

## Towards Municipal Socialism in the Copper Country

by Eli Haber

What should the political program of an autonomous socialist collective in a small town like Houghton/Hancock be, and how ought that program be realized? Looking at different movements and political traditions around the world and across history, we see a few competing visions for enacting socialism at the municipal level. While a complete survey of these visions is beyond the scope of this essay, it is worth starting with at least a basic typology.

First off, we ought to define municipal socialism. At risk of stating the obvious, I believe that in order for a movement, theory, or tendency to fall into this category, it must be a) municipal and b) socialist. In countries like the United States that are divided into municipal jurisdictions, socialist organizing unavoidably occurs within a municipality of some sort, but this does not necessarily make it municipal. For instance, campaigns to elect socialists to state or federal office, and organizations that primarily organize around such efforts, do not meet this criterion. Rather, a municipal socialist program must be primarily engaged with building socialism on the local level. As we will see, this can take many forms, and may engage with established municipal governments in different ways and to different degrees.

"Socialism" is, of course, itself a contentious term. For the purposes of this essay, I will say that a movement or tendency is socialist if it has some kind of proletarian class character. This class character may derive from some kind of direct administration by the working class (the sort of municipal socialism for which I will advocate below), but could also include control by elected officials or a vanguard party acting on behalf of the working class. In the last few decades in the United States, municipalities have made attempts to become increasingly democratic, making use of public meetings and referenda under the banner of "public participation." While these efforts are laudable, and in some cases create opportunities to further a municipal socialist agenda, they are not in and of themselves socialist because they do not specifically target, represent, or engage with the working class. (In fact, these institutions tend to be dominated by middle- and owning-class interests unless specific efforts are made to avoid this) [1].

Having defined our term of interest, we can now examine possible visions of a municipal socialist future, and consider how they might be instituted. To start, ought a socialist program be content with installing socialists in positions of power within the existing municipal bureaucracy, or should it rather seek to remake local power structures entirely? In the Upper Midwest (though as far as I know, not in the Copper Country in particular) starting around the turn of the 20th century, the former model was popular among socialists, and enjoyed a degree of success. This movement, most fully fleshed out in the Milwaukee city government, was known derisively as "Sewer Socialism" by some leftist critics who objected to their focus on mere points of policy and public utilities. This term was later taken up as a point of pride by Milwaukee municipal socialists, who pointed to the measurable benefit of their tactics to city residents. Sewer Socialism did indeed enjoy popularity and make undeniably positive changes to Milwaukee and other cities with elected socialist leaders. Though some Sewer Socialists remained in office through the McCarthy era, the Cold War was its death knell and the movement died out by the end of the 1960s. It also failed to reckon with racial issues, and delivered far more material improvements to the white poor than to Black and other minority working-class communities [2].

Today, the Democratic Socialists of America have attempted what could be considered a revival of Sewer Socialism in several large American cities. These efforts have succeeded in influencing

particular policy changes, and in normalizing socialists as players in those cities' politics. However, DSA electoral efforts have also proved vulnerable to co-optation into the liberalism of the Democratic Party, a damning reality for an organization which often seeks to "push Democrats left." It can certainly be debated how much of the shortcomings of the Milwaukee Sewer Socialists and the DSA are inherent to their theoretical and strategic priorities, and how much are contingent on the larger historical context in which the movements exist(ed). But even if the problem is one of context, the fact remains that such electoral movements have experienced mixed success *within that context*, and have in no case proven themselves to be a bridge leading from liberalism to socialism. Given that reality, I believe we might do well to look elsewhere if we hope to affect either true racial justice or self-sustaining working-class rule. To sustain itself, electorally-minded democratic socialism requires a small number of powerful officials to consistently judge the interests of the people they claim to represent, and implement effective policies accordingly. A few poorly-considered or out-of-touch decisions could quickly lead to a loss of public support, as could reactionary propaganda from within or without. In comparison, direct rule by the working class has much more staying power once implemented; the proletariat might make mistakes, but is unlikely to vote itself out of office. Historical systems of autonomous proletarian democracy, from the Paris Commune to Russia's early city and rural Soviets to revolutionary Catalonia, certainly encountered internal problems, but only at gunpoint did they cede power from the hands of workers altogether. The question becomes, then, how to institute such a system.

Three basic, though not mutually-exclusive, visions for implementing local working-class rule can be termed as follows: *entryism*, *dual power*, and *separatism*. Entryism, generally speaking, is the process by which a coordinated group of people joins a larger institution with the goal of influencing it from the inside. In our case, an entryist strategy would be one that seeks to install socialists in local office, not merely to enact progressive policy, but with the intention of instituting a socialist governmental system from the top down. The most famous attempt at local-government entryism is probably that of the Militant tendency of Britain in the 1980s. The Militants, a Trotskyist group, attempted a double program of entryism, first gaining positions of prominence within the Labour Party. Next, they sought to use this position as a springboard off of which to attain political office. This plan came closest to succeeding when they briefly gained control over the Liverpool City Council, but this success was short-lived and the group was ultimately expelled from the Labour Party [3]. As with the more moderate form of socialist electoralism discussed above, local-government entryism on its own has not just limited potential to live up to its radical posturing, but also a longevity problem. That said, it is not an unworthy strategy, so long as it is used in conjunction with bottom-up tactics.

