



Still the

INDUSTRIAL WORKER

★ Education
May 1991

★ Organization
Volume 88 Issue No. 1535

★ Emancipation
50 Cents

Profile of a Branch



A group portrait of the Wobbly recyclers at the Ecology Center in Berkeley.

Who are the Wobblies, really? Many of us are familiar with the past accomplishments of the IWW and its organizers. But who are the people that make up the union today?

The following set of portraits is an attempt to put names and faces on what may often seem like a faceless organization. The Wobblies interviewed and photographed in the following essay are an arbitrary sampling of union members from the San Francisco Bay Area General Membership Branch of the IWW. They are not meant to fully represent the breadth of diversity found in the IWW. We hope that other branches and job shops from around the union will follow suit and send in THEIR branch profiles, so that we can all start to get to know each other better.

Steve Rodriguez is the union delegate for the workers at Berkeley's Ecology Center curbside recycling program. Since this interview he's passed on the delegate's baton to Fellow Workers Matthew Carllstrom and Vickie Thomas. The following chat took place on a sunny spring morning outside Peet's Coffee, a popular Berkeley hangout.

IW: You took a spill recently, didn't you?

SR: Yea, I was thrown from the truck after we hit a bump, and I thought I'd be better off if I held onto the truck, but all that happened was that I got dragged through the street, so I decided I'd better let go and take my chances with the road. I bounced a couple of times and went into a somersault, I got some deep scrapes. I'm really lucky.

I think that's one reason we needed to organize because we weren't getting the compensation that corresponds to the degree of risk we were taking every day. This accident's a good example of the risks.

IW: How's the contract working out that we negotiated in November? Are people getting the bonuses (for extra poundage) that we negotiated?

SR: I got a \$40 bonus for one of my routes a few weeks ago. Yesterday I made a \$20 bonus on my route, that's really nice. I kinda wish it was more of a deterrent from making those big-sized routes, but it's nice to get that bonus on payday.

IW: Has the hiring committee that we instituted in this contract been put into effect?

SR: No, there really hasn't been a need for the hiring committee since our crew has been really stable, for some reason, we've had no firings or hirings since its formation.

IW: This seems pretty mellow. I mean, you work for a couple of hours and then take a coffee break at Peet's. Is that in the contract, a coffee break at Peet's?

SR: Well, implicitly maybe. I think the kind of work we do requires a different pacing than, say, office work or even other kinds of physical work. It's like ditchdiggers, they rotate. You drive by and you say "Look at those lazy PG&E linemen," they're out there, they've got ten guys around the hole and one guy digging. People don't understand that the way you've got to do backbreaking labor is to rotate, five minutes in and fifteen minutes out. This work is similar to that, you've got a lot of heavy lifting. Yesterday I lifted six tons by myself. The wear and tear on the body is unavoidable, so you really have to pace yourself.

(continued on page 4)

Reclaiming May Day

May 1st, International Workers Day, commemorates the historical struggle of working people around the world and is a recognized holiday in every country except the United States, Canada, and South Africa. Although May Day has been perverted in the U.S. by the state, capital, business unions, and the media as a holiday celebrated only in Red Square, we must remember that it has its roots in the United States and evolved from the struggle of U.S. workers for an eight-hour day. The May Day movement is not only about immediate gains such as shorter hours, but is rooted in labor's struggle for basic human rights, including the ability to control one's working life and the attainment of dignity on the job.

The U.S. government has attempted to erase the history and significance of May Day by declaring May 1st Law Day and recognizing, instead, Labor Day—a day devoid of any historical significance. So it becomes our responsibility to preserve and communicate an accurate understanding of May Day and celebrate the history that the powers-that-be have worked so hard to suppress.

Shorter hours have long been a demand by labor in order to both reduce long hours of toil as well as to spread work to the many unemployed victims of capitalism. In the 1830s and 1840s, trade unions established eight-hour leagues in order to pass legislation guaranteeing an eight-hour day. Although some eight-hour legislation was passed, much of it was not enforced and that which was enforced was restricted to a few trades or crafts.

