



We walk, we hold,
for Fellow Workers,
we do not cross

The Line

September - October | Volume 1 | Issue 3

FREE



OFFICIAL TENT CITIES COME TO OLYMPIA

by x384380

In mid July, the Olympia City Council declared a state of emergency regarding the recent growth of the houseless population in the city, or rather, the growing visibility of houseless people. There are indeed more houseless people in Thurston County than there were in 2017. Roughly 828 according to a census commissioned by the city, almost three hundred more than the year before.

However, city government, a business interest group known as Olympia Downtown Alliance, and The Olympian repeatedly choose to frame this increase as a crisis of optics: "Some downtown merchants who sit in the bull's-eye of a growing homeless presence in the city's commercial core are getting flighty over the possibility of seeing more activity catering to the destitute in what is also a business zone . . . our city needs a commercially vibrant downtown that attracts shoppers as well as new residents to the hundreds of new dwelling units that have been coming on line."

In this article entitled, "Homeless Tent Camps Belong Outside City Core," The Olympian worries that the creation of two permanent houseless encampments that the city plans to move forward with in the coming months, each to have space for 40 individuals, will frighten away the yuppies that the newer luxury condominiums were created for.

It doesn't take much effort to see that these high end "dwelling units" and the houseless people who supposedly threaten the interests of downtown landlords and businesspeople are dialectically entangled beyond the relation The Olympian imagines them to share.

Elsewhere, the same newspaper recognizes an aspect of the actual relationship between houselessness and the encroachment of luxury condos in Olympia when it quotes a city employee who states, "I think it's fair to say homelessness grew . . . with West Coast rent increases." Houseless people are not a threat to landlords, they are the victims of landlords.

What we're seeing in Olympia is an example of how class warfare waged from above is a self-perpetuating battle instead of one that can be decisively put to rest: coast-wide rent increases begets houselessness and the urgent need on the side of the capitalist class to conceal houselessness if it wants to create the kind of sanitized environment that encourages the well off to move in and start shopping.

With the advent of large scale, centralized production in factories, bosses faced a similar dilemma; they were suddenly able to hoard more capital than they could possibly spend, but they had also placed a large number of workers who shared the same lot in daily contact with another, thus making industrial organizing not only possible but necessary for survival. Capitalism, because it is based on this manner of class war, cannot operate without breeding these crises.

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The picture on page 6 and the poem on the back page is by fellow worker John B.

The Line was started in May of 2018 by the Olympia General Membership Branch of the Industrial Workers of the World to be a publication for the working class. The IWW has a very long tradition of newspapers and journalism dating all the way back to the union's inception in 1905. In the first half of the 20th century there were over 100 different newspapers in Bulgarian, Croatian, Czech, Flemish, French, German, Hungarian, Italian, Lithuanian, Norwegian, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian, Spanish, Swedish, Yiddish, and, of course, English.

Today there are newsletters in branches all over the U.S. and other parts of the world as well. While we know that more and more people are getting their news and info online (you can check out our website as well, www.OlympiaIWW.org) we still feel there is something to be said for a well curated newsletter. As a reminder we do all this as volunteers, in fact our entire union is made up of workers who give their time! So we hope you like it and we hope that you find some things you didn't know in these pages.

If you have any comments, questions, or an idea for something that you would like to see in *The Line*, let us know!

In Solidarity,

Dylan B. - Editor

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IWW General Membership Branch Chartered in Tacoma

Workers in Tacoma, Washington have organized and chartered a General Membership Branch (GMB) with the Industrial Workers of the World.

We here at *The Line* congratulate and stand in solidarity with our fellow workers in Tacoma. Workers and members of the IWW have been meeting with each other and organizing for around two years.