A dual-power strategy of implementing municipal socialism involves the creation of new, democratic proletarian institutions parallel to the existing municipal power structure, in the hopes of eventually supplanting the latter with the former. Murray Bookchin's theory of Libertarian Municipalism presents one theory of dual power in the municipal context. His approach involves the establishment of directly-democratic neighborhood assemblies without the sanction of the city government. Initially, these assemblies might have little in the way of efficacy or legitimacy, but with adequate effort they could prove themselves to respond to working people's needs in a way that the

centralized municipality does not. Over time, Bookchin hopes, these new institutions would empower people to make political decisions for themselves, and gradually replace the city government as the center of local power [4]. Other visions of dual power that could be enacted on a local level include politically-engaged unions and cooperatives [5]. In order to further a municipal-socialist program, these should operate with the intention of democratizing the local economy, potentially even side-by-side with a system of Bookchinian assemblies.

Our final vision for achieving working-class democracy on the municipal level is separatism. This is the tactic that was favored by Finnish socialists in the Copper Country in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Separatism involves establishing entirely new communities, and even municipalities, along socialist lines. Finnish enclaves in the Upper Peninsula were largely built around farming, and featured cooperative economies reminiscent of rural communities back in Finland. Their internal politics were generally participatory and democratic. Following the establishment of the Soviet Union and the Comintern, these enclaves faced a choice: whether or not to use proceeds from their cooperatives to fund the Workers Party of America (later known as Communist Party USA). Some communities voted for, and others against, leading to a split between the "White" and "Red Finns." Almost all Finnish cooperatives all eventually succumbed to internal conflict (and, in the Red cooperatives' case, anticommunism). No Red cooperatives still operate today, and only a small number of White cooperatives remain.

Establishing entire new communities structured around socialism is certainly a tall order, today even more so than in the 1890s. Additionally, history shows that communities like these can become embroiled in their own internal conflicts, to the detriment of both the project of global socialism and the communities' own longevity. Still, this strategy has a few things going for it. First, such communities need not be entire municipalities, at least not at first. Establishing cooperative living arrangements in the Copper Country, even within a single building or in the form of a commune or land project on a small property, could function as a "scale model" preceding larger-scale experiments further down the line. By demonstrating the efficacy of direct democracy and collective ownership on a small scale, activists could familiarize local residents with the skills and principles involved, making their implementation on a larger scale seem less far-fetched. Furthermore, the local heritage of communities organized around these principles, which existed in the region within living memory, could be emphasized in order to sell the concept to the Finnish-American public. If cooperative communities were successful enough, they could even incentivize socialist-minded people from elsewhere to move to the area.

As I stated above, these three strategies are not mutually exclusive. In fact, they have the potential to coexist quite harmoniously. Effective entryism can clear the way for dual-power projects that might otherwise be at odds with local governments, and maintain good relationships with separatist communities. Autonomous separatist projects are themselves a form of dual power, and could function as centers from which other dual-power initiatives could be organized. These principles are intentionally open-ended, and can manifest and combine in endless possible configurations. I do not mean to propose a specific plan or program for socialism in the Copper Country, but merely suggest some visions and guidelines along which

## Homage to Työmies

by Griffin Abbott

In 1903 the American Finnish Workers Publishing Company began publishing *Amerikan Suomalainen Työmies* (The American Finnish Worker) in Worcester, MA. Ten months later, in 1904, the paper moved to Hancock, MI, the epicenter of Finns in the United States. Here in Hancock it was published by the Työmies Publishing Company simply under the name *Työmies* (The Worker).



*Työmies Publishing Company building in Hancock, MI. from the Työmies Society, Seventieth Anniversary Souvenir Journal, pg. 14.*

In their first issue, then editor Victor Kosonen put forward the mission statement for the paper:

*"The American Finnish Työmies shall be the voice of the Finnish working people in America. It will devote what strength it may have to become the most ardent promoter of the spiritual and physical endeavors of the Finnish working people. As much as possible we will foster all progressive endeavors for the happiness and success of our people."*

From the beginning *Työmies* was a Marxist publication, demanding "human dignity and justice for the oppressed peoples," and being an advocate of radical labor action and organizing in the region and throughout the country. The first issue printed in Hancock featured the election platform of Socialist Party presidential candidate Eugene Debs. In 1906 several dozen local Finnish socialist organizations combined together to form the Finnish Socialist Federation, the first language federation of the Socialist Party of America (SPA), making *Työmies* an official organ of the SPA. During the 1913-1914 Copper Strike *Työmies* distributed official updates on the state of the strike to workers and debunked misinformation being propagated by the copper bosses.

For ten years *Työmies* was the preeminent Finnish language socialist publication in the United States. *Työmies* Publishing Company published a short running English newspaper in 1908 under the name *The Wage Slave* as well as several annual Finnish language magazines. In 1914, due to a variety of internal and external pressures, the *Työmies* Publishing Company moved to Superior, WI where it would continue to distribute *Työmies* until 1950 when it merged with the Communist Party USA Finnish language newspaper *Eteenpäin* (Forward) and distributed as *Työmies-Eteenpäin* until 1998.

The Keweenaw Socialists Quarterly seeks to continue the legacy of radical leftist publishing in the Copper Country by distributing this publication advocating for the liberation of working people in the Keweenaw and throughout the world. We echo the sentiments of Victor Kosonen in the mission statement of *Työmies*:

*"Only the working people themselves can improve their miserable conditions. We hope for enthusiastic support from working people not only as readers of our paper but also as its correspondents. Since this paper is to be the working people's own paper, it naturally follows that in writing to us they will freely express their uninhibited 'opinions' without concern for the oppressive politics of our capitalist society."*

We encourage feedback from our readership at:  
keweenawsocialists@gmail.com

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organizers might proceed. Other strategies that I have neglected to mention entirely will doubtless be part of this project as well. What I hope to emphasize, perhaps even above these specific principles, is the need for a *diversity of tactics* and the *fostering of a socialist culture*.

