

## Lend Lease Episodes 10 & 11 - American Anarchy (Anarchist and Syndicalist Movements of the late 19th and early 20th centuries in the United States)

Original notes by Bill Humphrey for Arsenal For Democracy, with additional copied-and-pasted sections by Rachel and Nate on specific subtopics.

*The longform notes below are still not quite in the order I actually intend to go over them, because it's hard to move long text blocks around safely; sorry about that. I have therefore created a projected order summarized here. -Bill*

### Part 1

Pre-industrial anarchism

Theory & definitions of anarchism & syndicalism (Russell)

Toward the creation of the IWW (Renshaw)

### Part 2

Violence: Propaganda of the Deed, Haymarket

First Red Scare / Criminal legislation (Dowell)

Role of Immigrants / Sacco & Vanzetti

(mixed throughout where they come up:) Key Women

- Pre-industrial American anarchism before the Civil War tended to be of the Individualist tendency, fitting the broader American mythos of self-sufficient, rugged individualism apart from government (while sometimes actively opposing it peacefully as needed, per Henry David Thoreau against imperialism and slavery) and was a counterpart to the communalist and mutualist movements of the same period that might be retroactively termed as more anarcho-communist. Anarcho-syndicalism (trade-unionism), the non-individualist and non-commune variety, came later with industrialization. The deeply pacifist, Individualist American proto-anarchism fit well ideologically if not tactically with the very anti-government and individual anarchism as a coherent, articulated philosophy by Frenchman Pierre-Joseph Proudhon who called it "the absence of a master, of a sovereign" [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pierre-Joseph\\_Proudhon#Anarchism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pierre-Joseph_Proudhon#Anarchism) Eventually they split bitterly in the 1880s <http://www.wendymcelroy.com/articles/violence.html> It's also worth noting that the individualist anarchism of the early 19th century probably has more in common philosophically with a lot of present-day right-libertarianism in the US context than with the rest of anarchism, but it would be a mistake to transpose things directly across contexts in different time periods, and also right-libertarianism isn't exactly consistent on a lot of things, due to racism and guns and property obsession.
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- Anarchist and Trade-Unionist Women
  - Emma Goldman (and Alexander Berkman) [Russian immigrants]
  - [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emma\\_Goldman](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emma_Goldman)

Attracted to anarchism after the [Haymarket affair](#), Goldman became a writer and a renowned lecturer on anarchist philosophy, women's rights, and social issues, attracting crowds of thousands.<sup>[2]</sup> She and anarchist writer [Alexander Berkman](#), her lover and lifelong friend, planned to assassinate industrialist and financier [Henry Clay Frick](#) as an act of [propaganda of the deed](#). Frick survived the attempt on his life in 1892, and Berkman was sentenced to 22 years in prison. Goldman was imprisoned several times in the years that followed, for "inciting to riot" and illegally distributing information about [birth control](#). In 1906, Goldman founded the anarchist journal [Mother Earth](#).

In 1917, Goldman and Berkman were sentenced to two years in jail for conspiring to "induce persons not to register" for the [newly instated draft](#). After their release from prison, they were arrested—along with 248 others—and deported to [Russia](#). Initially supportive of that country's [October Revolution](#) that brought the [Bolsheviks](#) to power, Goldman changed her opinion in the wake of the [Kronstadt rebellion](#); she denounced the [Soviet Union](#) for its violent repression of independent voices. She left the Soviet Union and in 1923 published a book about her experiences, [My Disillusionment in Russia](#). While living in England, Canada, and France, she wrote an autobiography called [Living My Life](#). It was published in two volumes, in 1931 and 1935. After the outbreak of the [Spanish Civil War](#), Goldman traveled to Spain to support the [anarchist revolution](#) there. She died in [Toronto](#), Canada, on May 14, 1940, aged 70.

During her life, Goldman was lionized as a [freethinking](#) "rebel woman" by admirers, and denounced by detractors as an advocate of politically motivated murder and violent revolution.<sup>[3]</sup> Her writing and lectures spanned a wide variety of issues, including [prisons](#), [atheism](#), [freedom of speech](#), [militarism](#), [capitalism](#), marriage, [free love](#), and [homosexuality](#). Although she distanced herself from [first-wave feminism](#) and its efforts toward [women's suffrage](#), she developed new ways of incorporating gender politics into anarchism. After decades of obscurity, Goldman gained iconic status in the 1970s by a revival of interest in her life, when feminist and anarchist scholars rekindled popular interest.

- Lucy Parsons & Lizzie Holmes -- Parsons was a Latinx-Indigenous revolutionary anarchist from Texas who moved to Chicago with her white husband (executed for the Haymarket bombing; "The Communist and anarchist urges the people to study their schoolbooks on chemistry and read the dictionaries on the composition and construction of all kinds of explosives and make themselves too strong to be opposed with deadly weapons.") and she co-founded the IWW in 1905 [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lucy\\_Parsons](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lucy_Parsons) ; her comrade was Holmes
  - Parsons also in 1905 proposed a new version of a strike where the workers essentially locked themselves inside factories and occupied the means of production to starve the capitalists instead of starving

themselves outside, which became the origin of Sit-in Strikes later (Renshaw p.85)

- Lizzie Holmes [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lizzie\\_Holmes](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lizzie_Holmes)  
She was a key figure in [Chicago's labor movement](#) in the years just preceding the [Haymarket Affair](#), during which she worked with and played a leading role in a range of unions including the [Knights of Labor](#) and the [International Working People's Association](#).  
In addition to her work as a labor organizer, Holmes served as a writer and editor in various radical and anarchist newspapers. She worked as the assistant editor of [The Alarm](#), and she published articles in [Lucifer, the Light-Bearer](#), [Freedom](#), and [Free Society](#). In contrast to some of her anarchist contemporaries, she was also willing to publish in more conservative outlets, which led to her publishing a string of articles in the [American Federation of Labor](#) affiliated journal [American Federationist](#).<sup>[4]</sup> Holmes published articles on a diverse array of topics, including [free love](#), [marriage](#), [gender inequality](#), and economic injustice. Holmes also published multiple works of fiction, including a full-length novel entitled *Hagar Lyndon; or, A Woman's Rebellion*. Along with her close friend and collaborator [Lucy Parsons](#), Holmes fought for and demonstrated the validity of [gender equality](#) within the anarchist and broader labor movement. Holmes has been recognized as an early pioneer of [anarchist feminism](#), and an influence on more prominent thinkers like [Emma Goldman](#)
- Mother Jones (the good one not the magazine[!o!])  
The loss of her husband and their four children, three girls and a boy (all under the age of five) in 1867, during a [yellow fever](#) epidemic in [Memphis](#) marked a turning point in her life. After that tragedy, she returned to [Chicago](#) to begin another dressmaking business.<sup>[9]</sup> She did work for those of the upper class of Chicago in the 1870s and 1880s.<sup>[4]</sup> Then, four years later, she lost her home, shop, and possessions in the [Great Chicago Fire](#) of 1871. This huge fire destroyed many homes and shops. Jones, like many others, helped rebuild the city. According to her autobiography, this led to her joining the [Knights of Labor](#).<sup>[10]</sup> She started organizing strikes. At first the strikes and protests failed, sometimes ending with police shooting at and killing protesters. The Knights mainly attracted men but by the middle of the decade member numbers leaped to more than a million becoming the largest labor organization in the country. The [Haymarket Riot](#) of 1886 and the fear of [anarchism](#) and upheaval incited by union organizations resulted in the demise of the Knights of Labor when an anarchist threw a bomb into an altercation between the Chicago police and workers on strike.<sup>[4]</sup> Once the Knights ceased to exist, Mary Jones became involved mainly with the [United Mine Workers](#). She frequently led UMW strikers in picketing and encouraged striking workers to stay on strike when management brought in strike-breakers and militias.<sup>[8]</sup> She believed that "working men deserved a wage that would allow women to stay home to care for their kids."<sup>[11]</sup> Around this time,

strikes were getting better organized and started to produce greater results, such as better pay for the workers.<sup>[12]</sup>

