



BETWEEN THE COVERS RARE BOOKS

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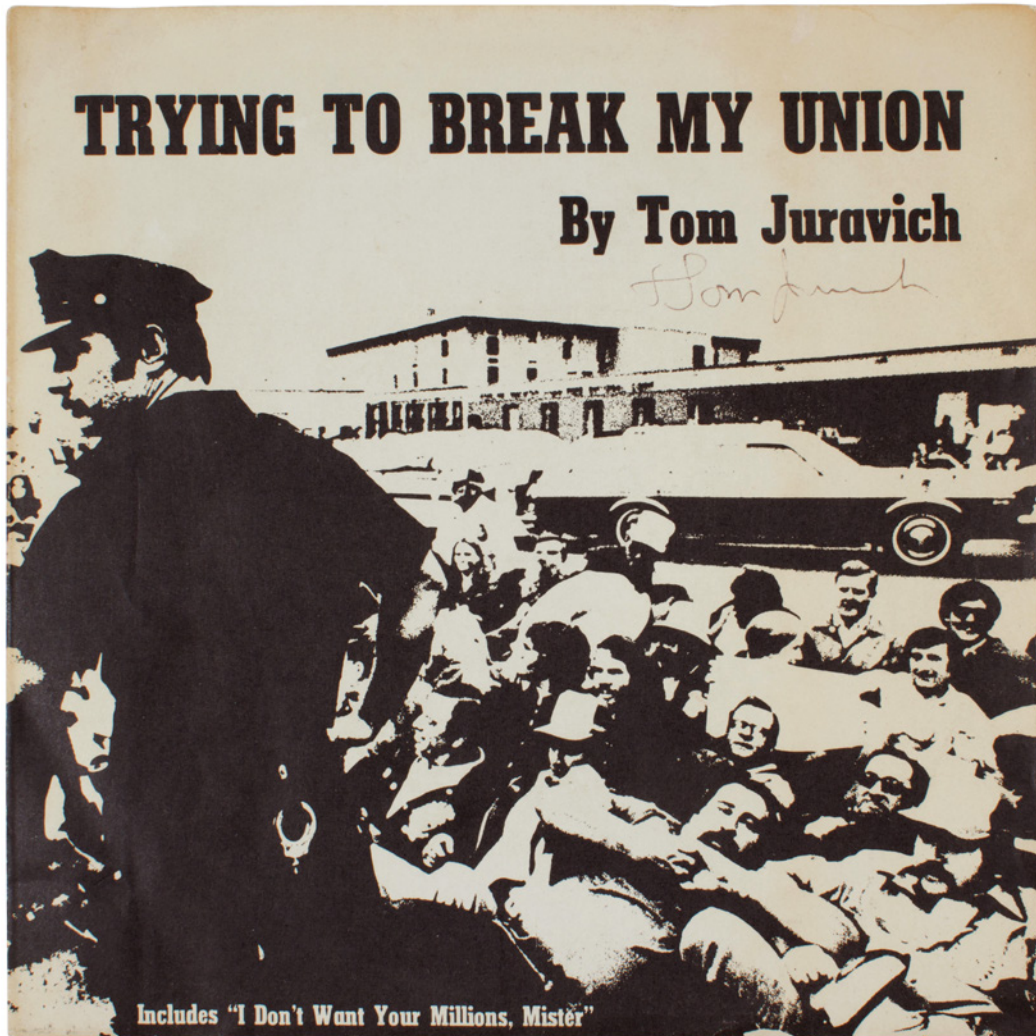


Tom Juravich

Trying to Break My Union

Northampton, Mass.: UAW Records / Local 430 1981

\$225



7" vinyl record. Pictorial sleeve, unprinted internal sleeve, and folded broadsheet with lyrics and liner notes. Record, liner notes, and internal sleeve are fine, outer pictorial sleeve with a little soiling and offsetting and is near fine. Signed by Juravich on the outer sleeve. Songs about union busting attempts against United Auto Workers local 430 in Westfield, Massachusetts. B side is the classic ballad "I Don't Want Your Millions, Mister." *OCLC* locates a single copy (Cornell). [\[BTC#408921\]](#)

I wrote TRYING TO BREAK MY UNION for my friends in Local 430. You don't have to spend too long with them on their picket line or in their hall before you get to know their story—a story of spending the better part of their lives working for Sterling and then, just when things were supposed to start getting easier, getting tossed out on the street like some old dish rag. It was clear. The company was out to break their union and them along with it. But the members of Local 430 weren't about to let either themselves or their union get broken and have never stopped struggling to get their jobs back. They tell the story better than anyone, and it's from their words that I made up this song.

TRYING TO BREAK MY UNION ©

—Tom Juravich 1981

Well I start-ed out at Ster-ling in nine-teen fif-ty four, my
 first time back in West-field since some-time before the War, The
 shop was might-y small then, John Reed was by our side, he said,
 "Boys I'm head-ing for the top, I'll take you for the ride." Now they're
 trying to break my un-ion they're trying to bust my life, and
 take all that I've worked for from my kids and my wife, I was
 just get-ting where things were star-ting to go my way, now these
 high priced law-yers and these lo-u-sy scabs try to take my job a-way.

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Well, I started out at Sterling in 1954
 My first time back in Westfield since before the war.
 The shop was mighty small then, John Reed was by our side,
 He said, "Boys, I'm heading for the top, I'll take you for the ride."

CHORUS: Now they're trying to break my union, trying to bust my life,
 And take all that I've worked for from my kids and my wife.*
 I was just getting where things were starting to go my way,
 And now these high-priced lawyers and these lousy scabs
 try to take my job away.

The shop, it started growing, but the wages still weren't high,
 But better days were coming, we could see it bye and bye.
 I remember the red letter day when we got our union in,
 With the UAW by our side we knew that we could win.

But something started happening, I know I felt a change,
 And then they got those new machines and nothing was ever the same.
 John Reed was upstairs now, his promise he forgot,
 With a contract full of take-aways, he forced us to walk out.

Now, as I watch this bus go by, I curse these lousy scabs;
 And the cops that force it through our line, you know I'd like to grab.
 I've walked on this picket line for six months and now more,
 For the 26 years I gave to him, is this my just reward?

So, listen to me union folks, it's time to take a stand,
 You may think that it won't happen to you—well, you'd better look again.
 All that labor's worked for, they're trying to take away,
 I don't know about you, but I won't be moved, and my union's here to stay.

FINAL CHORUS: I won't let 'em break my union, I won't let 'em bust my life,
 Or take all that I've worked for from my kids and my wife.
 Let's get back again to where things are going our way;
 No high-priced lawyers or lousy scabs can take our jobs away,
 And if we all can stick together, we'll see a better day.

*All the workers at Sterling are men. More generally the line might read:
 "And take all that we've worked for from our husbands, kids and wives."