You may reach the Tacoma GMB by email: TacomaIWW@riseup.net and you can find them on Facebook www.facebook.com/TacomaIWW/

Stardust Family United Keeps Fighting and Winning

A few years ago workers at Ellen's Stardust Diner, located in Manhattan, NY, organized and began standing up for their rights and the conditions of their employment. Stardust Family United (SFU), a branch of the Industrial Workers of the World, represents the interests of all front and back of house staff.

In a major victory for the singing servers, their employer has reached an agreement with their solidarity union, SFU, and the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB). By entering into the settlement agreement, the company will narrowly avoid a trial on some 19 violations of the National Labor Relations Act, including 31 retaliatory firings.

Under the terms of the agreement, all 31 employees terminated over the last year in retaliation for union activity have been offered immediate and full reinstatement, and will receive back pay from the time they were fired. Of the terminated employees, 13 will immediately return to work.

In addition, the restaurant is required to mail official notices to all employees, informing them that the company will not violate fed-

eral law by engaging in certain unlawful practices such as surveilling and threatening workers, interfering with their use of social media, and discouraging them from taking action to improve working conditions.

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Charges Dropped Against Last of J20 Defendants

All charges have been dropped by federal prosecutors against the 38 remaining defendants who had been charged with rioting during the Disrupt J20 protests on Inauguration Day. Thus ends the almost 18-month ordeal of 234 protesters who were threatened with as much as 60 years in prison for their alleged roles in the protests.

Several IWW members were among those who were charged. Indeed membership in the IWW was used as evidence of conspiracy. This harkens back to the days of criminal syndicate laws and the Palmer Raids.

Burgerville Workers Fight and Win Co-Worker's Job Back

[Report from Burgerville Workers Union. July 12th.] Burgerville is a fast food restaurant with locations around Portland and SW Washington.

Meet Brookelynn, a longtime Burgerville worker at the Gladstone store and a strong union supporter. She worked at Burgerville for two years before leaving the job in December for family reasons. Brookelynn reapplied shortly afterwards, much to everyone's excitement, and it's even Burgerville's policy to rehire workers who reapply within three months of quitting.

Because of how strong a union supporter she is, however, Burgerville refused to rehire her, violating their own policy. The General Manager, Michael Dawson, hired at least ten other people while Brookelynn kept reapplying, discriminating against

her over and over again for her union membership.

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GCI Workers in Seattle Organize

Workers at Grassroots Campaigns, Inc. (GCI) in Seattle have organized with the Industrial Workers of the World. Since going public in February, they have faced countless abuses.

Never the less, workers there have managed to expand the public presence of the IWW campaign to New Orleans and wider, while building a network of support and solidarity across the country.

A number of small victories so far, such as a \$2/hour raise in New Orleans and the resignation of several abusive corporate-installed managers in Seattle, have fueled this rise. GCI has not made the task of organizing easy, however.

For a week-and-a-half in June, the company illegally locked out its Seattle office in retaliation for a union action that demanded better training and onboarding for new hires. The lockout was broken through nationwide direct action and legal threats, but since reopening the company has waged an all-out war on its workers.

Workers around the country have been faced with direct sabotage by the company and numerous illegal unilateral changes to working conditions. To top it all off, three workers in different cities were illegally fired in July amidst a cloud of blatant lies and deceptions from the company.

With this latest attack, GCI workers across the country were forced to fight back. On Friday, July 27th, Seattle IU650 members kicked things off with a Strike against the company's unfair labor practices. In seven other cities, actions took place aimed at building the union's shop-floor presence and forcing the company to do right.

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 <p>The Line Official Publication of the Olympia IWW.</p>	<p>Editorial Committee Dylan B. x384380 Barbara M. Roger R. John B.</p>	<p>Olympia IWW Branch Secretary Alejandro C.</p> <hr/> <p>Press Date: September 1st, 2018</p>	<p>Published Bi-Monthly. Articles not so designated do not reflect the IWW's official position.</p>
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Some Restaurants Agree to End "No Poach"

Seven major restaurant chains, including Arby's, Carl's Jr., McDonald's and Jimmy John's, agreed to drop a hiring practice that critics say may be keeping tens of thousands of fast-food workers locked in low-wage jobs.