By pursuing multiple strategic avenues simultaneously, we do not merely hedge our bets in the hopes that one strategy is “the successful one.” Rather, a diversity of tactics creates the potential for symbiosis between different aspects of the movement to arise organically. Furthermore, it creates more spaces in which social creativity and radical democracy can take root and demonstrate their effectiveness to the wider community. Rather than a single-minded project, municipal socialism becomes a cultural phenomenon; not a job or chore, but a source of collective joy and empowerment.

In fostering this culture, socialists in the Copper Country must walk a fine line. We must be careful not to alienate or make enemies of community members or institutions (except blatantly fascist ones); rather, maintaining goodwill and mutual benefit with non-socialist aspects of the community is essential. Yet, we must also be as honest about our socialist identity and principles as possible. We do not seek to “infiltrate” or “take over” local institutions to their detriment and our own gain, but rather to democratize and collectivize them for the benefit of everyone. Participating in the local community as open socialists normalizes our presence and beliefs, an essential prerequisite to any practical success achieving local socialism. It also establishes a banner under which we can rally, fostering collective action and identity and safeguarding against co-option into the liberal mainstream. Of course, calling ourselves socialists will lead some people to oppose or hate us no matter what we do, namely hardline reactionary anticommunists and the local bourgeoisie who stand to lose from our program. But by making friends and spreading our message, we have the potential for political success.

I intend for this essay to be the first in a larger series, each one delving into different questions related to the history and future of socialism in the Copper Country. Potential future topics include environmental issues, industry, tourism, land tenure, Land Back, MTU, seasonal and transient residents, and the connection to larger movements. If you enjoyed reading this, please support Bazhiba’igan and stay tuned for future installments.

[1] R. Abers, “Practicing Radical Democracy: Lessons from Brazil,” The Anarchist Library

[2] S. Keith, “Parsing out the Legacy of Sewer Socialism,” The North Star

[3] L. Coates, “40 years since Liverpool took on Thatcher,” International Socialist Alternative

[4] M. Bookchin, “Libertarian Municipalism,” in The Murray Bookchin Reader, J. Biehl, Ed. Montreal, Quebec: Black Rose, 1999

[5] A Short Introduction to Anarchist Communism. London: Anarchist Federation, 2015.

## Pledge of Allegiance

by Jack Jones

### Your Freedom Isn’t Free

Yesterday—  
My country ’tis of thee  
You expected me to be your warrior.

A soldier in your army—  
Of the U.S. government  
Fighting self-determination.

Imperialism’s cause—  
For democratic freedom  
Led by the U.S.

Its military-industrial complex—  
White House  
Democratic or Republican Party  
controlled government.

No matter the servants—  
My generation’s war was waged because  
Ho Chi Minh  
Declared Vietnam one-country and  
communist.

The U.S. feared the USSR—  
The U.S. feared communism  
The U.S. feared communists.

The U.S. demanded gentilism—

Understanding ethnic cleansing  
For a greater United States of America.

Calling it Manifest Destiny—  
The divine calling of the white race  
The inherent superiority of white  
Americans and institutions.

A war of attrition between colonialists  
and indigenous ensured—  
Reservations created in victory for  
American Indians  
Subsistence dependent on the U.S.  
government.

Calling that model sovereignty not  
occupation—  
In the aftermath of the U.S.-American  
Indian Wars  
A genocide of Native Americans was  
inflicted.

Creation of the Bureau of Indian Affairs—  
Tribal American Indian police replacing  
chiefs and warriors  
Working as a part of the U.S. criminal  
justice system.

Collaborators—  
Working with the FBI and State Police  
forces  
U.S. government law enforcement agents.

The Birth of a Nation—  
Institution of slavery North and South  
The U.S. economy built by slaves.

The U.S. Founding Fathers ideolog—  
Third President of the United States of  
America  
Of the continent colonialists called the  
New World.

A Virginia plantation and slave owner—  
Thomas Jefferson  
Reaped the benefits.

As a young white skinned male—  
I was often schooled to become  
Athletic.

Educated—  
Elitist  
Refined.

Patriotic—  
Skilled  
Unquestioning.

Have balls—  
But be smart about it  
Be only amused by what you learn.

You live in the best country in the world—  
Cruel  
Exploitative.

Imperialist—  
Inhuman  
Murderess.

Racist—  
Sexist  
Unequal.

History aside—  
Be non-violent at home  
With wife and children.

Lower your whip arm—  
Be intolerant of the lashes  
The skin you’ve torn.

Man—  
Woman  
Child.

Gook—  
Baby  
Killer.

Blown-up—  
Buried-alive  
Gunned-down.

Identify—  
Annihilate the Viet Cong operative  
CIA Phoenix Program Vietnam.

Murder—  
Assassinate  
Imprison.

Overwhelming force—  
Saturation bombing  
Shock and awe.

Forever—  
Unable to ignore  
Created by U.S. history.

Your duty is to do or die—  
U.S. imperialism has no middle ground  
Rape earth’s mineral resources for profits.

Exploit the planet—  
No matter if sustainable  
As necessary exterminate life.

You expected me to become one of your  
captains—  
I have proven you dead wrong with the  
facts of my life  
I studied history.

I understand what you taught me growing  
up was a lie—  
I understand racism does not allow for  
equality  
I understand the role of the U.S. in world  
affairs.

Your freedom isn’t free

# Solidarity with Palestine

by Griffin Abbott

For many Americans the history of Israel and Palestine started on October 7th, 2023. Footage and headlines announcing an unprovoked attack by Palestinian terrorists against our good friend and ally Israel suddenly appeared everywhere. For people who had not been familiar with the situation this, understandably, came as a shock. But for those of us who are familiar with the history the events on and since October 7th are simply a continuation of the struggle by the Palestinian people for freedom since the 1940s.