Her political views may have been influenced by the [1877 railroad strike](#), Chicago's labor movement, and the [Haymarket riot](#) and [depression of 1886](#).<sup>[5]</sup> Active as an organizer and educator in strikes throughout the country at the time, she was involved particularly with the UMW and the [Socialist Party of America](#). As a [union organizer](#), she gained prominence for organizing the wives and children of striking workers in demonstrations on their behalf. She was termed "the most dangerous woman in America" by a [West Virginian](#) district attorney, Reese Blizzard, in 1902, at her trial for ignoring an injunction banning meetings by striking miners. "There sits the most dangerous woman in America", announced Blizzard. "She comes into a state where peace and prosperity reign ... crooks her finger [and] twenty thousand contented men lay down their tools and walk out."<sup>[14]</sup>

Jones was ideologically separated from many female activists of the pre-[Nineteenth Amendment](#) days due to her aversion to [female suffrage](#). She was quoted as saying that "you don't need the vote to raise hell!"<sup>[15]</sup> She opposed many of the activists because she believed it was more important to liberate the working class itself. When some suffragettes accused her of being anti-women's rights she clearly articulated herself, "I'm not an anti to anything which brings freedom to my class."

Also co-founded IWW

- Elizabeth Gurley Flynn (started her syndicalist career as a 17-year-old NYC soapbox orator – Renshaw says she was known as a working-class Joan of Arc – and a teenage delegate to the IWW convention of 1908)
  - She exposed abuses by police and prison guards at women's prisons/jails where they were extorting sexual activities from inmates/detainees. This helped rally the public to be more favorable toward the IWW (Renshaw p.121)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elizabeth\\_Gurley\\_Flynn](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elizabeth_Gurley_Flynn) In 1907, Flynn became a full-time organizer for the [Industrial Workers of the World](#), and attended her first IWW convention in September of that year.<sup>[6]</sup> Over the next few years she organized campaigns among garment workers in [Pennsylvania](#), silk weavers in [New Jersey](#), restaurant workers in [New York](#), miners in [Minnesota](#), [Missoula, Montana](#), and [Spokane, Washington](#); and textile workers in [Massachusetts](#). During this period, author [Theodore Dreiser](#) described her as "an East Side Joan of Arc".

In 1909, Flynn participated in a [free speech fight](#) in Spokane, in which she [chained herself to a lamp-post](#) in order to delay her arrest. She later accused the police of using the jail as a [brothel](#), an accusation that prompted them to try to confiscate all copies of the [Industrial Worker](#) reporting the charge.

- Not an anarchist but a socialist ally: Margaret Sanger, helped in the 1912 Lawrence mill strike, evacuating starving children

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Margaret\\_Sanger](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Margaret_Sanger) Margaret Sanger also threw herself into the radical politics and modernist values of pre-World War I [Greenwich Village](#) bohemia. She joined the Women's Committee of the New York Socialist party, took part in the labor actions of the [Industrial Workers of the World](#) (including the notable [1912 Lawrence textile strike](#) and the [1913 Paterson silk strike](#)) and became involved with local intellectuals, left-wing artists, socialists and social activists, including [John Reed](#), [Upton Sinclair](#), [Mabel Dodge](#) and [Emma Goldman](#).

- Propaganda of the Deed

- Invented by the Italian socialist Duke Carlo Pisacane - the concept was that acts of violence could draw attention to a cause and educate people on the need for revolutionary change: "ideas result from deeds, not the latter from the former, and the people will not be free when they are educated, but educated when they are free." [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carlo\\_Pisacane](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carlo_Pisacane)
- German-American anarchist Johann Most [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Johann\\_Most](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Johann_Most) -- an atheist with a brutal childhood he organized his first strike at age 12 (students); he was expelled from Germany and then from the SDP for his increasingly radical views that eventually turned against parliamentary socialism (he had himself been an SDP MP in the imperial Reichstag) and in favor of violent revolutionary anarchism. He began publicly hyping up Pisacane's Propaganda of the Deed concept (he called it "Attentat" in German) in the aftermath of the far-left terrorist group People's Will assassinating the liberal Russian Tsar Alexander II in 1881. People's Will, a very extreme revolutionary socialist or anarchist Russian group, pioneered the use of dynamite, which had been invented in the 1860s by Alfred Nobel, in their attacks. They took inspiration from Sergey Nechayev who was in prison at the time after alienating almost everyone across Europe by being very insane and also telling everyone to die for the revolution and cut all human ties except those they could manipulate to advance the cause. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sergey\\_Nechayev](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sergey_Nechayev) After Johann Most was released from British prison in 1882 for his incitements to violence following the Tsar's death, he moved to New York's and Chicago's German-American communities, took up revolutionary anarchist agitation there (promoting dynamite attacks), and began facilitating acquisition of dynamite to associated radicals. He was routinely imprisoned, including after McKinley's assassination which he praised in similar terms to his comments on the Tsar. He also famously said "Whoever looks at America will see: the ship is powered by stupidity, corruption, or prejudice" -- and he said in support of propaganda of the deed attacks on the elites that "The existing system will be quickest and most radically overthrown by the annihilation of its exponents. Therefore, massacres of

the enemies of the people must be set in motion." Non-immigrant anarchists of the more pacifist school like Benjamin Tucker publicly accused Most and his radical associates not just of dynamite attacks but of a series of apartment fires across New York City on their own properties that left many civilians dead, allegedly for insurance fraud

<http://www.wendymcelroy.com/articles/violence.html>. Also one time Johann Most got horse-whipped across the face by Emma Goldman because she was very mad at his criticism of Alexander Berkman (Goldman's romantic partner) who had attempted to assassinate Henry Clay Frick during the Homestead strike (which we talked about a prior episode) -- interestingly Berkman later launched an anarchist magazine called "The Blast" in a nod to the attacks so favored by Most

- Assassination of McKinley (1901) [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leon\\_Czolgosz](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leon_Czolgosz)
- Inspired by the Assassination of Umberto I (1900) by Italian-American immigrant Gaetano Bresci: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gaetano\\_Bresci](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gaetano_Bresci)
- The modern version are the so-called Insurrectionary anarchist cells of the 1990s to present, staging one-off demonstrations against security forces (also sometimes known as the Black Bloc tactic). These cells in the 90s sometimes had ties to Latin American anarchist and trade-unionist groups or to Quebec anarchists. Obviously the modern anarchists also had heavy involvement in Occupy Wall Street, rhetorically and tactically, but with less emphasis on the clashes with police than insurrectionary cells. Again, it's key to distinguish between ideology and tactics because the waters got very muddied by coverage.
- Haymarket Affair bombing (1886)
  - [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Haymarket\\_affair](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Haymarket_affair)
  - May 4, 1886, Haymarket Square, Chicago: Started as a peaceful rally in support of an 8-hour workday. [August Spies](#), [Albert Parsons](#), and [Samuel Fielden](#) spoke to a crowd estimated variously between 600 and 3,000 while standing in an open wagon adjacent to the square on Des Plaines Street. After all the speeches were over and the crowd was dispersing, an unknown person threw a dynamite bomb at police that were harassing the people that were leaving anyway. In an article datelined May 4, entitled "Anarchy's Red Hand", [The New York Times](#) had described the incident as the "bloody fruit" of "the villainous teachings of the Anarchists". The *Chicago Times* described the defendants as "arch counselors of riot, pillage, incendiarism and murder"; other reporters described them as "bloody brutes", "red ruffians", "dynamarchists", "bloody monsters", "cowards", "cutthroats", "thieves", "assassins", and "fiends" The journalist George Frederic Parsons wrote a piece for [The Atlantic Monthly](#) in which he identified the fears of middle-class Americans concerning labor radicalism, and asserted that the workers had only themselves to blame for their troubles.<sup>[74]</sup> [Edward Aveling](#) remarked, "If these men are ultimately hanged, it will be the *Chicago Tribune* that has done it."<sup>[75]</sup> Schaack, who had led the investigation, was dismissed from the police force for allegedly having fabricated evidence in the case but was reinstated in 1892