"The New York Times" exposed that several fast-food chains have clauses in their franchise contracts called "no poach" clauses. These clauses prevent one restaurant from hiring workers employed at another of the same restaurants. In other words, a worker from McDonald's could not get another job at a different McDonald's.

Many, if not most, workers were unaware of these "no poach" clauses because they were between the franchise owner and the company. Not between the worker and the owner.

In addition to stripping the clauses from existing franchise contracts in Washington, the seven chains have also vowed not to enforce them nationwide. The clauses cannot be included in new and renewed contracts either.

While this stops the seven restaurants from continuing this practice, there are still others. And more importantly, these kinds of actions on behalf of the owners and companies demonstrate their disregard for workers in their pursuit of more profit.

The only effect of these "no poach" clauses is to keep wages down and lock them there. It makes it more difficult for a worker to use their training and experience to get a better paying job or more hours at a second job.

On a related note, McDonald's Corp settled a wage-theft class action lawsuit two years ago for \$3.75 million. They had been forcing workers to work off the clock, not paying them overtime, and taking hours off their time cards.

This was apparently the first time that the corporation had settled legal claims by a group of US workers at one of its franchises. In relation to this, in May of this year the Supreme Court ruled that employers can force workers to use individual arbitration instead of class-action lawsuits to press legal claims. This decision applies directly to wage-and-hour claims.

Interpreters United

Workers with Interpreters United, Local 1671, have been fighting a recent change with the Health Care Authority (HCA). The interpreters are freelance and get their jobs through a vendor that HCA contracts with. That vendor recently changed from Language Link to Universal Language Services (ULS).

In the change over the workers contend that ULS has not met its end of the bargain by not being fully setup in time. The problem with this is that it has cost the interpreters jobs and money. Some that we talked to said they had hardly worked at all in July.

HCA and ULS seemed to have nothing but excuses and said that it would all get worked out. But nothing is being said about these lost jobs and pay. The interpreters want to go back to using the previous vendor Language Link.

These workers subcontract with ULS (the contractor) which administers for HCA. It seems to us that they should cut out the middleman and form a workers co-op which would take the place of the contractor.

Workers at Amazon strike

Amazon workers in Spain and Germany went on strike in the beginning of July ahead of "Amazon Prime Day." This is a very profitable day of sales for the company which highlights the extreme levels of profit that the company brings in while pushing their workers to the limit and over.

"The message is clear - while the online giant gets rich, it is saving money on the health of its workers," Verdi (German United Services Trade Union) spokeswoman Stefnie Nutzenberger said in a statement on the union's website.

Amazon and its billionaire founder, Jeff Bezos, have a long history of thwarting unionization efforts in the US. Bezos also owns the Washington Post, where this past July unionized workers approved a new contract with the company after 14 months of tense negotiations.

Amazon, which is headquartered in Seattle, held the city hostage in May over a tax that would have gone towards fighting homelessness. Amazon decided over night to halt construction on a new downtown Seattle tower. This created fear that the company might leave Seattle if the head tax passed.

Amazon had been involved in negotiations with the city on the tax and had signaled that it would not oppose it. After the tax had passed Amazon came out against it and gave \$25,000 to No Tax On Jobs, a committee created explicitly to put a referendum on the ballot to repeal the head tax.

A broad campaign of big corporations and the Seattle Chamber of Commerce fought back against the tax, and the city ultimately appealed it. We must realize that not only could these companies, afford to pay this tax, which was going to fight homelessness, but they get their profits off the backs of working people.

The people that work in their warehouses here in Washington make little more than minimum wage, with no benefits. The turn over rate is very high and it is not uncommon for people to get hurt as they work harder and faster to fulfill and ship orders.

