

STRIKES SET TO 'SWING' MUSIC

'Sit-Down' Strikers Have Their Fun, but Strict Self-Discipline Is Reminder That Objective Is Serious Business, After All.



Card games help to while away the time for sit-down strikers in Cleveland, while others in a Flint, Mich., plant are shown leaning out the windows to greet relatives and friends. Below: Workers protest dismissal from WPA theater project in New York City by calling a sit-down strike. Inset: John L. Lewis, leader of the Committee for Industrial Organization.

By WILLIAM C. UTLEY

MAHATMA GHANDI may have started the sit-down strike. Maybe it was the miners of Hungary or Wales. Or again, it might have been French factory workers. But it took Americans to set it to "swing" music.

America's new strike technique, as fostered by impresarios John L. Lewis of the Committee for Industrial Organization and Homer Martin of the United Automobile Workers of America, may be of grim purpose and persistent determination, but it is also light in spirit.

Take a typical scene about a striking automobile body plant. Parked along the curbs and in the street outside the plant are scores of cars containing sympathizers with the workers or simply the idly curious. Have they come in the hope of seeing some excitement—a riot, perhaps? No. They have come to listen to one of the nightly concerts played by the strikers' orchestra. And as the closing strains of "Pennies From Heaven" or "It's De-Lovely" float out the windows of the shut-down plant, there is a chorus of honking applause from the audience.

This is not an indication that the strikers are a bunch of loafers, bent on having a good time. It is actually one of the applications of "big business" methods to striking. If organized recreation makes happier industrial workers, so it makes strikers happier—and more effective. Concerts are a part of an efficiently-administered program of discipline and education which is a far cry from the conduct of strikes of the past.

Long Known in Mines.

It is also a far cry from the earliest "sit-down" strikes, which are mis-named, for the strikers do not actually sit down very much. They only remain inside the plant in which they worked, guarding the property against invasion by "scabs" until their demands are met.

Perhaps John L. Lewis, long known in mine labor circles, adapted this idea from a practice of miners over many years past. A miner who was not being given enough timber to "shore" his place would squat and refuse to load any coal until the timber arrived. The superintendent usually lost no time in getting it to him.

The first stay-in or sit-down strike to gain wide attention was that in the mines of Pecs, Hungary, in 1934. Miners down in the shafts refused to come up and even threatened to commit suicide en masse if their working conditions and pay were not improved. A year later the same idea was adopted by workers in collieries of Wales.

The sit-down strike became so widely applied in France last year it produced a crisis which was relieved only when the government, in a great hurry, passed a new collective bargaining measure and several other labor laws.

Strikers "Protect" Property.

In the United States it first received wide attention when employees of art and theater projects of the WPA "stayed-in" but refused to work until their demands were met.

Workers claim that when they strike inside a plant, they actually protect the property. But while they are there, the company cannot put anyone else on their jobs. Company officials claim this is trespassing and illegal.

First act of the union when a sit-down strike is called is to choose groups of pickets and captains, to

police the plant and grounds. It is of considerable advantage if the plant is located on the street, and not set far back from the gate, for the success of the strike depends upon the workers' control of all entrances and exits. The way must be kept open for despatches of food and other supplies to come in. If you can say an army marches on its stomach, you can say a modern strike sits down on its stomach. If a plant has windows which open to the street, supplies may be passed in without the necessity of entering through one of the gates.

Women Are Chaperoned.

Strike leaders realize that to keep the sympathy of the public they must remain orderly. Mobs with an axe to grind do not remain orderly for long unless their minds are occupied, unless there are means provided for expending the natural energy their bodies create. For that reason to every striker is assigned some duty. He may be given a certain area to keep clean, a certain "watch" to patrol or a "shift" on messenger duty.

If there are women among the strikers they may be charged with information desks, with preparing food, mending clothing, or even running impromptu beauty parlors to keep up the appearance of their colleagues. Chaperonage is usually of the strictest order, and there have been cases in which the regular plant matrons stayed in with the strikers to administer this important job.

The information clerks are often as not the liaison between the strikers and their families or friends outside. Wives often call at windows to see their husbands. Often ruses are employed in attempts to get the men out and home for a few hours; guards are told that Sam Jones' wife has had a baby, that Art Johnson's son is stricken with pneumonia. Pickets soon learn to investigate such claims thoroughly before giving a striker a pass-out check.