Eight anarchists were rounded up and put on trial. Seven were sentenced to death and one to a term of 15 years in prison [Neebe]. Illinois governor [Richard J. Oglesby](#) commuted two of the sentences to terms of life in prison [Fielden and Schwab]; another committed suicide in jail rather than face the gallows [Lingg]. The other four were hanged on November 11, 1887. Spies shouted, "The time will come when our silence will be more powerful than the voices you strangle today."<sup>[80]</sup> In their last words, Engel and Fischer called out, "Hurrah for anarchism!" Parsons then requested to speak, but he was cut off when the signal was given to open the trap door. In 1893, Illinois Governor [John Peter Altgeld](#) pardoned the remaining defendants and criticized the trial.  
<http://www.illinoislaborhistory.org/the-haymarket-affair>

While textbooks tell about the bomb, they fail to mention the reason for the meeting or what happened afterwards. Some books even fail to mention the fact that many of those who were tried were not even at the Haymarket meeting, but were arrested simply because there were union organizers. Sadly, these rights have been abridged many times in American history. During the civil rights marches of the 1960's, the anti-Vietnam war demonstrations and the 1968 Democratic National Convention, we saw similar violations to our constitutional rights.

<https://allthatsinteresting.com/haymarket-riot>

The police had no idea who'd thrown the bomb, but that didn't stop them from hauling people off en masse. Dozens were arrested the day of the Haymarket Riot, as were countless others in the months to come. The city struck down the need for search warrants and let the police ransack any building suspected to be involved with any anarchist or communist group.

- Origins of May Day
- The Haymarket Affair took on worldwide dimension in July 1889, when a delegate from the American Federation of Labor recommended at a labor conference in Paris that May 1 be set aside as International Labor Day in memory of Haymarket martyrs and the injustice of the Haymarket Affair. Today in almost every major industrial nation, May Day is Labor Day. Even Great Britain and Israel have passed legislation in recent years declaring this date a national holiday.
- I requested some history books from the library system
  - *Criminal Syndicalism Legislation in the United States* (1935)
    - Many states, especially after WW1, passed state laws against revolutionary communists, revolutionary syndicalists (especially

1917-1921), and also to a lesser extent against Nazis. These ranged from restrictions on the use of public grounds for assembly to restrictions on ballot eligibility to bans on red flags to literature distribution bans to various laws against industrial sabotage intended to achieve industrial/political objectives

- Many of these laws were so similar in wording that Eldridge Dowell, the author of this book (which was his dissertation at Hollins College in Virginia), was able to count which repeat sections had been passed into law in which state or US territory -- 15 states and 2 territories had virtually identical laws making it a felony to engage in or advocate for syndicalism and 11 states even banned teaching about it (pp.18-19)
- **Idaho passed perhaps the most draconian law on industrial action in 1925: "Idaho alone includes in the definition of sabotage such things as loitering, improperly done work, waste, publication of trade secrets, and slowing down of work or production." (p.18)** All 19 Progressive Party legislators in Idaho voted against the 1925 bill. (p.68)
- Utah and Montana had the lightest punishments in terms of fine size and potential jail time, while South Dakota had a fine of up to \$10,000 and potential jail time of 25 years. Typically, 10 years was the most common limit and \$5000 the most common fine. (p. 20)
- Dowell stresses that the IWW both in resolutions, constitution, and philosophy were not a violent organization. Their vision of a general strike leading to the dismantling of the bourgeois political state was a peaceful vision and violence was only to be used defensively if fired upon or otherwise attacked physically. They did not consider property destruction to be violence, obviously. And in fact in 1917 they formally dropped the use of the term "sabotage" which they considered to be more general like work slowdowns and not necessarily about property damage and they decided it was too confusing to the public.
- The media was pretty unhelpful toward the IWW and often repeated uncritically fantastical claims about violence and damage, including the Seattle mayor's insistence in early 1918 that a large-scale labor strike in Seattle by 110 local unions was actually a failed Bolshevik-IWW October Revolution. A year later newspapers were still citing this as a case study on Bolshevik revolutionary coup attempts on American soil. Earlier during the war before the Russian Revolution, most news stories insisted that the German Kaiser was financing the IWW's operations all over the US and that he had publicly praised the IWW's German members (which doesn't really hold up to common sense given his views about the Left)
- One major outlier state unsurprisingly was Wisconsin where the legislature managed to run out the clock on an anti-syndicalism bill and never bring it to a final vote. The conservative Republican Governor who requested the bill hated the IWW, but socialist Milwaukee mayor Dan



Hoan tried to shield them from state efforts and said they had never given the city any trouble and he wasn't going to start any. (p.94) Most of the opposition came from a coalition of State House Reps from the socialists, the unions, the farm groups, the progressives, and the liberals, who used a lot of procedural tactics and amendments to gum up the works until the session could end. No newspapers in Wisconsin endorsed the bill, although one of them was very anti-IWW as well.

- A bill introduced in Massachusetts after the unrest surrounding the Sacco & Vanzetti executions did not make it out of committee. A broad coalition of liberals, union members, anti-war groups, civil liberties advocates, and even some prominent local American Legion members opposed it (whereas in most states American Legion was actively pushing for these laws). One opponent testified that the Boston Tea Party would clearly have been the type of political property sabotage the bill sought to ban. (pp.98-100)
- Unsuccessful Southern bills were generally introduced in response to Communists organizing Black agricultural sharecroppers rather than to syndicalist industrial action and lumping the two issues together seems to have had less resonance than necessary for passage
- Repeated attempts at Federal bills on the issue were unsuccessful during and just after the war. They passed in the conservative US Senate a few times but died without going anywhere in the House. Even some supporting Senators acknowledged publicly that it was probably unlikely to hold up to constitutional scrutiny if the war ended.
- *The Wobblies: The Story of Syndicalism in the United States* (1967, Patrick Renshaw)
  - During the 1890s, industrial unions seeking to organize around the entire supply chain rather than specific occupations emerged as strong rivals of the somewhat more conservative and siloed craft unions (centered on the AFL) – although both types of American unions generally opposed legislative/parliamentarist strategies that were being promoted by the emerging Progressive movement.
  - The heavily German-American industrial National Union of Brewery Workmen of the United States had formed in 1884, organizing the brewers, “drivers, maltsters, firemen, even stenographers” (p.37) -- they left the much more conservative and loosely structured Knights of Labor and tried to join the AFL but ran into difficulty integrating their completely non-craft structure, foreshadowing the creation of the IWW (including some of the specific founding leaders). A few years later in 1890, the United Mineworkers of America formed and join the AFL but was completely industrial in nature and due to its enormous scale within the union movement, the AFL basically acceded.

- Eugene V. Debs, future socialist politician, led the new American Railway Union out of the AFL in 1893, repudiating the craft model that had not worked for rail strikers amid the 1893 railroad financial crashes. He had come up through the ranks of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen, a good example of a very specialized craft union as opposed to a unified industrial union that could organize all workers involved with operation of a railroad. The new industrial-oriented ARU exploded in popularity and geographic breadth for a brief moment and might have served to completely re-orient America's rail industry except that he allowed the nascent ARU to back the doomed 1894 wildcat Pullman Factory Strike (after trying to organize Pullman Company workers into the ARU), which the AFL refused to support despite President Cleveland's use of Federal troops to break the strike on the flimsy basis that mail delivery was being interfered with. This was one of the most famous attempts to launch a General Strike but it never got the support-strikes needed to win. However, to be somewhat fair to the AFL leadership, the strike essentially died because the AFL's member craft rail worker unions refused to join (and the AFL couldn't force them to), thereby undercutting the Pullman strikers and the ARU -- although this more or less proves the entire point of industrial syndicalists about the limitations of craft unions. A lot of workers agreed with this conclusion and turned toward industrial unionism and radicalism and away from craft unionism.
- Many American socialists at the end of the 19th century were willing to be involved in promoting industrial unionism, unlike many of their mainland European peers, because they viewed the socialist position in the US as being too weak to enter the political sphere without first building a strong workers' movement out in the workplaces of America. In this view, they might eventually form a Labor Party like the one that was contemporaneously emerging in the United Kingdom out of the unions (pp.41-42) and numerically albeit not proportionally they ended up being even stronger in polls within a decade or so than their British counterparts. Also in the 1890s, the Socialist Labor Party's Daniel DeLeon (the American counterpart to Lenin, roughly speaking) pushed American socialism to embrace a twin political and unionist strategy, on the basis that the capitalists were fighting on both fronts against the people, although he continued to insist that working men would eventually simply vote themselves into power in regular elections (pp.54-55) which did happen in some cities but never nationally (and in many states ballots were literally rigged or stuffed to prevent socialists taking office). However socialists were mostly not very successful on this co-option strategy, either in the industrial unions or in the AFL or KOL craft unions, in part because a lot of less doctrinaire socialists had already risen to union leadership positions and did not want to allow infiltration. Also workers