In 1884, the Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Unions passed a resolution stating, eight hours shall constitute a legal days work from and after May 1, 1886. The resolution suggested a general strike for the eight-hour day be used since legislative methods had failed. The May Day General Strike movement gained little initial support from union leaderships. Trade unions and even more radical unions such as the Knights of Labor were initially hostile or indifferent toward the eight-hour movement. Terence Powderly of the Knights of Labor sent a secret circular denouncing the proposed general strike and reaffirmed that no Knights of Labor locals should participate

because they did not have the approval of headquarters. Despite the opposition of union leadership, rank and file support for the eight-hour day grew rapidly. Union leaders continued their resistance to the May Day Strike and were alarmed at the rank and file militancy.

The movement developed quickly. By April 1886, many strikes and demonstrations for the eight-hour day took place throughout the country. By the end of April, a quarter million workers were involved in the May Day movement. The movement continued to swell and proved to be larger than anticipated. By the second week of May, 350,000 workers in 11,562 establishments were on strike; this direct action by workers resulted in 200,000 U.S. workers winning shorter hours. The movement was centered in industrialized cities such as Chicago, Boston, New York, Baltimore, St. Louis, and Milwaukee.

The heart of the movement was in Chicago and was organized primarily by the anarchist International Working Peoples Association, whose skill at propagandizing and agitating were the main reasons why the movement in Chicago was so powerful. However, capital and the state were frightened by the increasingly revolutionary character of the movement and prepared for May Day as well. The police and militia were increased in size and received new and more powerful weapons which were financed by local business leaders. For example, the Commercial Club in Chicago

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Industrial Worker
1095 Market St. #204
San Francisco, CA 94103
ISSN 0019-8870

Second Class Postage
PAID
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San Francisco, CA 94188

Letters to the Editors

Fellow workers,

I was very impressed by the new look of the Industrial Worker, the new advertisements, the new subscription requests, and the new directory. In fact, the IW of today sets new standards in IWW journalism with interesting, well-written, grammatical articles designed for people with more than a third-grade education. Rather than talking down to us with the same old stuff and assuming that everyone knows the IWW is always right, the articles in this issue justified their stands and presented them well.

I like the clean look. I like the intelligent headlines (well, the front page is a bit much—I think it'll turn off a lot of casual readers—but the new masthead, while still not what I would hope for, is a great improvement. And at least the front-page graphics were done well, and the intelligent writing. Most of all, I like the new subtle approach to IWW ads (interspersed with the text, and re-written to fit the 1990s).

Keep up the good work.

D. Sacz
Elizabeth, NJ

Dear Industrial Worker Collective,

The first day of Spring and the *Industrial Worker* shows up in my mailbox with a General Strike cover and article. Great. Gonna be a warm Spring.

I'd like to clarify a statement in the article "International Workers Association" which may give the wrong idea about the SAC (Sveriges Arbetares Centralorganisation), the Swedish syndicalist union and the relations between the IWW and the SAC.

The article claims that in the 1950s the "SAC wished to participate in the economic organizations of the state in order to share in the riches of the booming Swedish economy". What you don't learn from reading this vague and damning statement are the facts: the local nation-

state is 90% unionized, unemployment insurance is distributed through unions, and the SAC, a union controlling a quarter of the timber industry, participates in this process.

There are differences in local conditions—from Sweden to Gambia to Australia to Korea—and international solidarity requires that we respect our comrades around the world.

The IWW has long-standing, positive relations with the SAC. The IWW maintains solidarity with revolutionary unions inside and outside the IWA. There are principled differences among revolutionary unionists, some more important than others. What the international movement needs is *more practical* and principled unity. We need to exchange information, build the means of cooperation, and eventually the ability to spread action widely.

IWW members interested in the union's International Committee can contact committee convenor Mike Hargis at IWW, 1476 W. Irving Park, Chicago, IL 60613.

Solidarity,
Jeff Ditz
Chicago

Response to Jeff Ditz's letter

The statements "participate in the economic organizations of the state" and "...unemployment insurance is distributed through the unions, and the SAC ... participates in this process," mean essentially the same thing. In a capitalist economy, the state is always the servant of capital. The state never gives anything to workers without exacting a price. In the U.S. the state and capital bought the loyalty of the business unions with the *dues check-off* and the *closed shop*. These things allowed the U.S. business unions to guarantee the collection of dues while at the same time requiring

workers to join their unions. In Sweden the state and capital bought the loyalty of the unions via the distribution of unemployment benefits. The argument that the SAC had to cooperate in this travesty could also be made for the AFL-CIO unions.