Strikers are not nearly so uncomfortable as might be imagined. In the automobile plants there are usually enough rear seat cushions at hand to provide plenty of soft beds, while floor coverings make good blankets.

Wives Cook the Meals.

Barrels, kegs and boxes serve for chairs and are fairly comfortable, at that. On steel tables the strikers play such games as checkers, monopoly and poker. Washers can serve as either checkers or chips; a checkerboard can easily be fashioned from a piece of cardboard, and where can you find a few hundred men without a deck of cards among them?

Food usually is cooked in a hall near the plant. Sometimes a chef from a restaurant in the town supervises the work. The wives and sweethearts of the strikers do most of the actual cooking, and pack the many tubs and baskets which official union messengers transport

through the gates or hoist up to the windows.

There is no liquor for anyone. For, while there is no objection to the strikers' having a good time during their siege, the objective is too precious to risk what even one lone striker might do if he were "not himself."

Discipline in some plants approaches military standards. The rules, self-imposed, are rigidly obeyed; the few infractions are punished swiftly and severely. The old fraternity house method is used in the majority of cases; the non-conformist is made to "assume the angle" over a table or box, after which his fellows vigorously apply barrel staves upon the strategic spot. The offense is seldom repeated.

The orderly conduct of the strikers is aptly illustrated by one plant.

Men Do Own Washings.

A bugle call arouses the men from their slumbers at 7 a. m. Some take advantage of the shower baths provided in the plant; everybody washes well, behind the ears and all. Forty-five minutes later in the company cafeteria the breakfast sent in by the women folks is served—fruit, cereal, milk, coffee, rolls and doughnuts. For lunch there will be stew, dessert and coffee. At night meat, potatoes, vegetables, coffee and dessert.

When they have finished breakfast, the men patrol their assignments. The plant is kept almost as clean as it is when there is no strike on. They do their own laundry in some cases; the conveyor lines resemble back yards on wash day. Some of the men, of course, send their laundry home.

Time is not allowed to drag. When the work is done the strikers may, if they wish, attend classes which are conducted under the auspices of the union officials. Here they may be instructed in public speaking, economics, physical culture and, to be sure, labor problems.

Propaganda With Entertainment.

There are generally two important meetings every day. The strikers' executive committee meets and discusses the progress of the movement at noon; later on there is a general meeting at which all the strikers are advised as to what is going on.

After dinner at night there is invariably community entertainment, such as might be found in a boys' camp. Radios provide music for community singing part of the time. In addition, a not-half-bad orchestra can usually be rounded up from the ranks of the strikers.

In the regular employees' meetings and "parties" when there is no strike on, the company seldom fails to include propaganda designed to promote happier relations between employer and employee. And in the parties of the strikers there is plenty of propaganda supplied by the leaders to keep up enthusiasm for the strike. Mixed in with the "swing" music and hill-billy songs is an occasional paraphrase of a familiar ballad—a new lyric reminding the strikers of the advantages to be gained if they will continue to be persistently patient.

Perhaps the importance of the sit-down strike as a weapon of labor depends upon the very discipline which has been developed and maintained. It is not hard to see that an idle mob, banded constantly together for days, might get out of hand, act rashly and by some act of violence defeat its own ends.

what Irvin S. Cobb thinks about:

Making 1937 A Safe Year.

SANTA MONICA, CALIF.—This time last year we were all dedicating ourselves to a crusading campaign to make 1936 a safer year for motorists.

We were going to cut down the volume of traffic disasters, going to reduce the appalling mortality toll which had marked the preceding year.

So what? Well, here's what. The end of 1936 showed an all-time top for deaths on the public highways—roughly 37,450, or approximately 450 more than in 1935.

So now we'll pliously resolve, all over again, to do something about this hideous destroyer which kills by the thousands and maims by the hundreds of thousands and makes our fatalities and casualties in the world war seem, by comparison, puny.

And what will come of the renewed agitation? The National Safety Council will wage a gallant, hopeless fight, various local organizations and civic bodies will do what they can, newspapers will rail and statesmen will deplore—and the ghastly record of slaughter will keep right on mounting.

The Value of "Experts"

I HEARD a supposed expert advising a director, bound for Africa to shoot a big game picture, that practically everything about his kit was wrong except possibly his rear collar button.

It reminded me of the pampered millionaire's son who was heading for the arctic circle. He called in a veteran of polar expeditions and told about his outfit. All went well until he started describing his parka.