who had strong unions that were working well for them were not terribly interested in a revolutionary future where everything would change. And committed anarchists and syndicalists had no interest in being anyone's stepping stone to either a bourgeois electoral party or to a political dictatorship of the proletariat. DeLeon's leadership style and a very failed effort to start a socialist trade-union wing led to a split among socialists and a rejection of socialism by many trade-unionists by the end of the 1890s. (Nevertheless he would go on to help found the IWW in 1905 after becoming a bit more interested in syndicalist theory & practice emerging in Europe – and after realizing that if he didn't get in on the ground floor the IWW might affiliate to the rival socialists who had left the SLP and become more popular.)

- Renshaw analogizes (p.21) the syndicalist character of industrial unions forming around the giant industrial cartel and monopoly corporations to represent all the different types of workers in the supply chain and production cycle as akin to a “shadow” government except for the entire economy -- basically if the industrial unions were to take control of the vertically-integrated supply chains of the increasingly horizontally-monopolized private corporations, they would have replaced the entire capitalist system and rendered the political state irrelevant: “Its industrial departments were to act as syndicalist shadows of American capitalism, so that after the revolution they could quickly step in and help govern the workers’ commonwealth” ... makes one think about a company like Amazon today if one could imagine a future in which some union had managed to gain representation over every worker in every different operation Amazon includes. Of course, the industrial unions of the corporate trusts era also never managed to unionize these monopolies either, which is probably why we never did experience the destruction of the political state and the overthrow of capitalism by industrial unionism...
- While the Progressive movement turned to trust-busting legislation to try to break the emerging cartels, by the Hoover Administration, they were actually probably more engulfing of the entire US economy than they had been at the end of the 19th century. The IWW's formation in 1905 was in no small part an attempt to seek a more permanent, syndicalist fix to the problem by organizing every single American worker into a single union that could not be played off another union at the same company and which could eventually be positioned to take worker control of a given corporation away from whatever family or individual controlled it. Again, this didn't pan out, but that was the hope: A workers' monopoly to defeat the capitalist corporate monopolies. Renshaw also calls this dual purpose “both the embryo of the new society and the revolutionary instrument for

achieving it” (i.e. through a “a series of strikes, leading to a general strike which would force the capitalists to capitulate”) (p.21)

- In 1897 (p.63), the Western Federation of Miners not only left the AFL but by mid-1898 had formed a Western Labor Union vowing to “organize all labor west of the Mississippi ‘irrespective of occupation, nationality, creed, or color.’” This overly ambitious objective was an immediate forerunner to the IWW’s vision of one big union encompassing all workers. But of course it was basically just miners from the WFM union making this declaration without really getting too many other occupations on board first. While their lofty stated goal was not really being met, they still set about immediately launching mining strikes all across the Mountain West region, building support for a Direct Action approach and more militancy. By 1902, they had gotten Eugene Debs on board in addition to their existing leaders like Bill Haywood, and Debs advised them to aim even higher and become the American Labor Union with the objective of representing all workers across the entire nation. Having Debs sign on to the project brought together at least that portion of railworkers who preferred industry-wide unionism over occupation-specific unionism. He was followed shortly thereafter by key figures from the Brewers and even some Canadian cross-border unionists and the US branch of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers of Great Britain, who were having a lot of jurisdictional problems with the AFL’s craft unions. They also gained the support of the most famous female trade-unionist, Mother Jones, who was very popular with both militant miners and militant rail workers. By the start of 1905, this revolutionary cadre of leaders was prepared at least in secret to establish an American organization (with a transnational aspect) seeking not only to represent all workers across all occupations and industries, but also to organize that working class into what they called “approximately the same groups and departments and industries that workers would assume in the working class administration of the Cooperative Commonwealth” that would follow the revolution. They held a founding conference in Chicago for the new Industrial Workers of the World in the summer of 1905 and took direct inspiration from the rising power of France’s syndicalist CGT, although the CGT still had not yet taken on some of its more explicitly anarchist and violence doctrines. The IWW also, perhaps fatally, tried to follow the recently adopted CGT-FBT French model of twin organization along both industrial and craft union lines with lingering local or regional autonomy for craft unions, despite the problems this had already caused in the US during situations like the Pullman Strike, where they needed local craft unions to have gotten on board with industrial-level work stoppage attempts nationwide. The conference-goers were also inspired by the unfolding abortive Russian

Revolution of 1905 happening concurrently. They still also did not have much buy-in by unions outside their core (mines, rail, metal, machines)

- The second IWW convention in 1906 was a total disaster with a number of the more impressive founding figures in jail or otherwise occupied – on a previous episode we talked about Haywood being kidnapped by Pinkertons and put on trial for the bombing assassination of Idaho's governor – and a significant factional fight that even included the leadership inexplicably calling the cops on their rivals and those rivals in turn trying to appeal to the court system for help winning control of the organization. Disgusted moderates either quit the IWW at this point or re-confirmed earlier decisions not to join and many of them began abandoning direct-action confrontational approaches toward the capitalist owners in favor of more conciliatory negotiations, which seemed to be getting better results at this point than endless strike waves. (Renshaw doesn't say if this had anything to do with the end of the Long Recession period of the 1870s-1890s where wages had been falling and the arrival of an era of more generally rising wages? But I'm not sure either, just wondering.) Perhaps the killing blow to the nascent IWW was the departure of the Western Federation of Mineworkers who had basically been the genesis of the entire project and had had the most resources and manpower. This WFM exodus was itself a bitter two year saga concluding in 1908.
- The third convention of the IWW (1908) purged anyone still remaining who was willing to entertain political participation instead of revolutionary industrialism. All the socialists of various alignments were now gone and the IWW was definitively syndicalist.
- However they were quite busy in the field during the 1905-1908 period, too .... Organizing window washers, restaurant workers, rodeo cowboys, newspaper production and delivery workers, Western Union delivery boys, etc. but these tended to be fairly brief labor actions or fairly short-lived unions. The IWW also increasingly came into conflict with craft union workers that refused to join them like carpenters or printers.
- The IWW almost collapsed in 1907 when a financial panic wiped out most of their resources and locals. Then it gained a new lease on life in 1909 when a US Steel subsidiary in Pennsylvania tried to change their pay system to a complicated piecework-based system that confused and alienated their immigrant workers, especially those who did not speak English. 6,000 workers went on strike. The IWW was brought in to help establish an organization from scratch. A picketing Czech worker was killed by company guards and funeral eulogies were given in 15 languages. A young General Executive Board member of the IWW, Joseph Ettor, spoke English, Italian, and Polish, and helped usher in a new era of IWW focus around Eastern industrial immigrant workers. IWW

propaganda began referring to police as Cossacks at the suggestion of Russian workers as violence against the McKees Rocks strikers mounted and state police attacked from horseback. Public opinion in western Pennsylvania soured toward the company and they surrendered completely to worker demands.