The IWW has a history of refusing to cooperate with the schemes of the state and capital which are seen as contrary to the long term interests of working people. At the time the SAC decided to go along with the Swedish state (rather than risk losing members), they were warned that cooperating with the state would lead to a decrease in militancy. In fact, the SAC did enter a long period of peaceful co-existence with the Social Democratic state of Sweden. Their recent strike activity is the first in decades, and hopefully it signals a return to their revolutionary unionist roots. I agree whole-heartedly that we need to build solidarity (both internationally and *nationally*) and increase cooperation and communication. In my opinion this means looking out for each other and making honest criticism when it is warranted. This is the only way we can learn from our mistakes and move forward. Re-writing history will not facilitate this process. Factionalism *certainly* will not facilitate this process. Practical and principled unity will come only from honest communication and intelligent analysis. Otherwise we will be doomed to repeat the same cycle of growth, struggle and defeat. I consider the workers in the SAC to be comrades in the struggle for working class emancipation. It is my wish that any criticisms be taken in this spirit of comradeship.

—Mike Kolhoff

To the Editorial Collective,

For the second time, I have noticed that, in the section of names and addresses of IWW groups, etc., you have put Winnipeg, which is in (and the largest city in) MANITOBA, into the province of Alberta. This is inexcusable. A correction is due. Winnipeg has a great history in the labour movement, being the location of a famous general strike. Please get this right. The way it is, it exhibits once again American ignorance of Canada.

For the Works,
X331024

Fellow Workers,

As one of the authors of the resolution seeking IWW affiliation to the International Workers Association (and an effort to unite all revolutionary unions into the IWA/AIT), I must disagree with FW Kolhoff's article in the March *IW*.

Kolhoff states that the Swedish Central Workers Organization (SAC) withdrew from the AIT because they "wished to participate in the economic organizations of the state in order to share in the riches of the booming Swedish economy." This is quite misleading—the issue was whether the SAC would administer unemployment benefits after the Swedish government decided to funnel these through the unions. Had the SAC refused, it's members would have been eligible only for reduced benefits. Certainly we can debate the most appropriate response, but Kolhoff's characterization is sectarian. He is a member of the Workers Solidarity Alliance, the U.S. affiliate of the IWA/AIT) and unfair,

Yours for revolutionary unionism,
Jon Bekken, X331117

Note: The last two paragraphs of FW Bekken's letter were not included because they contain allegations against former members of the IWW which have never been proven in the manner prescribed by our Constitution.

INDUSTRIAL WORKER



LOCAL 583

Printed by members of Graphic Arts International Union, Local 583. Pre-press production by members of IWW I.U. 450.

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The Industrial Worker (ISSN 0019-8870) is published monthly by the Industrial Workers of the World, 1095 Market St. #204, San Francisco, CA 94103. Second class postage paid at San Francisco, California. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the Industrial Worker, 1095 Market St. #204, San Francisco, CA 94103. Subscriptions to the Industrial Worker are included as part of dues for all IWW members. Subscriptions for nonmembers are \$10 per year. The Industrial Worker is the official publication of the Industrial Workers of the World. Submissions whose content violates the principles of the IWW as laid out in the Preamble and Constitution will not be printed. Unless designated as official policy, articles in the Industrial Worker do not represent the official position of the Industrial Workers of the World. No paid or commercial advertising accepted. The Industrial Worker is published monthly. The deadline for all copy is the 12th of each month. Submit articles to: IW Collective, 1095 Market St., #204, San Francisco, CA 94103. For more information, call (415) 863-WOBS.

IWW Directory

CANADA

BRITISH COLUMBIA

Vancouver GMB—P.O. Box 65635, Station F, Vancouver V5N 5K5

Gleaner Publications Job Branch (I.U. 450)—Student Union, 100 W. 49th Ave., Vancouver V5Y 2Z9

Eastside Datagraphics Job Branch (I.U. 450)—1460 Commercial Dr., Vancouver V5L 3X9, (604) 255-9559

Mac Underground Pacific Job Branch (I.U. 450)—6591A Victoria, Vancouver V5P 3X8

The Tools Job Branch (I.U. 630)—c/o 1536 Kamloops St., Vancouver V5K 3W2

MANITOBA

Winnipeg IWW—Delegate B. Mackay, P.O. Box 3204, GNPO, Winnipeg R3C 4E7

ONTARIO

Kingston IWW—472 Albert Street, Kingston Ontario K7L 3W3, (613) 544-2382

Ottawa IWW—P.O. Box 4773, Station E, Ottawa K1F 5H9, (613) 231-4392

Toronto GMB—26A Oxford St., 2nd Floor, Toronto M5T 1N9, (416) 972-6293. Meetings first Thursday, 7 pm, each month, phone for location

