

Given the complexity of the social democratic attitudes towards anti-Semitism and Jewish matters in general, Fischer's conclusion is too far-reaching: "To the extent that Social Democrats shared this dream [of a future without Jews] they also share the responsibility for rendering German society susceptible to Nazi anti-Semitism and preparing the ideological seedbed from which the Shoah could grow" (p. 228). Such a judgment disregards the fact that, when the SPD was outlawed and persecuted by the Nazis in 1933, German Jews lost their most important source of support.

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COLE, PETER. *Wobblies on the Waterfront. Interracial Unionism in Progressive-Era Philadelphia.* [The Working Class in American History.] University of Illinois Press, Urbana [etc.] 2007. x, 227 pp. \$40.00; doi:10.1017/S0020859009990137

Wobblies on the Waterfront is an important book; one that implicitly challenges the myth that the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW, popularly known as the Wobblies) were intrinsically incapable of building strong, lasting unions, whether because of their revolutionary orientation or as a result of a perceived preference for mass strikes and other dramatic action over the difficult work of organizing and representing workers on the job.

While there have probably been more books written about the IWW than about any other union (at least on a per-member basis), there was until recently remarkably little historical work on the union's activities on the job. The IWW's Marine Transport Workers Local 8 represented Philadelphia longshoremen from 1913 through 1922, when the union's job control was broken by a united front of employers, police, the federal government and the International Longshoremen's Association (ILA, which shipped in hundreds of scabs from New York City) in a long lock-out and strike that crushed a fight to win the eight-hour day. Although the IWW continued organizing on the Philadelphia waterfront for many years to follow (something Cole discusses only briefly), and waged job actions as late as 1936, it was never again able to assert the job control that transformed working conditions and race relations on the waterfront between 1913 and 1922. Indeed, many of the gains won by the Wobblies, such as integrated work crews and an end to the shape-up, were surrendered once Philadelphia came under ILA contract, and would not be restored for decades.

Philadelphia Wobblies faced many challenges in establishing and maintaining job control. As Cole notes, some were predictable – employers were loath to deal with any union, let alone one which encouraged its members to use direct-action tactics to resolve grievances and improve job conditions. Police ruthlessly cracked down on union organizers and pickets. Employers repeatedly tried to crush the union, as they had defeated earlier efforts to organize the city's longshoremen. Philadelphia had a long history of racial animosity that had left its waterfront workers weak and divided. The federal government jailed key IWW leaders, infiltrated the union, and helped recruit and house scabs during the 1922 dispute that ended IWW job control. But the union was also undermined by repeated clashes with the larger IWW in the postwar era. Philadelphia's charter was twice suspended in 1920 – once for allegedly loading munitions to the Wrangel forces trying to overthrow the Bolshevik government (as Cole notes, evidence for this is scant), and a second time for charging a \$25 initiation fee, violating the IWW's policy of low initiation fees and universal transfer between its branches.

Before the war, the IWW tried to use Philadelphia as a base to reach out to other maritime workers; after the war many of the officials who filled in for the hundreds of jailed and deported Wobblies seemed more interested in ideological purity than in defending the IWW's largest industrial branch as it struggled to survive. "The national organization should have done all in its power to ensure the continued health and allegiance of Local 8", Cole argues (p. 147). However, "at a time when the IWW should have been attempting to resuscitate its ailing organization by building on still vital branches such as Local 8, the IWW suspended Local 8 twice on debatable grounds". Whether this was due to communist intrigue, as African-American IWW organizer Ben Fletcher believed, or to the short-sighted and narrow vision of union officials who stepped up during the wartime repression, Cole places much of the responsibility for the IWW's decline on internal factors.

Wobblies on the Waterfront is based on extensive archival research, including the surviving records of the US Shipping Board and War Department (both of which assigned undercover operatives to spy on the union), oral histories of Philadelphia longshoremen, and a myriad of other sources documenting working conditions on the waterfront and the city's troubled race relations, as well as the history of Local 8 and the broader IWW. Cole stresses the role of the IWW's commitment to working-class solidarity in enabling the union to overcome the deep racial divide on the Philadelphia waterfront and to forge a union that for many years not only survived ILA raids and employer attempts to crush it, but won some of the best working conditions in the country, and for a time transformed race relations among the city's longshoremen. Cole persuasively argues that Local 8 was "the most powerful mixed-race union of its era, [...] completely interracial and egalitarian" (p. 3). The interplay of race and immigration is one of the key factors Cole follows in this richly nuanced work, which also focuses upon the tension between the IWW's commitment to overthrowing capitalism and its efforts to win better conditions, and the ways these two goals could reinforce each other in the union's day-to-day work. The IWW's ideology, Cole concludes, was indispensable to the Local 8's success: "These unskilled and diverse workers put the ideology of radical egalitarianism into action. [...] Local 8 demonstrates what can be accomplished when workers overcome racial and ethnic differences. It also is an excellent case study of the myriad, powerful forces that can defeat such efforts" (p. 176).