- In 1909 nearly half of all remaining IWW member workers were on strike somewhere in the United States for some reason or another. While impressive, this meant they couldn't pay dues.
- One early flash of anarchism and mutual aid: Early efforts by governments to legislate against the anarcho-syndicalist IWW focused on trying to ban them from giving street corner soapbox speeches telling the truth about terrible working conditions in the US. The IWW would mobilize a national network of itinerant hobo soapboxers to flood into any community that tried to ban it, which would overwhelm and agitate the local prisons and until the local governments relented on the law (p.119). These networks could mobilize hundreds or even thousands of IWW protesters to a given location.
- There was immense violence in Southern California against trade-unionists after the 1912 bombing and accidental fire at the anti-union Los Angeles Times building, which the IWW was falsely accused of perpetrating. The IWW also expressed vocal concern that the AFL was not doing enough to stand with them as the chaos unfolded. The AFL subsequently worked harder to cooperate with the IWW after similar bursts of violence against workers in places like Washington State.
- Also in 1912, the IWW's focus began to shift with the Lawrence Massachusetts textile mill strike. This nine-week strike coincided with a wave of strike action across the entire English-speaking world of the British Empire, some of which the IWW was actually advising on. Lawrence had 86,000 residents, 60,000 depending directly on mill wages, and 30,000 men and women working themselves in the mills. Overwhelmingly, the town was either immigrant or first-generation American, representing 25 or more nationalities. A pay cut in the second week of January 1912 also happened as the pioneering Massachusetts minimum wage and maximum hours law for women and children was rolling out. 10 or 15,000 workers walked out immediately, triggering a citywide general strike, although many immigrant groups did not join until later, and the small IWW local wired for emergency help from the national leadership, who arrived quickly on the scene. A number of them would later be arrested and held without trial for months. The Massachusetts militia fired water hoses into the strikers on January 15, a few days in, and the workers became so enraged that they committed to following through on the general strike in progress. French and Belgian syndicalists were very active in the strike (including their bakery keeping people fed), while

the city's Irish and English communities tended to undermine the strike, especially since the Irish were now in control of city government (some of whom even purchased and planted dynamite to frame IWW leaders unsuccessfully). The Italians were divided with many serving as the core of the strikers but also quite a few siding with management and the city (see the Italian-American notes). The Massachusetts militia consisted largely of nativists, multi-generation Americans, and young professionals – drawn heavily from Harvard. Anarchists from Boston, possibly actually agents working for management, brought signs with atheist slogans that alienated many workers. The IWW had to evacuate thousands of starving children to supporter homes across the northeast as the privations grew, which proved to be such an effective propaganda tool to demonstrate the abusive siege against the workers that the militias and police began trying to stop the evacuations and arresting mothers on neglect charges. The US Solicitor General condemned the intervention, saying it was any parent's right to send their child to a home where they would be safer and better fed, and at this point American middle class opinion turned in favor of the strikers despite misgivings about the revolutionary rhetoric and descriptions of syndicalist tactics of sabotage and so on. Soon there were newspaper editorials across the country raising questions not only about the millowners in Lawrence but about the entire US textile industry which was heavily benefiting from a federal tariff regime. To avoid a much more serious review of US policy on their industry that could cost them far more money, the American Woolen Company decided to raise wages in 33 cities, then bumped pay for 125,000 millworkers in six states, and soon after a number of other textile companies announced pay rises, overtime pay, and worker protections. The strike ended and a wave of smaller textile strikes across New England quickly ended with similar surrender to worker demands. Unfortunately, as elsewhere, the IWW was unable to capitalize on a major victory by putting down roots and building infrastructure, and the hard-won gains fizzled away quickly.

- The 1913 Paterson NJ textile strike initially looked like it might follow the Lawrence track but the owners were even more prepared to take extreme measures and various innovative tactics by the IWW like Jack Reed's Madison Square Garden Pageant ended up causing more internal problems than helping. Also once again, extreme anarchists – who according to IWW syndicalists may or may not have been working for the government – showed up and made extreme demonstrations that made a lot of immigrant workers uncomfortable at best and at worst fearful that it might result in their expulsion from the country. The strike ended in almost total failure with 300 different contract agreements between the various mills and workers instead of one citywide contract. In both Lawrence and Paterson, the millowners made sure to invest in equipment upgrades and

line production changes that would allow them to make their workers work faster and produce more for the new pay rate, thereby rendering any gains from the strikes meaningless.

- Some rare southern successes for the syndicalists in the pre-WWI period included forming mixed locals of Black and White loggers in Louisiana to ensure that owners could not simply replace striking workers of one race with scab workers of the other race during labor disputes. The IWW also informally supported Eugene Debs' 1912 presidential run which saw some successes especially in single-party Democratic strongholds like the South, despite the IWW's policy opposing political participation. Unfortunately the socialists ejected the syndicalists during and after 1912 from the party and denounced "violence, sabotage, and crime" – and Renshaw notes that this same anti-sabotage language would become the basis a few years later of the anti-syndicalism legislation wave. (pp.160-162)
- The IWW also became increasingly divided internally over the decentralizing anarchists vs the centralizing syndicalists who felt that the IWW would keep failing or losing momentum if it did not have stronger national leadership and permanent on the ground field organizers. The anarchist wing was more popular in the Western US while the syndicalists were more popular with the Eastern industrial immigrant communities. The syndicalists were also divided on whether to focus on competing with the AFL or trying to take it over like the French had done. Everyone basically agreed that wildcat striking, while effective among transient workers with seasonal jobs, was probably not the best approach to urban factories and things needed to change on that front strategically. (pp 163-165) The French syndicalists were actually also divided over some of the same exact questions on future direction despite their successful capture of the CGT at the turn of the century. Moreover, the AFL was so focused on skilled labor and expensive apprenticeships that it was unclear how the working poor unskilled laborers would be able to make the jump into the AFL in the first place to infiltrate it.
- Another key step by the IWW was a 1914 convention decision to begin organizing the unemployed members of the working class, not only to help them find jobs, but also to make it easier for them to avoid serving as surplus labor force scab workers during strikes. This followed a 1913 campaign to organize seasonal farm laborers across the Midwest who spent much of the year struggling to find work between harvests and then lived in horrid conditions during the harvest season (pp.174-177). The IWW's previous experience with the hobo networks for soapbox protests made them very experienced at formalizing rail-hopping migrants into a union with red cards that carried a great deal of respect. By 1916, the Agriculture Workers Organization was a massive force within the IWW



and was raking in the dues money and winning fight after fight with farm owners who could not afford to let their crops spoil during a strike. The centralizers had won control of the IWW but now the IWW's strongest branch was a highly decentralized union of seasonal and mostly unemployed farm workers. And that was the final year before the US entry to World War One and the start of the first Red Scare as well as the emergence of a strong Communist state in Russia as an attractive and powerful force on left-wing revolutionary politics.

- The IWW and its predecessors (see the Russell notes and the Renshaw notes) -- a fraught combination of revolutionary trade-unionist/syndicalists, parliamentary socialists, and communists
  - Short-lived splinter group tried to infiltrate more conventional craft unions based on observations of pre-war European syndicalist models especially France's [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Syndicalist\\_League\\_of\\_North\\_America](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Syndicalist_League_of_North_America)
  - The IWW's Australian branch (also for One Big Union) still exists today as a descendant Australian Council of Trade Unions formed in 1927 by revolutionary syndicalists opposed to the more conciliatory unionism of the Australian Workers Union, although it eventually became parliamentarist too and President Bob Hawke became PM in 1983 and led a very successful government [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Australian\\_Council\\_of\\_Trade\\_Unions](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Australian_Council_of_Trade_Unions). Renshaw argues in his 1967 book that Australia and New Zealand came to American syndicalism because of a similar fading national mythology around frontier farming and pasturing, although I suspect it might have more to do with early legal decisions empowering trade-unions in certain ways that initially favored an industrial approach over a political approach. Renshaw calls it post-frontier syndicalism as contrasted with European syndicalism.
  - In late 1936, a number of industrial-oriented unions broke away from the craft-union-dominated American Federation of Labor (AFL) to form the Congress for Industrial Organizations (CIO), which would not end its rivalry until they merged back together in 1955, but that is beyond the scope of our focal time period here. The CIO had one key advantage over the IWW that it was now organizing English-speaking children of the multi-lingual immigrants who had formed a core base of support for the IWW decades earlier.
- Italian-Americans heavily influenced anarchism in the United States, especially during the 3 million strong migration from Italy to the US from 1900 to 1915 (WWI)
  - nearly half of Italian migrants from 1905 to 1920 returned to Italy, unlike Irish or Scandinavian migrants to the US <http://ieg-ego.eu/en/threads/europe-on-the-road/economic-migration/irial-glynn-e-migration-across-the-atlantic-irish-italians-and-swedes-compared-1800-1950#Returnmigration>
  - However it is critical to remember that Italian unification was only completed by the northern monarchy in 1871 and Italy remained heavily regionally fragmented, with different dialects, politics, and rural vs urban industrial backgrounds --