One thing this fight over the tax, and these strikes, show is that as workers we have far more power at the point of production, that is, where we work. The corporations will always have more money to spend on ad campaigns to sway people and politicians, but when we shut down their warehouses, shops, etc. and we stand together, there is little that the likes of Amazon can do.



Just Housing Rolling Refuse Removal RRR

Just Housing is a local grassroots group advocating for and supporting the rights, dignity, and basic human needs of unhoused Olympians. Just Housing consists of both housed and unhoused organizers and their advocacy is centered on the voices and needs of those who are currently houseless in our community.

Every Sunday they organize people to go to different houseless camps around Olympia to help with removing garbage in one of many of their efforts to work with and help the houseless community.

Clean up volunteers: meet at the Westside Food Co-op (921 Rogers St. NW) at 12pm. After an orientation on safety guidelines and settling on an action plan for the day, volunteers will carpool to encampments for garbage cleanup.

If you have a truck you can help with dump runs: dump fees can be either donated or reimbursed. Truck owners needn't lift bags, and can meet volunteers at the encampments after 1pm, if unavailable earlier. Please call their cleanup coordinator at 845-988-6394 to get directions to the day's cleanup site.

Please dress appropriately (long pants, boots, work gloves). If you do not have gloves of your own, Just Housing can provide them.

Anti Fascists Confront Nazis in Portland

by x384380

On August 4th, anti-fascists, union members, immigrant rights groups, wobblers, and others converged in Portland, OR to repel an open gathering of right wing organizations. A4, as the rally has been named, was initially organized by Patriot Prayer and its leader, Joey Gibson, who's vague, incoherent platform serves to unite many different tendencies.

Attending were the Proud Boys (an alt-right group of self-professed "western chauvinists"), Identity Evropa (straightforwardly neo-nazi), and PDX Stormers (straightforwardly white supremacist).

Counter-protesters outnumbered the fascists ten to one and there were few clashes between the two groups, unlike the June 30th anti-deportation rally in Portland when many of the same right-wingers chose to defend the state terror agency known as ICE.

At A4, however, another political organization arrived on the scene and attacked those opposing hatred and bigotry: the Portland Police Department. They made their allegiances known by protecting neo-nazis and white supremacists and assaulting the counter protest with less lethal weapons, hitting two and nearly murdering one anti-fascist by shooting flashbang grenades directly into the crowd.

Following the second Unite the Right rally on August 12th, another poorly attended, heavily protested right-wing gathering in Washington, DC, neo-nazi and face-punch recipient Richard Spencer declared that the event's miniscule turnout signaled "the end of an era" for the alt-right, having complained months earlier that his events "weren't fun anymore." Clearly, anti-fascism works, running off local fascists works, and doxxing the fascists in your community works. Ask the local Proud Boy about it.

City Staff Close Artesian Well Park

In their continued war with the houseless and poor community city staff closed the Artesian Well Park in downtown Olympia on August 24th.

They cite threats against personnel working at the park. The city staff also list "strategies" they have implemented in the past - we assume against the poor and houseless - which include, but is not limited to:

An increase in staffing, adding fencing and gates, installing six cameras, and hiring security staff.

Is it a park or prison? Since when do we have "strategies" to deal with the population in such ways? It would seem that threats would be a logical outcome of such controlling measures.

We would remind the city staff and the people of Olympia that the staff are not elected. Yet Steve Hall - the City Manger and semi-unofficial King of Olympia - continues

to make pronouncements that negativity impact our lives. We encourage the poor, working class, and houseless to stand together and not be taken in by the double speak of these people who presume to be our managers.

People Have Organized to Protect Cats

As you may have heard there is a psycho murdering cats in Olympia and possibly other areas in the region. It is hard for us to even think about let alone write about.

However, in light of this people on the West Side of Olympia, including some wobblers, have autonomously organized several different patrols. Since their organization, towards the beginning of August, these patrols have gone out nightly.

