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## AN ECONOMICS READING LIST FOR TRADE UNIONISTS

Many of our readers have asked us for a list of books and periodicals that explain economics in an understandable way from an institutional (or trade unionist) viewpoint. Below, we list some materials that you might want to read on various topics. Most readings require no background in economics. However we have included some more advanced readings for people who want to pursue a topic seriously. Although more difficult, these starred items (\*) are clear and well-written. Most of these books and periodicals can be read at the Institute of Industrial Relations Library (Monday-Friday, 8:00 am - Noon and 1:00 pm - 5:00 pm) or at your local public library. Many can also be purchased at Cody's Books, 2454 Telegraph Avenue, Berkeley, or Modern Times, 968 Valencia, San Francisco. They can also be ordered directly from the publisher.

### I. Basic Books on Economics and Labor Economics Issues

**Economics: A Tool for Understanding Society**, Second Edition, Tom Riddell, Jean Shackelford, and Steve Stamos, Addison-Wesley, 1982. A basic economics textbook that is lively and enjoyable to read.

**The Capitalist System**, ed. R. Edwards, M. Reich, and T. Weisskopf, Prentice Hall, 1978, 2nd Edition. A comprehensive, accessible collection of readings that explain economics from a radical perspective.

**Economics Explained**, Robert Heilbroner and Lester Thurow, Prentice Hall, 1982. An easy, basic guide to economic terms and policies, including GNP, monetary policy, investment, and government intervention.

\* **Women, Work, and Wages**, Donald Traiman and Heidi Hartmann, National Academy Press, 1981. A report of the National Research Council that analyzes the wage differential between men and women and advocates wage adjustment through comparable worth as a means of overcoming sex-biased wage inequality.

\* **Labor in the American Economy**, E. J. Burt, St. Martin's Press, 1979; or **Labor and the Economy**, Howard Wachtel, Academic Press, 1983. Two college labor textbooks that explain the economics of wage determination, unemployment, discrimination and collective bargaining from an institutional perspective. They cover the field of labor economics thoroughly. Chapters can be read separately.

### II. Labor Economics and Economic Analyses of the History and Development of Working in the United States

**Strike!**, Jeremy Brecher, South End Press, 1977. Enjoyable, readable history of labor strikes from 1877 to 1970. Stories of major labor strikes, company and labor leader tactics, and the creativity and energy of the rank and file.

**The Lean Years**, Irving Bernstein, Houghton Mifflin, 1960; and **Turbulent Years**, Irving Bernstein, Houghton Mifflin, 1970. Two comprehensive histories of American labor covering the period from 1920 to 1941. The former looks at workers in the context of the 1920s and early depression years, while the latter chronicles the rapid spread of unionism and collective bargaining in the middle and late 1930s.

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**The World of the Worker: Labor in Twentieth Century America**, James R. Green, Hill and Wong, 1980. A descriptive history of the American labor movement in the 20th Century from a radical perspective. Emphasizes militant activity by the rank and file.

**American Labor**, Henry Pelling, University of Chicago Press, 1960. An easy to read straightforward history of labor in the United States, written by a British scholar. Includes a chronology of important events and bibliographical notes.

- \* **Segmented Work, Divided Workers**, D. Gordon, M. Reich, and R. Edwards, Cambridge University Press, 1982. Discusses the evolution of the labor process and the structure of the working class since the 19th Century. Emphasizes the role of job segmentation in splitting the working class.
- \* **Workers Control in America**, David Montgomery, Cambridge University Press, 1979. Seven essays by the author arguing the case for worker control of the means of production.

### III. Analysis of the Current Crisis

**The Deindustrialization of America**, Barry Bluestone and Bennett Harrison, Basic Books, 1982. An analysis of how and why American management is dismantling the nation's basic industries. Emphasizes plant closings and community abandonment.

**The Permanent War Economy**, Seymour Melman, Simon and Schuster, 1974. A powerful challenge to the conventional view that the arms race produces prosperity. The author argues that wasteful defense spending, aside from endangering our survival, has also led to America's decline as an industrial power.

**Greed is Not Enough: Reaganomics**, Robert Lekachman, Pantheon Books, 1982. A sharp attack on the ideology behind Administration economic policies. Cuts through the supply side rhetoric in effectively illustrating the grim reality.

**The World's Money**, Michael Moffitt, Simon & Schuster, 1983. Demonstrates how large international banks have fed inflation, speculated against currencies, and involved themselves in the debt crisis. Also explains how the world financial crisis affects the average banking consumer.

- \* **Bank Control of Large Corporations in the United States**, David M. Kotz, University of California Press, 1978. Discusses the evolution, extent and significance of the influence which large financial institutions wield over the economy.
- \* **U.S. Capitalism in Crisis**, Union for Radical Political Economics, 1978. Readable radical analysis of what's wrong with capitalism; how inflation, monopolies, recessions and unemployment result from the market economy.
- \* **The New Industrial State**, J.K. Galbraith, Houghton Mifflin, 1978, 3rd Edition. A provocative and comprehensive critique of changes in the postwar U.S. economy, stressing the growing power of large corporations.

### IV. Periodicals

**AFL-CIO News**, 815 Sixteenth St., N.W., Washington DC 20006, weekly, \$10 per year. Official publication of the AFL-CIO, with articles on matters of current interest to union members.

**California AFL-CIO News**, California Labor Federation, 993 Market St., San Francisco CA 94103, \$3.50 per year. Official weekly publication of the California Labor Federation, with articles concentrating on state and local issues.

**Labor Notes**, published monthly by the Labor Education and Research Project, P.O. Box 20001, Detroit MI 48220, \$10 per year. Articles and editorial policy emphasize militant rank and file activity nationwide.

**Dollars and Sense**, published monthly except June and August by the Economic Affairs Bureau, Inc., 38 Union Square, Room 14, Somerville MA 02143, \$16 per year for individuals. Offers non-technical interpretations of current economic events from a socialist perspective to be of use to people working for progressive social change.

**Labor Center Reporter**, Center for Labor Research and Education, Univ. of Calif. 2521 Channing Way, Berkeley CA 94720, monthly, \$10 per year. Articles offering a cogent analysis of problems currently facing the labor movement.

(\* means more difficult)

This list was compiled by the Labor Center Reporter Board, with special thanks to David Brauer, Clair Brown, and Teresa Ghilarducci.