1880-1900 Italian immigration in particular tended to be from the impoverished former Kingdom of the Two Sicilies in Southern Italy as opposed to industrial northern Italian cities – not all politically active Italians who came to the US shared the views of the anarchist immigrants and as early as the 1890s, large numbers of Italian-Americans had already moved into the public sector roles in places like New York City and Chicago with which they are now stereotypically associated. [http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/voices/italian\\_immigration.cfm](http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/voices/italian_immigration.cfm)

- Also many rural Italian immigrants opted to remain in American cities in more transient manual labor jobs and avoided settling down to continue to farm. They were overwhelmingly male and usually did not bring the rest of their families with them during this period (although of course the women working during the 1911 Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire were Italian or Jewish women or girls active in the trade-union movement inside the factory  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Triangle\\_Shirtwaist\\_Factory\\_fire](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Triangle_Shirtwaist_Factory_fire)  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International\\_Ladies%27\\_Garment\\_Workers%27\\_Union](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International_Ladies%27_Garment_Workers%27_Union)). [http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/voices/italian\\_immigration.cfm](http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/voices/italian_immigration.cfm)
- Italian-American political alignment and position began shifting significantly during World War One and with the interwar changes in immigration law
- Eventually in Northampton Massachusetts in September 1939, at the start of World War Two, Italian-American anti-fascists formed the Mazzini Society dedicated to democratic republicanism and the removal of Mussolini, but they were reluctant to invite anti-fascists of the communist and anarchist persuasion  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mazzini\\_Society](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mazzini_Society)
- Sacco & Vanzetti trial (1920-1927) and the wider Italian-American anarcho / trade-union movement (see Russell notes on the importance of immigrants in American radical unionism)
  - Sacco was from Apulia (southern Italy), whereas Vanzetti was from Piedmont (northern Italy)
  - Galleanism (1914-1920) <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Galleanists> -- they often blew themselves up or random civilian bystanders and never once actually hit an intended high-profile ruling class target. (One was in Franklin MA in 1919.) They attempted a string of retaliatory attacks in the US and Europe after S&V were indicted for the robbery gone wrong
  - 2 trials for separate crimes in separate jurisdictions
    - Judge Webster Thayer was a known xenophobe and had just given an anti-Bolshevik speech.
    - A court interpreter didn't know all the relevant dialects of Italian to relay defense witness testimony correctly to the jury of non-Italians
    - The jury also tampered with physical evidence while deliberating their verdict and part of the first case had to be thrown out
    - In their death penalty case for the murder, they were represented by a radical IWW lawyer who went over even worse with Judge Thayer. When S&V testified in the second case (they did not in the first), they rambled a

lot trying to explain their political views instead of avoiding that. (They had skipped the draft in 1917 and hid in Mexico too.)

- Sacco literally was not present for the murder he was charged with because he was inside the Italian consulate in Boston at the time and consular staff backed that up but were unable to be present for the trial
- Prosecutors also insisted OJ-trial-style that an article of clothing recovered from the crime scene much later that did not fit the defendant (Sacco's cap) was definitely his and proof of his guilt
- 60 cities in Italy held protests against the verdicts. Mussolini personally tried to intervene in the case behind the scenes to seek a commutation from the Massachusetts Governor. By contrast, within the US they did not become famous until well after their convictions as the appeals processes dragged on and supporters politicized it more heavily, especially among Italian immigrant communities across the country.
- In 1925, still before they were executed, a different robber confessed to the murder and it turned out he had a close associate who looked a lot like Sacco. That gang had a specific history of knocking over shoe factories for cash. Defense was unable to get a new trial. Even the Boston Herald (unlike every other local paper) called for a new trial at that point.
- In August 1927, an IWW-led protest walkout in a Colorado mining town saw so many miners walk off the job to protest the approaching executions that it triggered organizing a statewide coal mine strike. (Unusually it was an IWW strike not a UMW strike, partly because the UMW presence in Colorado had collapsed after the Ludlow massacre in 1914 when the National Guard machine-gunned down 12 children and 8 adults in a tent camp of striking miners and their families. The IWW presence in Colorado was also more heavily Latino not Italian like some places but was standing in solidarity with Sacco & Vanzetti.) The strike, as a side note, included a lot of interesting tactical experiments including an abortive idea to launch a syndicalist workers cooperative-owned mine in an abandoned mine, though they couldn't work out how to comply with regulations enough not to be shut down immediately if they tried it. The IWW also held firm when machine guns were brought in against them and a massacre occurred again, eventually winning a \$1 pay raise. Unfortunately, because of the IWW's ideological commitment to decentralization and resistance to formalized Union Recognition or Union Contracts, they weren't able to maintain or sustain the level of organizing they reached in the 1927 strike.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Industrial\\_Workers\\_of\\_the\\_World\\_philosophy\\_and\\_tactics#Colorado\\_coal\\_strike\\_\(a\\_case\\_study\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Industrial_Workers_of_the_World_philosophy_and_tactics#Colorado_coal_strike_(a_case_study)) (In the Bertrand Russell chapter cited elsewhere in our notes, the IWW secretary in 1918 was quoted as saying "There is but one bargain the I. W. W. will make with the employing class— complete surrender of all control of industry to

the organized workers" which sort of sums up their attitude and why they struggled to sustain organization in Colorado despite popular support.

- In 1977, 50 years after their execution, Mike Dukakis proclaimed a memorial day for them and said they had been unjustly convicted. He did not issue posthumous pardons because pardons are for guilt.
- They were considered martyrs in the Soviet Union, not just in Italy.
- Contemporary background info: Lord Bertrand Russell (UK) a born aristocrat (his grandfather was Prime Minister twice) and political essayist/author who studied leftist movements at the time published "Proposed Roads to Freedom: Socialism, Anarchism, and Syndicalism" in 1918, written between the 1914 left & state accommodations, the 1917 mutinies, and the 1920 factional splits over the anarchist & syndicalist left's potential future relationship to the emerging Bolshevik Russian state -- <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/690/690-h/690-h.htm> -- he had been convicted of refusing conscription in World War One due to his pacifism. Later he served on an official British diplomatic mission to the Soviet Union and was very critical of Lenin's new regime. (Everyone else on the trip was apparently impressed.) Russell noted in 1918 that Anarchist tendencies were more popular in Italy, Spain, and France (the "Latin" countries of Europe), whereas followers of Marx and his state-oriented vision of socialism were more dominant in the German-speaking countries [and German-speaking US communities -Bill] and to a lesser extent in England, although Fabianism (focused on re-educating the civil service to promote social democracy through the unelected bureaucracy) was more popular there according to Bertrand. (Bakunin, the anarchist counterpart to Marx, was Russian originally.) Here are Russell's definitional sections:
  - *"IN the popular mind, an Anarchist is a person who throws bombs and commits other outrages, either because he is more or less insane, or because he uses the pretense of extreme political opinions as a cloak for criminal proclivities. This view is, of course, in every way inadequate. Some Anarchists believe in throwing bombs; many do not. Men of almost every other shade of opinion believe in throwing bombs in suitable circumstances: for example, the men who threw the bomb at Sarajevo which started the present war were not Anarchists, but Nationalists. And those Anarchists who are in favor of bomb-throwing do not in this respect differ on any vital principle from the rest of the community, with the exception of that infinitesimal portion who adopt the Tolstoyan attitude of non-resistance. Anarchists, like Socialists, usually believe in the doctrine of the class war, and if they use bombs, it is as Governments use bombs, for purposes of war: but for every bomb manufactured by an Anarchist, many millions are manufactured by Governments, and for every man killed by Anarchist violence, many millions are killed by the violence of States. We may, therefore, dismiss from our minds the whole question of violence, which plays so large a part in the popular imagination, since it is neither essential nor peculiar to those who adopt the Anarchist position.*
  - *Anarchism, as its derivation indicates, is the theory which is opposed to every kind of forcible government. It is opposed to the State as the embodiment of the*