One of the patrols has encountered several suspicious events including someone spotting a man trying to lure three different cats. But as of this writing there has been no further development. As of this writing the reward for the cat killer is \$20,000.

Private Security Doing Nightly Sweeps

Pacific Coast Security has been hired by multiple businesses downtown to patrol and sweep people who are hanging out or sleeping in the doorways and areas around the businesses.

This of course does nothing to help the houseless crisis that the city has been experiencing for a long time. This is a further expression of the idea "not in my back yard."

Hiring private security to sweep people from where they are sleeping because of a perceived negative effect on your business shows a distortion of priorities. Placing money over human life and existence.

This action was organized by the Olympia Downtown Association (ODA). Which is a dues paying organization of business owners in the downtown area.

Many businesses are a part of such organizations from chambers of commerce and "small business" associations, to the National Restaurant Association, which vigorously fights raising the minimum wage and supports anti-worker laws.

Calendar of Events and Trainings

Sept. 1st

I.W.W. Orientation
3pm to 5pm
Olympia Center
Learn about the
Union and how you
can get involved!

See OlympiaIWW.org/events
for all events and meetings.

Sept. 19th

POTLUCK

I.W.W. Potluck and
Social
5:30pm
Priest Point Park

Sept. 21st

Radical Movie Night
6pm
Mixx96
"Malcolm X" for
free!

Oct. 19th

Radical Movie Night
6pm
Mixx96
"A Place Called
Chiapas" for free!

WHAT TIME IS IT?



Sept. 22nd & 23rd

Organizers Training 101
8am - 5pm both days
115 Legion SW
This is our two day inten-
sive training for learning
the skills and tools to help
you organize your work-
place. Please see our web-
site for more info and how
to register.

SFU Wins Back Jobs

[Continued from page 2]

For the singing servers, this has been a long road. The union initially went public in late summer of 2016. Weeks after making their efforts known to management, 16 active union members were fired. Over the fall and winter, the workers continued to engage in direct workplace action to improve health and safety conditions, as well as pursue other demands. Another mass firing in January 2017 brought the total of terminated singers up to 31.

Despite this, Stardust Family United remained active, both inside and outside the restaurant. "I'm thrilled and proud to know our struggle and vigilance over the last year has paid off," says returning worker Matthew Patterson. "I'm looking forward to returning and making a positive impact inside the diner."

Check out their website for more information.
<http://www.stardustfamilyunited.com/>

Burgerville Workers Union

[Continued from page 2]

Meanwhile, Burgerville has spent thousands and thousands of dollars on ads claiming to value their employees and that they do not intimidate or retaliate against workers for being part of the union.

After months of fighting, Brookelynn and the union finally won her job back! She returned to work today and everyone is thrilled. Furthermore, the National Labor Relations Board found merit in Brookelynn's charges of anti-union discrimination, which means Burgerville will likely face legal consequences for their union busting activity.

We're excited about the ongoing contract negotiations, but this just goes to show how important it is to keep fighting outside the bargaining room as well.

Welcome back, Brookelynn! When we fight, we win!

<http://www.burgervilleworker-union.org/>

GCI Workers

[Continued from page 2]

IU650 members are united in demanding the rehiring of all those impacted by the company's illegal union busting, improvements to the company's harsh quota system, and protections in the case of bad weather, street harassment, and other issues that might force canvassers to drop shifts. In addition, they are working to fight unique local challenges ranging from lockouts to laundry.

Tent Cities

[Continued from the front page]

Furthermore, the bosses of the industrial era and the landlords and business owners of Olympia share a set of techniques to manage, on the one hand, houseless people, and on the other hand, industrial workers. You can find the police wherever mass strike action takes place and you can find them enforcing the criminalization of houseless people. Olympia Downtown Alliance has even hired a private security firm, Pacific Coast Security, to make sure the harassment never stops.