"It's fine," he said, "made of seal-skin and the hood all fringed with wolverine and—"

"One moment," said the professional, "is the hairy surface of the pelt worn next to your body?"

"No," said the youth. "The fur is outside, of course."

"All wrong," pronounced the critic. "Thermal demonstration has proved that to conserve the bodily heat the hide should be turned so the fur is used as a lining and the smooth or naked side is exposed, thus cutting the wind."

The youngster burst out laughing. "Have I said something to excite your mirth?" demanded the specialist.

"Oh, not at all," said the amateur. "I was just thinking what a darned fool a buffalo is."

Americans in England

RENEWED excitement has been aroused in the British isles by the discovery that yet another member of the royal family—this time it's the young duke of Kent—not only shows a regrettable tendency to enjoy himself as any normal natural, healthy youngster might, but, what is even more distressing, has lately been seen in the company of an American woman.

Oh, these pestiferous Yankee women! In spite of all that can be done, it's almost certain some of them will witness the coronation, and several thousands of them will break their girlish necks trying to do so.

Militarizing the C. C. C.

REPRESENTATIVE NICHOLS of Oklahoma is trying to accomplish something which should have been done long ago. He's preparing a bill to make military reserve units of the C. C. C. boys, which would mean discipline and morale for thousands of young Americans and, if needed, would provide the nucleus of a trained citizen-army.

Seems to me there is every reason why congress should enact the legislation, not as a warlike gesture, but as a peace-time move for national defense and national protection. But watch the professional pacifists fight it—professional pacifists being well-meaning folks who believe in Santa Claus, turning the other cheek, and the beautiful, if slightly impractical theory, that a white rabbit will be perfectly safe among a pack of greedy coyotes.

Actors Trading Careers.

HALF-WAY across the continent, actors who have succeeded in Hollywood and are headed east, hoping to break into the legitimate stage on Broadway, pass actors who, having succeeded on Broadway, are heading west, hoping to break into the movies in Hollywood. It is a two-way traffic which grows heavier all the time.

Thus we see how human hopes are uplifted and how curious a thing is human nature, not to mention human ambition. Also it's good for railroad travel.

But if the jaybirds suddenly decided to trade their nests for woodpecker holes and the woodpeckers fell in heartily with the idea, we superior creatures could laugh at feathered friends for being such idiots.

IRVIN S. COBB.

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STAR DUST

Movie • Radio

By VIRGINIA VALE

ONE of the trade magazines of the motion picture industry startled the workers in the business recently by publishing a report on the popularity of the screen stars. For months, people had been told that Robert Taylor had climbed to the very top; that he got more fan mail than Clark Gable did, that his name above a theater was magic, because it drew so many paying customers; that, in short, Mr. Taylor was tops.

But—according to this report, Clark Gable is the screen's most popular actor!

Last year Shirley Temple held that position. This year she is second. Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers as a team come third, Robert Taylor fourth, and William Powell fifth.

In case you're interested, the other leading stars are listed in this order: Myrna Loy, Claudette Colbert, Norma Shearer, Gary Cooper, Fredric March, Jeanette MacDonald and Nelson Eddy as a team, Lionel Barrymore.

It is nice to report that James Cagney's new picture, "Great Guy," is one of his best.

It had to be. He made it for Grand National you know, a new organization, and if it hadn't turned out well we might have had no more Cagney on the screen for a while. After all his troubles with studios it is pleasant to know that he is once more on the big time and that his comeback is really a triumph.



James Cagney

Have you listened to that new radio program, "Do You Want to Be an Actor?" If you haven't, do! It's very entertaining. People who are in the audience are given roles in scenes that are done before the microphone, and after each performance the best woman performer and the best man are given movie tests by Warner Brothers. It's quite possible that some of our future stars will be developed in this way.

If the radio programs given by "Myrt and Marge" for so long were among your favorites, you'll be glad to know that a new series done by that popular couple has started. It's a family affair, for "Myrt's" son is now on the program, and "Marge" is her daughter. The son, George Damerel, used to go to the University of Southern California, but he left college to tour with his mother and sister when they went on the stage. Looks as if "Myrt" had built up a pretty good business for the family by writing those sketches, doesn't it?

Grace Moore has had to abandon her career on the concert stage and on the air, temporarily, in order to take a much needed rest. She has been working hard in pictures—in fact, she has turned into a real trouper, and the temperamental that used to cause so much trouble is well under control.