Far from an unprovoked attack, what we witnessed on October 7th was a last ditch effort at obtaining freedom for a group which has had every avenue towards peaceful liberation denied to them. For 75 years the State of Israel has been engaged in an illegal campaign of permanent occupation of Palestinian lands and mass murder and displacement of Palestinian people. All throughout this time we have seen numerous peaceful efforts at diplomacy and protest met with overwhelming lethal and destructive force from the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF.) For those of us who have been following this ongoing atrocity the pattern of: Establishing a ceasefire, the IDF violating that ceasefire through attacks on Palestinian civilians or illegal land seizure, militant Palestinian groups engaging in acts of symbolic retaliation, and the State of Israel using that as an excuse to commit mass violence against the Palestinian population, is very familiar.

This incursion into territory, which had previously been illegally occupied by the State of Israel, by Palestinian militants on October 7th (referred to as the Al-Aqsa Flood in reference to an attack on Palestinian worshipers at the Al-Aqsa mosque back in September) is an act of self defense against ethnic cleansing by an illegally occupied people. Any claim to self defense that the State of Israel might make against Palestinian militants ended with the Nakba back in 1948. It is the responsibility of the State of Israel to cease all illegal occupation of and violence towards the Palestinian people before it has any claim to self defense.

I want to be crystal clear, I oppose the killing of civilians and any human rights violations made by Palestinian militants, just as I oppose the killing of civilians and human rights violations committed by the IDF before and since October 7th. I will not, however, equivocate between them. The violence of the oppressed is not comparable to the violence of the oppressor. Furthermore, the reporting on human rights violations during this conflict from western sources has been consistently biased at best and outright fabricated at worst. In the days following October 7th we saw claims of mass civilian execution, mass rape, baby killing, and all manner of other atrocities. Since then we have seen the majority of these claims quietly debunked through the appearance of those reported to be killed, photos and audio clips found to be doctored, and the testimony of Israelis taken prisoner who have since been released. These blatantly fabricated war crimes invalidate the actual suffering as a result of actual war crimes committed during this conflict. Additionally, by exclusive reporting on crimes committed by Palestinian militants during the Al-Aqsa Flood and not the crimes committed on and before October 7th by the IDF media reinforces the narrative of Palestinians as savage animals attacking an innocent Israel. Human rights violations are a grim reality of war, not exclusively committed by brown Muslim Palestinians, and must oppose them on all fronts.

Since October 7th we have seen a military response by the IDF which can only be described as genocidal. The mass targeting of civilian residential buildings, medical buildings, doctors and members of the press with conventional and chemical munitions, such as white phosphorous, by the IDF are clear for all to see and are cut and dried war crimes. At time of writing the IDF has killed nearly 30,000 civilians in Gaza, 12,000 of which are children, and they have bombed every hospital in Gaza. All the while they have continued to receive support from the US, even after the International Court of Justice ordered Israel to cease targeting civilians. I remind the reader that as the occupier

and aggressor the IDF is justified in killing neither civilian nor combatant.

This historic and ongoing campaign by the State of Israel to cleanse the Indigenous population of Palestine to make way for Israeli settlers stems from political Zionism. The insistence by the State of Israel and the US government that condemnation of the State of Israel or Zionism is an act of antisemitism is absurd. In addition to placing the label of antisemite onto thousands of anti-Israel and anti-Zionist Jews in the US and around the world, it asserts that Israel is representative of the Jewish population as a whole and that all Jews are guilty of Israel’s crimes. This is a concerted effort to paint criticism of, and resistance to, the apartheid State of Israel as simply a continuation of the historic oppression of Jewish people and the violence actions taken by the IDF as in the defense of all Jews. Historic and modern Jewish anti-Zionist movements show us that this is not the case and that these claims are actually antisemitic. In fact, since October 7th, we have seen extensive and violent repression of Jewish people inside Israel who oppose the ongoing genocide by the IDF. We’ve also seen violent suppression of anti-Zionist Jewish groups in the US and elsewhere in the world.

The bottom line is that the presence of Jewish people in Palestine is not the issue. Jewish, Muslim, and Christian people have lived together in harmony in Palestine for hundreds of years. Nor is the immigration of Jewish people to Palestine an issue. The issue is the Zionist insistence that Palestine must be for Jewish people only, that any non-Jews living in Israel must be considered second class citizens under an apartheid system, and that the genocide and ethnic cleansing of Palestinians is necessary for the safety of Jewish people.

The solidarity with Palestine we have seen from governments and people around the world is righteous. It has been heartening to see hundreds of thousands of people take to the streets in the US to call for a ceasefire in Gaza and the ending of funding and military aid to Israel. A growing number of Americans are becoming aware of the reality in Palestine with 61% now supporting a ceasefire. In the United Nations the US has now used its veto power to stop three resolutions calling for ceasefire in Gaza while nearly every other country in the world supports it.

With that, I call on every person in the Copper Country who supports freedom for all to stand in solidarity with the people of Palestine and to make your voice heard to your community and to your representatives for as long as the genocide continues.

From the River to the Sea, Palestine will be Free.