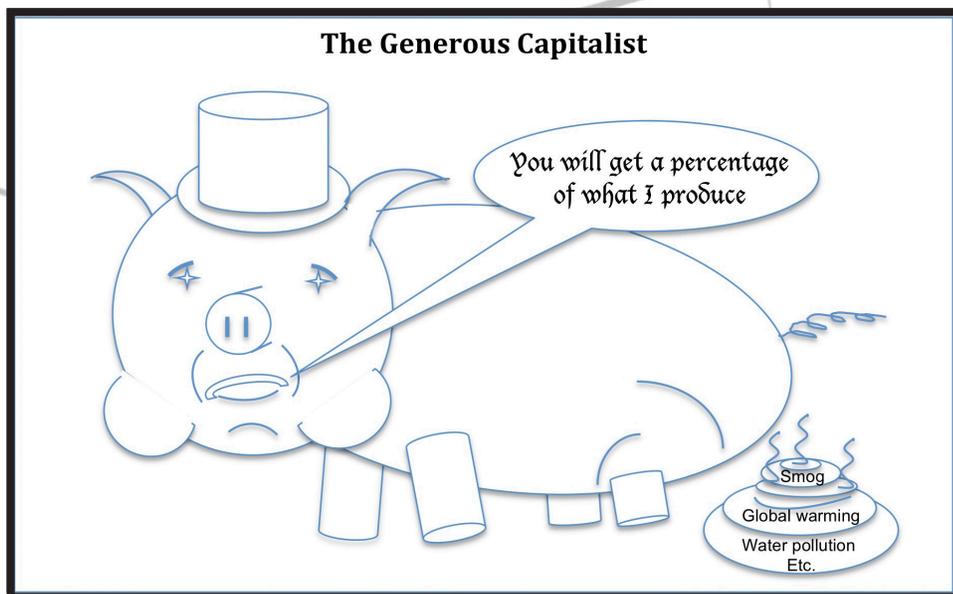
At least there is some hope for eighty individuals who will benefit from the new permanent camps the city plans to create along with the Low

and tiny house cities in Seattle. Sadly, however, we don't need to do that much digging to unearth some dirt on the way LIHI runs other tent cities and its transitional housing program. While The Olympian wrings its hands over "activity catering to the destitute . . . in a business zone," there's nothing stopping LIHI from transforming transitional housing and tent cities into "business zones."

Unfortunately, it is difficult to find what most would refer to as a "reliable source" on the kind of organization LIHI really is. As one tenant of the LIHI-owned building in Olympia put it when I asked about their thoughts on the non-profit, "they're just terrible . . . but when you come here you come here off the streets," which makes it much less likely that tenants will speak up about unjust practices.

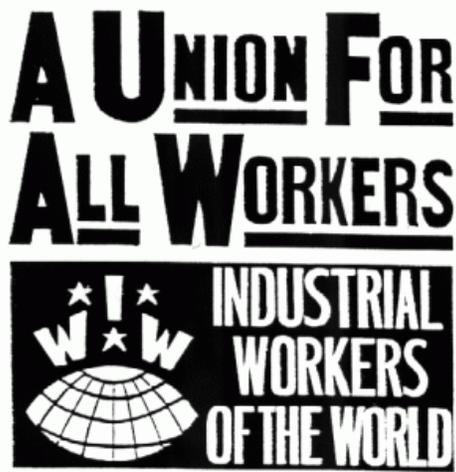
A Facebook group called Victims of Seattle LIHI, however, calls the organization slumlords and accuses them of profiting off of the houseless and systematically evicting people without just cause from apartments originally built with the aid of the Low Income Housing Tax Credit which extends credit to developers with the caveat that they operate with rent caps in place, thereby subsidizing the creation of low income housing.