*force employed in the government of the community. Such government as Anarchism can tolerate must be free government, not merely in the sense that it is that of a majority, but in the sense that it is that assented to by all. Anarchists object to such institutions as the police and the criminal law, by means of which the will of one part of the community is forced upon another part. In their view, the democratic form of government is not very enormously preferable to other forms so long as minorities are compelled by force or its potentiality to submit to the will of majorities. Liberty is the supreme good in the Anarchist creed, and liberty is sought by the direct road of abolishing all forcible control over the individual by the community.”*

- *“The modern Anarchism, in the sense in which we shall be concerned with it, is associated with belief in the communal ownership of land and capital, and is thus in an important respect akin to Socialism. This doctrine is properly called Anarchist Communism, but as it embraces practically all modern Anarchism, we may ignore individualist Anarchism altogether and concentrate attention upon the communistic form. Socialism and Anarchist Communism alike have arisen from the perception that private capital is a source of tyranny by certain individuals over others. Orthodox Socialism believes that the individual will become free if the State becomes the sole capitalist. Anarchism, on the contrary, fears that in that case the State might merely inherit the tyrannical propensities of the private capitalist. Accordingly, it seeks for a means of reconciling communal ownership with the utmost possible diminution in the powers of the State, and indeed ultimately with the complete abolition of the State. It has arisen mainly within the Socialist movement as its extreme left wing.”*
- *“The ECONOMIC organization of society, as conceived by Anarchist Communists, does not differ greatly from that which is sought by Socialists. Their difference from Socialists is in the matter of government: they demand that government shall require the consent of all the governed, and not only of a majority. It is undeniable that the rule of a majority may be almost as hostile to freedom as the rule of a minority: the divine right of majorities is a dogma as little possessed of absolute truth as any other. A strong democratic State may easily be led into oppression of its best citizens, namely, those whose independence of mind would make them a force for progress. Experience of democratic parliamentary government has shown that it falls very far short of what was expected of it by early Socialists, and the Anarchist revolt against it is not surprising. But in the form of pure Anarchism, this revolt has remained weak and sporadic. It is Syndicalism, and the movements to which Syndicalism has given rise, that have popularized the revolt against parliamentary government and purely political means of emancipating the wage earner. But this movement must be dealt with in a separate chapter.”*
- *“France, unlike England and Germany, was not content merely to repeat the old shibboleths with continually diminishing conviction [as parliamentary electoral socialism gained movement dominance]. In France a new movement, originally*

known as Revolutionary Syndicalism—and afterward simply as Syndicalism—kept alive the vigor of the original impulse, and remained true to the spirit of the older Socialists, while departing from the letter. Syndicalism, unlike Socialism and Anarchism, began from an existing organization and developed the ideas appropriate to it, whereas Socialism and Anarchism began with the ideas and only afterward developed the organizations which were their vehicle. In order to understand Syndicalism, we have first to describe Trade Union organization in France, and its political environment. The ideas of Syndicalism will then appear as the natural outcome of the political and economic situation. Hardly any of these ideas are new; almost all are derived from the Bakunist section of the old International. The old International had considerable success in France before the Franco- Prussian War; indeed, in 1869, it is estimated to have had a French membership of a quarter of a million. What is practically the Syndicalist program was advocated by a French delegate to the Congress of the International at Bale in that same year. [...] The disputes between the various sections of Socialists caused difficulties in the Trade Unions and helped to bring about the resolution to keep politics out of the Unions. From this to Syndicalism was an easy step. [Russell then also notes a series of French socialist politicians who rose to power through electoralism and cabinet appointments only to turn against socialism, which convinced many radicals that state politics was a mistake to be avoided.] Syndicalism stands essentially for the point of view of the producer as opposed to that of the consumer; it is concerned with reforming actual work, and the organization of industry, not MERELY with securing greater rewards for work. From this point of view its vigor and its distinctive character are derived. **It aims at substituting industrial for political action, and at using Trade Union organization for purposes for which orthodox Socialism would look to Parliament.** "Syndicalism" was originally only the French name for Trade Unionism, but the Trade Unionists of France became divided into two sections, the Reformist and the Revolutionary, of whom the latter only professed the ideas which we now associate with the term "Syndicalism." It is quite impossible to guess how far either the organization or the ideas of the Syndicalists will remain intact at the end of the war, and everything that we shall say is to be taken as applying only to the years before the war. It may be that French Syndicalism as a distinctive movement will be dead [...]

- The French CGT was a sort of loose central committee for 700 unions ("syndicates") and the FBT was a federation of labor councils representing all workers across all occupations in a given location. From 1902 onward, they together had a dual membership and dual federalism system where every geographic area was represented but also every industry nationwide was represented so that decisionmaking would neither be overly local nor overly national (or dominated by one industry). The CGT-FBT was governed by turn of the century French anarchists who tried to avoid any centralization even within the organization and they tried to be "advisory" more than directing labor action.

“the Committee had no chairman and votes very rarely took place ... The C. G. T. allows much autonomy to each unit in the organization. Each Syndicat counts for one, whether it be large or small.”

- *“There is a Reformist section in the C. G. T., but it is practically always in a minority, and the C. G. T. is, to all intents and purposes, the organ of revolutionary Syndicalism, which is simply the creed of its leaders. **The essential doctrine of Syndicalism is the class-war, to be conducted by industrial rather than political methods. The chief industrial methods advocated are the strike, the boycott, the label and sabotage.** The boycott, in various forms, and the label, showing that the work has been done under trade-union conditions, have played a considerable part in American labor struggles. Sabotage is the practice of doing bad work, or spoiling machinery or work which has already been done, as a method of dealing with employers in a dispute when a strike appears for some reason undesirable or impossible. It has many forms, some clearly innocent, some open to grave objections. One form of sabotage which has been adopted by shop assistants is to tell customers the truth about the articles they are buying; this form, however it may damage the shopkeeper's business, is not easy to object to on moral grounds. A form which has been adopted on railways, particularly in Italian strikes, is that of obeying all rules literally and exactly, in such a way as to make the running of trains practically impossible. Another form is to do all the work with minute care, so that in the end it is better done, but the output is small. From these innocent forms there is a continual progression, until we come to such acts as all ordinary morality would consider criminal; for example, causing railway accidents.”*
- *“**By far the most important of the Syndicalist methods is the strike.** Ordinary strikes, for specific objects, are regarded as rehearsals, as a means of perfecting organization and promoting enthusiasm, but even when they are victorious so far as concerns the specific point in dispute, they are not regarded by Syndicalists as affording any ground for industrial peace. Syndicalists aim at using the strike, not to secure such improvements of detail as employers may grant, but to destroy the whole system of employer and employed and win the complete emancipation of the worker. For this purpose what is wanted is the General Strike, the complete cessation of work by a sufficient proportion of the wage-earners to secure the paralysis of capitalism. Sorel, who represents Syndicalism too much in the minds of the reading public, suggests that the General Strike is to be regarded as a myth, like the Second Coming in Christian doctrine. But this view by no means suits the active Syndicalists. If they were brought to believe that the General Strike is a mere myth, their energy would flag, and their whole outlook would become disillusioned. It is the actual, vivid belief in its possibility which inspires them. They are much criticised for this belief by the political Socialists who consider that the battle is to be won by obtaining a Parliamentary majority. But Syndicalists have too little faith in the honesty of politicians to place any*