## Book Club

### Readings from Books Clubs this Quarter

#### Municipal Socialism - January

Parsing Out the Legacy of Sewer Socialism *by Sean Keith*

Libertarian Municipalism: An Overview *by Murray Bookchin*

Practicing Radical Democracy: Lessons from Brazil *by Rebecca Abers*

#### Revolution in Rojava - February/March

Origins of the PKK and the 'Rojava' Revolution *by Dingane Xaba*

The Main Principles of Democratic Confederation *from Komun Academy*

Rojava: Reality and Rhetoric *by Gilles Dauvé and T.L.*

Syria, Anarchism and Visiting Rojava *by David Graeber*

The Social Contract of the Democratic Autonomous Administration of the North and East Syria Region

# To The Person Sitting In The Darkness

by ozhaawashko-animikinini

*"In the era of the Earth, we will effectively require a language that constantly bores, perforates, and digs like a gimlet, that knows how to become a projectile, a sort of full absolute, of will that ceaselessly gnaws at the real. Its function will not only be to force the locks but also to save life from the disaster lying in wait."*

- Achille Mbembe, Necropolitics

Mark Twain published a similarly-named article for the Anti-Imperialist League in 1901. While Twain's snark in the original article is appreciated, there will be only limited attempts to recreate it here. This article is written from an Indigenous perspective, and to lay on the sarcasm too heavily would make its reading incomprehensible to the intended audience: because if you are a white-bodied person reading this almost one and a quarter centuries after its original publication, the person sitting in the darkness, more than likely, *is you*. So slow down when reading this. Pause. Feel the air as it's drawn down into your lungs. See if you can feel your heartbeat quicken in your chest before you exhale again. Feel the tension in your neck, your shoulders, your face, and breathe deep to try to alleviate it. Repeat this as often as needed while reading what's below to ensure as best you can that you're actually present for it.

## In the Shadow of Colonialism

The person sitting in the darkness thinks colonialism was an event (now over). To imagine colonialism as a set of structures upheld through violence, to imagine that the bedrock of "our" legal system upholds centuries of genocide to this day... that would be unthinkable. And the person sitting in the darkness can think of no shortage of excuses; if pressed, they can turn themselves into a veritable fountain of bullshit. There must always be something, *anything*, they can use to ward off the deeply unsettling feeling that they were raised to live a lie.

Even now their attention is already pulling away from the page.

The person sitting in the darkness thinks that climate change is a modern issue. Maybe it goes as far back as the 70's, when Exxon was first reported to have found empirical links between CO2 emissions and a warming atmosphere. The person sitting in the darkness has no idea how much further back it goes. The stage for global climate change was set the day settlers arrived to this land, a land they gave themselves the *divine right* to carve up and sell to the highest bidders. When nothing—not the land we depend on for life, not plants and animals, not people—were safe from being bought and sold, when settlers held nothing sacred but their right to profit at the expense of other peoples' most basic dignities, this is when the seed of the global climate crisis was planted.

The person sitting in the darkness thinks that mental illnesses are a problem of individual brain chemistry. Never mind the study in 2022 which found "no convincing evidence that depression is caused by low serotonin levels". Never mind that after decades of research and new drugs, suicides in this country have climbed to an all time high. No, mental illness must be a problem of the individual because the person sitting in the darkness cannot imagine the world that was smothered and smuggled away to appease the insatiable appetite of Manifest Destiny.

The person sitting in the darkness would love to believe that what is required for one to "be a racist" is to be outwardly and overtly hateful, that enmity is the primary force holding together whatever remains of white supremacy. But this is far from true. Enmity is there, of course, but it has never been the most widespread social force of white supremacy. No, that honor belongs to apathy. For every Klansman, every cop, every neo-nazi and white nationalist, there have been at least ten people who passively support their violence through inaction. Some uncountable number of these *in-actors* were the audience at lynchings; others have been bystanders to police brutality. A great many have the privilege of sitting at home where their closest proximity to the violence of white supremacy is seeing it covered briefly in the news. To varying degrees, all of these people are culpable of upholding the violence.

The person sitting in the darkness is more than a little frustrated with the state

of things they find themselves in today. How is one supposed to plan a life when the world is both literally and metaphorically on fire? But the person sitting in the darkness may not know, some of their ancestors are smiling! "This is the world we wanted for you! The freedom to pursue building wealth with abandon, the freedom to shut yourself away, to build up walls to protect yourself from the *suffering of Others*. A freedom built on the backs and graves of Black and Indigenous peoples. This is your inheritance!"

## The Healing Journey - Emotional Burden

How are you faring now, person sitting in the darkness? Has this been a difficult read so far, or are you able to numb yourself even more thoroughly than the average white-bodied person? Are you filled with a deep conviction to do something about this mess of a world we've inherited? Or are you deciding on a list of expletives and derogatory phrases to hurl at the author? Maybe you're more "polite" about it, and are choosing to embrace willful denial in reaction to what you're reading. For those of you who are willing to become genuine allies (or capable of one day becoming one), what's needed from you isn't all that different, regardless of where you fall above.

What's needed above all, from those persons stepping out of the darkness, is your resilience, and the understanding that your future is inextricably linked to ours. For many of you, this means rebuilding the empathy that centuries of white supremacy has stolen from you. That starts with recognizing that some of the emotions brought up by this article are ones you've experienced and likely suppressed without even thinking before. It means recognizing the deep uncomfotability you've felt talking about race, racism and Whiteness before, and resolving to change that. For a small minority of others who are conscious of already having run themselves into the ground due to these emotions, it means finding ways to build yourself back from that emotional exhaustion without withdrawing back into the cocoon of Whiteness, where "maintaining your mental health" depends on doing fuck-all to dismantle white supremacy while still reaping its benefits. The only way out is through: you cannot heal by repeating the White Supremacist Stress Response of attacking or avoiding what makes you uncomfortable. No, to step out of the darkness will mean celebrating uncomfotability, because it is necessary for you to learn and grow.