However, Cole sometimes discusses Local 8 as if it were an exception to the IWW's general approach to unionism, whether in terms of its longevity (the union had active textile locals for decades, even if most historians treat its strikes as spontaneous eruptions; organizing among agricultural, coal, construction and timber workers was similarly sustained into the 1930s; and the IWW's Cleveland metal machine shop organizing maintained job control for sixteen years, though involving only hundreds of workers, rather than the thousands in Philadelphia), or attention to issues of race. "The IWW claimed to know that signing up African American workers was vital", Cole states (p. 106), "but only in Philadelphia was much effort expended". This is belied by the IWW's earlier and brutally suppressed integrated campaign to organize Southern timber workers, efforts by Philadelphia longshoremen to spread their union to Southern ports, and the union's employment of African-American organizers and repeated publication of literature specifically aimed at them. To be sure, the IWW reached out to African Americans (and other minorities) as workers first and foremost, arguing that their interests were ultimately identical to those of all workers, but from its inception the IWW rejected race prejudice, campaigned against it in its press and on the job, and actively

reached out to minority workers. The respect the IWW won from African-American organizations was not based simply on its record in Philadelphia; rather, as Cole demonstrates in the bulk of this admirable work, Philadelphia Wobblies simply put into practice the IWW's longstanding commitment to racial equality.

Wobblies on the Waterfront offers a richly nuanced treatment of the conditions that both enabled the IWW to establish and maintain job control on the Philadelphia waterfront, and which ultimately led to its loss. Among the factors that weakened IWW job control were the migration of large numbers of Southern African-American workers to Philadelphia in the years leading up to the 1922 strike who lacked the experience of working together with white workers to build the union; increased segregation and racial tension in Philadelphia including the formation of strong Klan and Garveyite movements; a general economic slowdown that meant that scabs would be available; a strongly united group of employers, many national and multinational operators; the city, employers, ILA, and federal government's determination to crush the IWW despite the heavy short-term cost; and the union's weakened condition as a result of the war-era repression and postwar internal conflicts. Indeed, when the 1922 dispute began many key organizers were still in prison and the strike was led by less experienced officials who ignored rank-and-file reluctance to strike and refused to call union meetings once it became clear that support was faltering. (One of those officials later brought the ILA to the port, running a "union" that while racially integrated, unlike many ILA locals, was notorious for its corruption and tolerated job conditions reminiscent of those the IWW had successfully organized to overcome.)

The 1922 debacle followed an unsuccessful 1920 strike in which workers failed to win their objectives but returned to work united. But in 1922 the union was badly damaged; employers had succeeded in splitting workers along racial lines (while many African-American longshoremen stayed with the strike through the end, and remained in the IWW afterwards, many others crossed picket lines) and the IWW lost its vital control of the hiring process and of the job. The 1922 defeat was catastrophic. Employers reinstated the 50-hour working week, dramatically increased the volume of cargo longshoremen were required to haul, restored the hated shape-up, and established nearly unfettered control of the waterfront work force.

The IWW built a substantial membership among maritime workers, operating a network of union halls around the world to support its seafaring members through the 1940s and beyond. The union waged major longshore strikes on the Great Lakes (and in Argentina and Chile) in the 1910s, and in Portland, Oregon, and San Pedro, California, in the 1920s. This history of sustained on-the-job organization has been neglected despite the proliferation of historical work on the IWW; Peter Cole's *Wobblies on the Waterfront* helps fill this gap, and is an important contribution to labor history in its own right.

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RITA, CHIN. *The Guest Worker Question in Postwar Germany*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge [etc.] 2007. xi, 281 pp. £40.00; \$75.00; doi:10.1017/S0020859009990149

Rita Chin's study on the guest-worker question in postwar Germany analyses the complex and conflicted way in which the Federal Republic of Germany came to terms with