These evictions, which are usually issued shortly before the lease on one of their apartment ends, not only allow LIHI to steal deposits but



Income Housing Institute, a Seattle-based non profit that owns over forty properties around the Puget Sound (including three in Thurston County, with one located in downtown Olympia) and manages tent

are also illegal since they are never accompanied by the "good cause" that the LIHTC program requires. **>Tent Cities**, Continued on back page



Why Join the I.W.W.?

It does not take long to figure out that workers and their employers do not have the same interests. Workers want shorter hours, higher pay, and better benefits.

We want our work to be less boring, less dangerous, and less destructive to the environment. We want more control over how we produce goods and provide services. We want meaningful work that contributes to our communities and world.

Our employers, in contrast, want us to work longer, harder, faster, and cheaper. They want fewer safety and environmental regulations and they demand absolute control over all decisions, work schedules, speech, and actions in the workplace.

The easiest way to stand up for each other in our workplaces and communities and the easiest way to improve our working conditions is to join a union.

That is why employers fight so hard, and spend so much money, to keep unions out of their workplaces. Workers with unions generally have higher pay and job security, better benefits, and fewer scheduling problems. More pay equals fewer hours at work and more hours for enjoying the good things in life.

Nothing will change until we organize. Joining the IWW is easy. Just give us a call. The sooner you do, the sooner things will improve and the sooner we, and not the bosses, will enjoy the good things in life.

OlympiaIWW.org IWW.org

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[Contuned from page 6]

A Seattle Solidarity Network campaign based on a LIHI deposit theft from 2012 also suggests this is not a new practice. It's not just the deposit thefts, either. LIHI and an affiliated group, SHARE, have been accused of "misusing public money, illegally withholding bus tickets, and forcing the homeless into activism" over the course of their management of different tent cities in Seattle, according to a Seattle Times article entitled, "Homeless group's tough tactics draw criticism." You've got to wonder how non-profit the organization is when you hear that one of the tenants of the LIHI owned building in Olympia pays \$600 in rent, only \$40 of which was covered

Remember me not,
My true loved one,
For in my land,
There is no sun.

Forced I to war,
No cause did cry,
Bewitched my blood,
To see friends die.

The flowers scream,
I know not why,
From what I see,
I fight they die.

Remember me not,
My true loved one,
For I am lost,
To love my gun.

by the Department of Housing and Urban Development, or HUD. Another said LIHI refused to do repairs around the building and were not receptive to complaints regarding the way the building is managed.

Though LIHI files its taxes as a non-profit, they nevertheless operate with the same motives and structures that all landlords share, only their tenants have even less power or social capital than your average renter. They own and control the spaces they rent, not the tenants. As the new permanent tent cities take shape in Olympia, we need to remember LIHI's history, listen to the occupants, and be prepared to act in solidarity in any way we can.

Preamble to the IWW Consitution

The working class and the employing class have nothing in common. There can be no peace so long as hunger and want are found among millions of the working people and the few, who make up the employing class, have all the good things of life.

Between these two classes a struggle must go on until the workers of the world organize as a class, take possession of the means of production, abolish the wage system, and live in harmony with the earth.

We find that the centering of the management of industries into fewer and fewer hands makes the trade unions unable to cope with the evergrowing power of the employing class.

The trade unions foster a state of affairs which allows one set of workers to be pitted against another set of workers in the same industry, thereby helping defeat one another in wage wars. Moreover, the trade unions aid the employing class to mislead the workers into the belief that the working class have interests in common with their employers.

These conditions can be changed and the interest of the working class upheld only by an organization formed in such a way that all its members in any one industry, or in all industries if necessary, cease work whenever a strike or lockout is on in any department thereof, thus making an injury to one an injury to all.

Instead of the conservative motto, "A fair day's wage for a fair day's work," we must inscribe on our banner the revolutionary watchword, "Abolition of the wage system."

It is the historic mission of the working class to do away with capitalism. The army of production must be organized, not only for everyday struggle with capitalists, but also to carry on production when capitalism shall have been overthrown. By organizing industrially we are forming the structure of the new society within the shell of the old.