## The Healing Journey - Cathartic Disclosure

Understand that the next step in your healing journey involves cathartic disclosure - talking to another white-bodied person about how growing up in a racist and settler-colonial country has emotionally affected you. As an example of something to talk about, go listen to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s speech from the 1963 March on Washington. It's often referred to as the *I Have a Dream* speech, but searching for this title will pull up mostly short clips of the most famous section. What we want is his full address, which is only about 17 minutes long. Remember to stop and focus on your breathing once in a while; listen to the optimism and electricity in his voice. And then cry, with the knowledge that he was shot down less than five years later, and that the struggle we find ourselves in today really isn't all that different from the one he was rallying against 60 years ago. Pay attention to the physical sensations in your body from grieving the loss of Dr. King, from grieving the life you could have had if centuries of racists and white bystanders hadn't created an environment where we have to be exploited just to survive. Talking about these feelings with another white-bodied person is not an intellectual exercise, it is visceral. Do you feel the muscles in your face or chest tighten? A twisting pit in your stomach? Or is there a hot flush of anger? If so, it is up to you to ensure that this anger is directed where it belongs: at not only every settler-colonizer and slaveholder in our history, but also every white in-actor that stood by and let it happen, that continues to let it happen.

## Lifelong Healing and Community Against Colonialism

Enmity and apathy; remember these adversaries. They are the lifeblood of white supremacy. Too often the anger of white-bodied people is redirected at Black and Indigenous people for resisting

oppression. Even now, countless millions are spent manufacturing consent for the continued genocide of Palestinians. You do not have to agree with all of the ideology or tactics of Hamas to be able to see that Palestinians have every right to resist Israeli settler-colonialism, and that they have a right to do so with violent means. Nobody can pull your head out of your own ass for you. It's a private affair, which is best done collectively. Combating the twin adversaries of enmity and apathy will require you to go on your own healing journey, taking as many other white-bodied people with you as you can. And once you have a community of people committed to antiracism, your focus needs to grow from not only lifting up the most disadvantaged people here within our own borders, but to figuring out how to dismantle the systems of oppression and extraction that have grown onto a global stage.

The instrumentalization of all life: this is what the settler-colonial machine has always sought and depended on. Tearing this machinery apart will require tactics you may not expect. For those white-bodied people stepping out of the darkness, it will mean (to those still in the darkness) becoming a traitor to your race. It will require a radical empathy - the ability to listen to the most fucked up things a racist can say, and to hear the *pain* behind their words. Perhaps the most difficult part, as this article set out to do, will be to help those people sitting in the darkness learn to soothe a ragged nervous system in ways that don't result in returning to the sidelines. Look into somatic (body) therapy for help with this, but not just for others. Start with yourself. It's surely something that's even more effective with professional help, but the changes and breakthroughs you can accomplish just practicing a little at home will be surprising. The person sitting in the darkness is only still there because they're stuck in cycles of trauma. Somatic therapy does what no amount of talking or thinking alone can: teaching our body to move in new ways to help process and grow around our traumas.

Racial justice will also require you to be willing to continually learn and heal, checking in with yourself for likely the rest of your life. On what grounds, exactly, do you plan to base your notion of success? On making money? Supporting your family with benefits? Buying a big house? A new car? Having a little extra on top to gamble on the stock market? If actively dismantling white supremacy and settler colonialism aren't in that list of things to get done, I ask you to reevaluate your shit. The time has long since come and passed for white-bodied people to continue standing by and waiting for racism to sort itself out. You no longer get to call yourself innocent while being a bystander in this system, because to be a bystander makes you a critical part of the infrastructure that holds it in place. Two of the most important things you could be doing instead of sitting on your thumbs are ensuring that Native Land gets returned to Native Hands (LAND BACK), and devoting your life to helping as many other white-bodied people join in that pursuit as you can. Beyond that, find ways to ensure that BIPOC are financially supported for helping educate you and others, and if you can't find the infrastructure to get that job done locally, you and your community should be building it. Other important projects include learning how and when to get out of the way of BIPOC, and developing new tools other than complaining that anti-white sentiments are "racist". You're going to need to be willing to be wrong, a lot. And it's up to you and all of your relations to learn how to get back up and keep moving each time it happens.

*"It's useless to wait - for a breakthrough, for the revolution, the nuclear apocalypse or a social movement. To go on waiting is madness. The catastrophe is not coming, it is here. We are already situated within the collapse of civilization. It is within this reality that we must choose sides."*

- The Invisible Committee

Oh, and if you've managed to read to the end of this article and still don't support Palestinian liberation and the end of the Israeli occupation, you are invited to eat my ass like groceries.

# A Mocking Song

by Jack Jones

**Day 358 of the Russia-Ukraine war:** [1] The politics of propaganda is a slick business, read<sup>1</sup> many sources and in-between-the-lines Understand the why of the Russia-Ukraine war in real time.

U.S. foreign policy establishment—Pentagon, North Atlantic Treaty Organization—beating a familiar anti-Russian drum: Russian oligarchs a.k.a. Russian gangster capitalists, the Russian Orthodox Church—post the era of Perestroika and Mikhail Gorbachev, the eighth and final General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union—U.S. conservative evangelicals, ultra-nationalist Americans, America First neo-fascist politicians, far-right militia group leaders, all have publicly prayed for and saluted Putin and Russia.

Russia is taking a page from NATO's playbook and trying to replace U.S. hegemony in Europe: The people of Ukraine are the victims of Russian protectionism and Western conspiratorial provocation. The pawns in the game are uprooted young Russian soldiers, flesh and blood Ukrainians. Men, women, and children—living, fighting, bleeding, dying—in the trenches, rubble of destroyed Ukrainian cities reminiscent of World War II. Lost lives, both Nations' dreams for security and prosperity dissipate in this war; instead killing each other on the field of battle in a war that will not help the world achieve economic and social justice—peace and respect—even for its own humanity. Ukraine war ravaged—Russia's point made—NATO creates war.