*reliance on such a method or to believe in the value of any revolution which leaves the power of the State intact.”*

- **“Syndicalist aims are somewhat less definite than Syndicalist methods.”**
- *The doctrines of Syndicalism may be illustrated by an article introducing it to English readers in the first number of "The Syndicalist Railwayman," September, 1911, from which the following is quoted:— "All Syndicalism, Collectivism, Anarchism aims at abolishing the present economic status and existing private ownership of most things; but while Collectivism would substitute ownership by everybody, and Anarchism ownership by nobody, Syndicalism aims at ownership by Organized Labor. It is thus a purely Trade Union reading of the economic doctrine and the class war preached by Socialism. It vehemently repudiates Parliamentary action on which Collectivism relies; and it is, in this respect, much more closely allied to Anarchism, from which, indeed, it differs in practice only in being more limited in range of action." (Times, Aug. 25, 1911). In truth, so thin is the partition between Syndicalism and Anarchism that the newer and less familiar "ism" has been shrewdly defined as "Organized Anarchy." It has been created by the Trade Unions of France [...]*
- Russell says anarchism and syndicalism are essentially “sympathetic” -- except that anarchism is focused on violent revolution against the state military to abolish the state, whereas syndicalism is focused on achieving a revolution to abolish the state via the mechanism of the general strike, while recognizing that such a strike would likely be met with armed force by the state. He has a great sum-up quote on the overall problem with the anarchist philosophy especially in the context of the huge war machine just witnessed in the world war:  
**“Syndicalists might retort that when the movement is strong enough to win by armed insurrection it will be abundantly strong enough to win by the General Strike. In Labor movements generally, success through violence can hardly be expected except in circumstances where success without violence is attainable.** This argument alone, even if there were no other, would be a very powerful reason against the methods advocated by the Anarchist Congress.”
- A French philosophy with American roots: *“Syndicalism stands for what is known as industrial unionism as opposed to craft unionism. In this respect, as also in the preference of industrial to political methods, it is part of a movement which has spread far beyond France. The distinction between industrial and craft unionism is much dwelt on by Mr. Cole. Craft unionism "unites in a single association those workers who are engaged on a single industrial process, or on processes so nearly akin that any one can do another's work." But "organization may follow the lines, not of the work done, but of the actual structure of industry. All workers working at producing a particular kind of commodity may be organized in a single Union. . . . The basis of organization would be neither the craft to which a man belonged nor the employer under whom he worked, but the service on which he was engaged. This is Industrial Unionism properly so called. **Industrial***



*unionism is a product of America, and from America it has to some extent spread to Great Britain. It is the natural form of fighting organization when the union is regarded as the means of carrying on the class war with a view, not to obtaining this or that minor amelioration, but to a radical revolution in the economic system. This is the point of view adopted by the "Industrial Workers of the World," commonly known as the I. W. W. This organization more or less corresponds in America to what the C. G. T. was in France before the war. The differences between the two are those due to the different economic circumstances of the two countries, but their spirit is closely analogous. The I. W. W. is not united as to the ultimate form which it wishes society to take. There are Socialists, Anarchists and Syndicalists among its members. But it is clear on the immediate practical issue, that the class war is the fundamental reality in the present relations of labor and capital, and that it is by industrial action, especially by the strike, that emancipation must be sought. The I. W. W., like the C. G. T., is not nearly so strong numerically as it is supposed to be by those who fear it. Its influence is based, not upon its numbers, but upon its power of enlisting the sympathies of the workers in moments of crisis."*

- *The labor movement in America has been characterized on both sides by very great violence. Indeed, the Secretary of the C. G. T., Monsieur Jouhaux, recognizes that the C. G. T. is mild in comparison with the I. W. W. "The I. W. W.," he says, "preach a policy of militant action, very necessary in parts of America, which would not do in France."<sup>29</sup> A very interesting account of it, from the point of view of an author who is neither wholly on the side of labor nor wholly on the side of the capitalist, but disinterestedly anxious to find some solution of the social question short of violence and revolution, is the work of Mr. John Graham Brooks, called "American Syndicalism: the I. W. W." (Macmillan, 1913). American labor conditions are very different from those of Europe. In the first place, the power of the trusts is enormous; the concentration of capital has in this respect proceeded more nearly on Marxian lines in America than anywhere else. In the second place, the great influx of foreign labor makes the whole problem quite different from any that arises in Europe. The older skilled workers, largely American born, have long been organized in the American Federation of Labor under Mr. Gompers. These represent an aristocracy of labor. They tend to work with the employers against the great mass of unskilled immigrants, and they cannot be regarded as forming part of anything that could be truly called a labor movement. **"There are," says Mr. Cole, "now in America two working classes, with different standards of life, and both are at present almost impotent in the face of the employers. Nor is it possible for these two classes to unite or to put forward any demands. . . . The American Federation of Labor and the Industrial Workers of the World represent two different principles of combination; but they also represent two different classes of labor."**<sup>30</sup> The I. W. W. stands for industrial unionism, whereas the American Federation of Labor stands for craft unionism. [...] The I. W.*

W., though it has a less definite philosophy than French Syndicalism, is quite equally determined to destroy the capitalist system. As its secretary has said: "There is but one bargain the I. W. W. will make with the employing class—complete surrender of all control of industry to the organized workers."<sup>31</sup> Mr. Haywood, of the Western Federation of Miners, is an out-and-out follower of Marx so far as concerns the class war and the doctrine of surplus value. **But, like all who are in this movement, he attaches more importance to industrial as against political action than do the European followers of Marx. This is no doubt partly explicable by the special circumstances of America, where the recent immigrants are apt to be voteless.** [Side note from Bill is that also in 1912 the Socialist Party of America formally opposed sabotage and removed Bill Haywood from leadership, and almost any syndicalists who were even sort of willing to engage in some electoralism left the party basically en masse.] The fourth convention of the I. W. W. revised a preamble giving the general principles underlying its action. "The working class and the employing class," they say, "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 earth and the machinery of production, and abolish the wage system. . . . Instead of the conservative motto, 'A fair day's wages for a fair day's work,' we must inscribe on our banner the revolutionary watchword, 'Abolition of the wage system.'"<sup>32</sup>

- Numerous strikes have been conducted or encouraged by the I. W. W. and the Western Federation of Miners. These strikes illustrate the class-war in a more bitter and extreme form than is to be found in any other part of the world. Both sides are always ready to resort to violence. The employers have armies of their own and are able to call upon the Militia and even, in a crisis, upon the United States Army. What French Syndicalists say about the State as a capitalist institution is peculiarly true in America. In consequence of the scandals thus arising, the Federal Government appointed a Commission on Industrial Relations, whose Report, issued in 1915, reveals a state of affairs such as it would be difficult to imagine in Great Britain. The report states that "the greatest disorders and most of the outbreaks of violence in connection with industrial disputes arise from the violation of what are considered to be fundamental rights, and from the perversion or subversion of governmental institutions" (p. 146). It mentions, among such perversions, the subservience of the judiciary to the military authorities, the fact that during a labor dispute the life and liberty of every man within the State would seem to be at the mercy of the Governor (p. 72), and the use of State troops in policing strikes (p. 298). At Ludlow (Colorado) in 1914 (April 20) a battle of the militia and the miners took place, in which, as the result of the fire of the militia, a number of women and children were burned to death.<sup>34</sup> **Many other instances of pitched battles could be given, but**

*enough has been said to show the peculiar character of labor disputes in the United States. It may, I fear, be presumed that this character will remain so long as a very large proportion of labor consists of recent immigrants. When these difficulties pass away, as they must sooner or later, labor will more and more find its place in the community, and will tend to feel and inspire less of the bitter hostility which renders the more extreme forms of class war possible. When that time comes, the labor movement in America will probably begin to take on forms similar to those of Europe.*