

Talking Union

John Mccutcheon

Now, if you want higher wages let me tell you what to do

You got to talk to the workers in the shop with you

You got to build you a union, got to make it strong

But if you all stick together, boys, it won't be long

You get shorter hours, better working conditions

Vacations with pay. Take your kids to the seashoreIt ain't quite this simple, so I better explain

Just why you got to ride on the union train

'Cause if you wait for the boss to raise your pay

We'll all be a-waitin' 'til Judgment Day

We'll all be buried, gone to heaven

St. Peter'll be the straw boss thenNow you know you're underpaid but the boss says you ain't

He speeds up the work 'til you're 'bout to faint

You may be down and out, but you ain't beaten

You can pass out a leaflet and call a meetin'

Talk it over, speak your mind

Decide to do somethin' about itCourse, the boss may persuade some poor damn fool

To go to your meetin' and act like a stool

But you can always tell a stool, though, that's a fact

He's got a yaller streak a-runnin' down his back

He doesn't have to stool, he'll always get along

On what he takes out of blind men's cupsYou got a union now, and you're sittin' pretty

Put some of the boys on the steering committee

The boss won't listen when one guy squawks

But he's got to listen when the union talks

He'd better, be mighty lonely

Everybody decide to walk out on himSuppose they're working you so hard it's just outrageous

And they're paying you all starvation wages

You go to the boss and the boss would yell

"Before I raise your pay I'd see you all in hell."

Well, he's puffing a big cigar, feeling mighty slick

'Cause he thinks he's got your union licked

Well, he looks out the window and what does he see

But a thousand pickets, and they all agree

He's a bastard, unfair, slavedriver

Bet he beats his wifeNow, boys, you've come to the hardest time

The boss will try to bust your picket line

He'll call out the police, the National Guard

They'll tell you it's a crime to have a union card

They'll raid your meetin', they'll hit you on the head

They'll call every one of you a goddam red
Unpatriotic, Japanese spies, sabotaging national defenseBut out at Ford, here's what they found
And out at Vultee, here's what they found
And out at Allis-Chalmers, here's what they found
And down at Bethlehem, here's what they found
That if you don't let red-baiting break you up
And if you don't let stoolpigeons break you up
And if you don't let vigilantes break you up
And if you don't let race hatred break you up
You'll win. What I mean, take it easy, but take it

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