Imagine Russia allying itself with Mexico in a formal economic and military alliance that places advanced offensive weapon systems on the U.S. southern border: The U.S. would go to war against Mexico to prevent that from happening. The Cuban Missile Crisis of October 1962 should serve as an historic example and precedent setting.

The 1917 Russian Revolution made Ukraine and Crimea a part of a federated Union of Soviet Socialist Republics: Vladimir Ilyich Putin has denounced Vladimir Ilyich Lenin and renounced Marxism-Leninism and his February 24, 2022 invasion of Ukraine looks predictable: A would be 21st century Russian Tsar reestablishing Russia as a world-power and broker. A super-power enough to be a thorn in the West's agenda of expansion into what was formally Eastern-Europe before the implosion and demise of the Soviet Union in 1991.

The cost is the Russia-Ukraine war: Making billions of U.S. dollars in profits for the Military Industrial Complex—the Masters of War—while touching bleeding hearts in the West; bleeding white lives, resources, and refugees command's the attention of mainstream racist white media while the long standing wars' in Palestine and Yemen attracts no such Western media attention.

Ask yourself why the Russia-Ukraine war has happened: Why cannot the West demilitarize and resolve this Russia-Ukraine border war through a negotiated settlement? Allow the regions of Ukraine to decide for themselves, through referendum, which country—Ukraine or Russia—they wish to belong to.

**Day 462 of the Russia-Ukraine war:** *The politics of propaganda is a slick business, read many sources and in-between-the-lines.* Understand why the Biden Administration is holding the U.S. population hostage over debt limit negotiations along with far right-wing Freedom Caucus Republicans with Social Security, Medicare, and minimal Safety Net Programs hanging in the balance.

Debt ceiling negotiations: The Biden administration has given U.S. domestic resources towards Ukraine's war, NATO's war, against Russia. Why do you think that President Joe Biden and colleagues, both Democratic and Republican—and the Atlantic alliance—want war, in particular this war going strong instead of helping humankind build an equitable and sustainable Earth? In the last century when has the U.S. not been involved in an overseas conflict or war? Not since the end of the Vietnam War in 1975—due to a decade of internal U.S. opposition to that war and civil unrest over inequality and racism—until the invasion of Granada in 1983. And other than World War II those wars were *solely* in the national interests of U.S. imperialism.

CONTINUED ON BACK

U.S. colonialism: The U.S. waged war and took land first from American Indians, then imported African slave laborers to build the U.S. economy, then made war on Mexico in 1846 following the annexation of Texas. Is the U.S. planning to give back American Indian land—land taken illegally, in violation of U.S. Senate ratified treaties—or pay reparations to African-American descendants of U.S. slaves? Why is it that Taiwan is not looked at the same as Crimea? Why cannot the U.S. demilitarize, and the Russia-Ukraine war resolved through referendum?

Ukraine support tracker:[2] Since the war began, the Biden administration and the U.S. Congress have directed more than \$75 billion in assistance to Ukraine which includes humanitarian, financial, but mainly military support, according to the Kiel Institute for the World Economy, a German research institute. And that aid does not include the recent announcement that the Biden administration has approved supplying Ukraine with an undisclosed number of advanced American-made F-16 fighter jets and that the Ukrainian pilots will be trained by NATO.

Beating a predictable drum of anti-Western rhetoric: call this the definition of παρωδία.

A mocking-song.

To be continued...

[1] Cook, Larne, 2023, February 16, Brussels. From tents to tanks; a big year for NATO. Associated Press. "All that's missing, it might seem, is the boots of allied troops on the ground. Indeed, the public in Europe and North America could be excused for believing that their taxes funding the world's most powerful security organization are being spent in a war with Russia. [...] In the year since the Russians invaded, the U.S. has provided more than \$27 billion in military help to Ukraine. Two senior defense officials estimated this week that other allies have stumped up more than \$19 billion worth, with over \$1 billion each from Britain, Canada, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, and Poland. [...] That's on top of the tens of billions the West is sending to keep Ukraine's battered economy afloat."

[2] Ukraine Support Tracker, Kiel Institute for the World Economy

# Union Scabs

by Oscar Ameringer, reprinted from the March 20, 1908 issue of *The Wage Slave*, Hancock, MI

There are three kinds of scabs: the professional, the amateur and the union scab.

The professional scab is usually a high-paid, high-skilled worker in the employ of strikebreaking and detective agencies. His position is that of a petty officer's in the regular scab army.

The amateur scab brigade is composed of bums, riff-raff, slum dwellers, rubes, tramps, imbeciles, college students and other undesirable citizens.

The last, and by far the most important class is the union scab.

Professional scabs are few and efficient. Amateur scabs are plentiful and deficient, and union scabs both numerous and capable.

The professional scab knows what he is doing, does it well and for the sake of the long green only.

The amateur scab, posing as a free born American citizen, who scorns to be fettered by union rules and regulations, gets much glory (?), little pay and when the strike is over he is given an honorable discharge in the region where Darwin searched for the missing link.

The union scab receives less pay than the professional scab, works better than the amateur scab and don't know that he is a scab.

He will take a pattern from a scab pattern-maker, cast it in a union mold, hand the casting to as lousy a scab as ever walked in shoe leather, and then proudly produce a paid-up union card in testimony of his unionism. Way down in his heart he seems to have a lurking suspicion that there is something not altogether right in his action, and it is characteristic of the union man who cooperates with scabs that he is ever ready to flash a union card in the face of innocent bystanders.