In "Stowaway" you'll see Shirley Temple doing imitations of Eddie Cantor and Al Jolson and doing them well. The funny thing about it is that the child star never has seen either of them; just worked the imitations up from what she was told about the two gentlemen's work.

Hollywood is still shocked over the suicide of Ross Alexander, although his friends knew that he had never ceased to grieve over the death by suicide of his first wife, Aleta Freile, a little more than a year before. It was said that she killed herself because, coming to Hollywood from the New York stage, she could not seem to get ahead in pictures. Young Alexander was doing very well with his career, and his second wife, Anne Nagel, is one of the screen's prettiest young actresses.

ODDS AND ENDS . . . Remember "The Shiek," with Valentino? Nino Martini will appear in a picture based on a similar story . . . Jean Harlow and Robert Taylor will appear together in "The Man in Possession" . . . It isn't supposed to be Joan Fontaine is Olivia de Havilland's sister, but everybody knows it—and the fact was announced here in "Star Dust" months ago, when she signed with Jesse Lasky . . . Once again "Madame X" is to be screened, this time with Gladys George in the stellar role.

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Household Questions

The corduroy clothes so popular with young people will launder easily, if washed in mild soap and plenty of warm water. Rinse well, shake and hang up to dry.

Salted peanuts, freshened by heating in oven, are very good served with chocolate sauce or vanilla ice cream. The young people like this combination especially well.

Stains may be removed from a marble mantelpiece in the following way: First of all, wash with soap and water, then wipe dry, and apply a paste made of finely powdered bathbrick or carbonate of soda, and lemon juice. Rub this well into the discolored parts and rinse off in clean, cold water.

For white sauce, melt two and a half tablespoons of butter in saucepan. Add five and a half tablespoons flour mixed with one-third teaspoon salt and few grains pepper. Add one cup scalded milk, stirring constantly. Bring to boiling point and beat until smooth and glossy.

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Quickest Way to Ease a COLD



Take 2 Bayer Aspirin tablets with a full glass of water.

If throat is sore also, gargle with 3 Bayer tablets in 1/2 glass of water.

The modern way to ease a cold is this: Two Bayer Aspirin tablets the moment you feel a cold coming on. Repeat, if necessary, in two hours. If you also have a sore throat as a result of the cold, dissolve 3 Bayer tablets in 1/2 glass of water and gargle with this twice. The Bayer Aspirin you take internally will act to combat fever, aches, pains which usually accompany a cold. The gargle will provide almost instant relief from soreness and rawness of your throat. Your doctor, we feel sure, will approve this modern way. Ask your druggist for genuine Bayer Aspirin by its full name—not by the name "aspirin" alone.



15¢ FOR A DOZEN 2 FULL DOZEN FOR 25¢ FULLY DOZEN 1c a Tablet

Kindness Wears Well Kindness wears well, looks well and will be remembered long after the prism of politeness or the complexion of courtesy has faded away.—Van Amburgh.

CHECK THAT COUGH BEFORE IT GETS WORSE

Check it before it gets you down. Check it before others, maybe the children, catch it. Check it with FOLEY'S HONEY & TAR. This double-acting compound gives quick relief and speeds recovery. Soothes raw, irritated tissues; quickly allays tickling, hacking, spoo-fy on retching makes for a cough-free sleep. No habit-forming, stomach-upsetting drugs. Ideal for children, too. Don't let that cough die to a cold hang on! For quick relief and speeded recovery insist on FOLEY'S HONEY & TAR.

Relieving Distress To pity distress is but human; to relieve it is Godlike.—Horace Mann.

When You Feel Sluggish (Constipated)

Take a dose or two of Black-Draught. Feel fresh for a good day's work. Work seems easier, life pleasanter, when you are really well—free from the bad feelings and dullness often attending constipation. For nearly a century, Black-Draught has helped to bring prompt, refreshing relief from constipation. Thousands of men and women rely on it.

BLACK-DRAUGHT A GOOD LAXATIVE

ARE YOU Miserable?

Mrs. Raymond Thomas of 1408 Clarkson St., Baltimore, Md., said: "I was weak after one of my babies came. I had no appetite, very little strength, and I was all run down. Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription was recommended to me as a tonic. I had a real appetite after its use. Blood strength and felt fine." New size, tablets 50c. Liquid \$1.00 & \$1.25. Buy now of your near-by druggist. Consult Dr. Pierce's Clinic, Buffalo, N. Y.