Blackbird Design Collective Job Branch (I.U. 450)—394 Euclid Ave., Rm. 301, Toronto, M6G 2F9, (416) 972-6293

AUSTRALIA

Jura Books—110 Chrystal St., Petersham, Sydney

UNITED STATES

ARKANSAS

IWW Delegate—P.O. Box 1403, Conway 72032

CALIFORNIA

IWW Delegate—Dorice McDaniels, Los Angeles, (213) 679-2570

San Diego IWW—Box 191224, San Diego 92119

San Francisco/Bay Area GMB—1095 Market St., Room 204, San Francisco 94103, (415) 863-WOBS

East Bay IWW Delegate—Richard Ellington, 6448 Irwin Court, Oakland 94609, (415) 658-0293

Berkeley Recycling Center Job Branch (I.U. 670)—c/o Steven Rodriguez, 4156 Howe Street, Oakland 94611

IWW Local 1/Mendocino/Humboldt GMB—

c/o Stenberg, 254 Wall Street, Fort Bragg 95437 (707) 961-0302

COLORADO

Denver/Boulder GMB—2412 E. Colfax, Denver 80206, (303) 388-1065. Office Open Saturdays 9-12. Meetings, second Sunday each month; phone for time.

P&L Printing Job Branch (I.U. 450), 2998 Clay, Denver 80211, (303) 433-1852

IWW Delegates—Cliff Sundstrom, 910 E. 8th Ave. #202, Denver 80218, (303) 832-7602. G. Austin Brown, 1178 Elati, Denver 80204, (303) 595-8320. Dave Frazer, Box 6, Rollinsville 80474, (303) 258-3732.

GEORGIA

Atlanta IWW—Box 54766, Atlanta 30308-0766, (404) 378-5542

ILLINOIS

Chicago GMB—(New World Resource Center) 1476 W. Irving Park, Chicago, 60613, (312) 549-5045. Meetings, first Friday at 7:30 pm, Labor Video Forums, third Friday at 7:30 p.m.

Champaign/Urbana IWW—Box 2824, Champaign 61820

MARYLAND

Baltimore GMB—1054 Hollins Ave., Baltimore 21223

MASSACHUSETTS

Boston GMB—Box 454, Cambridge, 02138, (617) 629-2922. Meetings, second Sunday, 2 pm.

MICHIGAN

Southeast Michigan GMB—400 W. Washington, Room 2B, Ann Arbor, 48103, (313) 995-1422

Ann Arbor Tenants' Union (I.U. 670)—4001 Michigan Union, Ann Arbor 48109, (313) 763-6876

People's Warehouse Branch (I.U. 660)—727 W. Ellsworth, Ann Arbor 48108, (313) 769-8629

IWW Delegates—Geoff Kroepel, 2617 West Ellsworth, Ann Arbor 48108, (313) 769-8629.

Michael Kozura, 2237 Shadowood, Ann Arbor 48108, (313) 973-9102

N. Michigan—John Patterson 7335 N. Conway Road #5, Alanson, MI 49706

MINNESOTA

Minneapolis/St. Paul GMB—Box 2391, Loop Stn., Minneapolis 55402, (612) 339-5002

IWW Delegate—Chris Shillock

MISSOURI

IWW Local 2/Mississippi Valley GMB—P.O. Box 63223, St. Louis 63104

IWW Delegates—Rose Ritter, St. Louis, (314) 773-4708. Steve Taylor, St. Louis, (314) 776-3390

MONTANA

IWW Delegate—George J. Evankovich, 214 Roosevelt Dr., Butte 59404, (406) 494-2523

NEW YORK

New York IWW Arts Branch (I.U. 630)—272 E. 3rd St., New York 10009, (212) 979-0601, at the Living Theatre

IWW Delegates—David Boyl, 93 Ave. B #4F, New York 10009. Robert Hieger, 9 E. 3rd St. #4B.