He don't know that the rose under any other name is just as fragrant; he don't know that calling a cat a canary won't make the feline warble, and he don't know that helping to run the shop while other workers bend all their energies in the opposite direction is scabbing. He relies on the name and seeks refuge behind a little pasteboard card.

When a strike is declared it becomes the chief duty of the organization to effect a complete shutdown of the plant. For that purpose warnings are mailed, or wired, to other places, to prevent working men from moving to the afflicted city.

Pickets are stationed around the plant or factory, or harbor, to stop workers from taking the places of the strikers. Amateur scabs are coaxed, persuaded, or bullied away from the seat of the strike. Persuasion having no effect

on the professional strikebreaker, he is sometimes treated with a brickbat shower. Shut down that plant, shut it down completely, is the watchword of the striker.

Now while all these things are going on and men are stopped in ones and twos, a steady stream of dinner pail parades pours through the factory gate. Why are they not molested? Oh, they're union men, belonging to a different craft than the one on strike. Instead of brickbats and insults it's "Hello, John; hello, Jim; howdy, Jack," and other expressions of goodfellowship.

You see, this is a carriage factory, and it's only the Amalgamated Association of Brimstone and Emery Polishers that are striking, the Brotherhood of Oil Rag Wipers, the Fraternal Society of White Lead Daubers, the Undivided Sons of Varnish Spreaders, the Benevolent Compilation of Wood Work Gluers, the Iron Benders' Sick and Death Benefit Union, the Oakdale Lodge of Coal Shovelers, the Martha Washington Lodge of Ash Wheelers, the Amalgamated Brotherhood of Oilers, the Engineers' Protective Lodge, the Stationary Firemen, the Portable Firemen, the F.O.O.L., the A.S.S.E.S. Societies have nothing to do with the Amalgamated Association of Brimstone and Emery Polishers.

At the next regular meeting of those societies, ringing resolutions endorsing the strike of the Amalgamated Association of Brimstone and Emery Polishers will be passed. Moral support is pledged and five dollars' worth of tickets are purchased for the dance given by the Ladies' Volunteer and Auxiliary Chore for the Benefit of the Amalgamated Association of Brimstone and Emery Polishers.

The whole thing is like beating a man's brains out and then handing him a headache tablet.

During a very bitterly fought molders' strike in a northern city the writer noticed one of the prettiest illustrations of the workings of plain scabbing and union scabbing.

A dense mass of strikers and sympathizers had assembled in from of the factory awaiting the exit of the strikebreakers. Out they came, scabs and unionists in one dark mass. Stones, rotten eggs and other missiles began to fly, when one of the strikebreakers leaped on a store box and shouted frantically:

"Stop it, stop it, for C---'s sake, stop it; you are hitting more unionists than scabs; you can't tell the difference."

That's it. Wherever scabs and union men work harmoniously in the strikebreaking industry all hell can't tell the difference.

To the murky conception of a union scab, scabbing is only wrong when practiced by a non-union man. To him the union card is a kind of scab permit that guarantees him immunity from insults, brickbats and rotten eggs. After having instructed a green bunch of amateur scabs in the art of brimstone and emery polishing all day, he meets a striking brother in the evening and forthwith demonstrates his unionism by setting up the drinks for the latter.

Union scabbing is the legitimate offspring of craft organization. It is begotten by ignorance, born of imbecility and nourished by infamy.

My dear brother, I am sorry to be under contract to hang you, but I know it will please you to hear that the scaffold is built by union carpenters, the rope bears the label, and here is my card.

This is union scabbing.

## Rediscovery

The Theme for this Quarter

The Keweenaw Peninsula has a long history of radical labor action, socialist organizing, and publishing leftist literature. Much of this history, however, has faded in the minds of residents of the Copper Country. As the once booming industry of the area withdrew to carve out markets elsewhere so too did the radical organizing which was focused around that industry as leftist organizing waned nationwide.

Now, as the radical labor movement and leftist organizing are once again on the rise in this country, we can look back and rediscover the radical history of the Keweenaw and be guided by it as we continue to work for liberation from capitalism.

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Keweenaw Socialists Quarterly is an anti-capitalist quarterly publication bringing academic literature, meaningful discussion, visual art, poetry, and prose to the people of the Keweenaw. This publication seeks to advocate for the liberation of workers, indigenous peoples, and all other minorities in the Keweenaw peninsula and throughout the world.

Keweenaw Socialists Quarterly is published and distributed by Bazhiba'igan Publishing, an official organ of the Keweenaw Socialists. If you're interested in contributing to a future issue or have any questions please reach out to [keweenawsocialists@gmail.com](mailto:keweenawsocialists@gmail.com).

# bazhibaigan publishing

## Landlord Blackout Poetry

by Johnathan Hill

Hello,

██████████ signed a lease on a 130 year old property ██████████

██████████

██████████

██████████ I had to take what I could get. That revealed ██████████

██████████ a whole home

██████████ with time. I asked ██████████

██████████ if this is something that could wait until summer. They recommended doing it now

██████████ Among ██████████ mold in the bathroom, mice

infestation in the kitchen, ██████████

██████████

██████████

██████████'m sure ██████████

██████████

██████████

██████████ a safe environment. I want to prevent

a ██████████ displace ██████████ ment ██████████. I have done

everything possible to ██████████ make this ██████████ comfortable ██████████

██████████

██████████

██████████ I will return ██████████

██████████.

As far as the day to day ██████████

██████████, days of the week and hours ██████████

I will ██████████ not ██████████

██████████ make it work

██████████

regards