Jackie Panish, Box 372, Rego Park 11374, (212) 868-1121. Joe O'Shea, Winkler's Farm, Towner's Rd., Carmel 10512. Rochell Semel, Rd 1 Box 158B, Hartwick 13348, (607) 293-6489. Bob Young, Box 920, Wingdale 12594

New York GMB—P.O. Box 1147M, Bayshore 11706

OHIO

IWW Delegate—John Perotti #167712, Box 56, Lebanon 45036-0056

PENNSYLVANIA

IWW Delegate—David Griggs, Rd. 1, Box 96H, Bechtelsville 19505

Bethlehem IWW—P.O. Box 55, Bethlehem, PA 18012

SOUTH CAROLINA

Harbinger Publications Job Branch (I.U. 450)—18 Bluff Rd., Columbia 29201, (803) 254-9398

TEXAS

IWW Delegate—Gilbert Mers, 7031 Kernal, Houston 77087, (713) 921-0877

UTAH

IWW—2010 S. 300 East #3, Salt Lake City 84115, (801) 485-1969

WASHINGTON

Bellingham GMB—Box 1386, Bellingham 98227

Tacoma/Olympia GMB & GDC Local 4—2115 Sheridan, Tacoma 98405

Seattle IWW Group—Box 95686, Seattle 98145-2686

WISCONSIN

Madison GMB—Box 2605, Madison 53701, (608) 251-1937 or 249-4287

Lakeside Press Job Branch (I.U. 450)—1301 Williamson, Madison 53701

Around The Union

California:

Approximately 800 people gathered to participate in the "Radical Environmentalism" Conference the weekend of March 1-3 at the University of California at Santa Barbara. The conference, organized primarily by two local Wobblies, was intended to critique the mainstream conservation environmental movement and offer alternate ideas regarding the appropriate strategy and tactics of the still forming radical ecology movement. The weekend included many speakers, workshops, and a lively concert by Wobblies Judi Bari and Darryl Cherney.

The environmental movement is at a crucial stage. Vital decisions regarding the appropriate direction have taken on an increasing sense of urgency. This is especially true in light of the fact that the previous attempts to "rescue" the environment, through mainstream organizations and compromising legislation, have met with limited success. In response to this impending environmental crisis, a number of writers and organizers have turned away from the more traditional "conservation ethic" and moved on to an approach that is more radical and yet at the same time more practical in terms of preserving what little is left of the natural world.

The speakers at the conference articulated different perspectives within the radical ecology movement and included Winona LaDuke, Alexander Cockburn, Irene Diamond, Brian Tokar, Kelpie Wilson, Jane McAlevey, Medea Benja-

min, Christopher Manes, George Sessions, and Judi Bari.

Although some environmentalists believe that ecological issues are being "infected" by socio-economic issues, many participants at the conference—especially the Wobs—believe that ecological justice is inextricably linked to social and economic justice. Judi Bari's keynote address underlined this position. "We didn't go in to ally with the timber workers, to ally with the noble proletariat. We went into ally with them for reasons that are threefold. First, the workers are getting screwed just as the forest was. These companies are anti-life, and I genuinely felt for the workers... Second, the most successful thing that the company was doing was pitting the workers against the environmentalists, and promoting vigilante violence against us. Third, we live in a community with these people and they're not abstract." She adamantly denies the charge that Northern California Earth First! has compromised itself by building bridges with workers and claims that one necessarily runs into social issues and politics when s/he attempts to practice deep ecology in the "real world."

The debate about deep ecology, misanthropy, ecocentrism, and social change "infiltration" were addressed not only during the keynote speeches, but were also the focus of many workshops. There was a total of 28 workshops, including "Labor and the Environment" facilitated

by fellow workers Jess Grant and Dave Karoly as well as Wob Zack Stentz and Lisa Henry's workshop on Redwood Summer; these workshops generated solid turnouts and constructive discussions.

The conference was a unique and exciting event that included a strong IWW presence from throughout the state of California. The pamphlet used in the "Labor and the Environment" workshop is available from the San Francisco Bay Area General Membership Branch (see IWW Directory) and audio tapes of the keynote speeches are available for \$8 each or \$70 for all eleven. Send checks or money orders to Shari Menard, P.O. Box 2633, Goleta, CA 93118.

Chicago Branch:

In March, we kicked off a new monthly series of labor videos. The labor video series takes place the third Friday of each month at 7:30 pm at New World Resource Center, 1476 W. Irving Park in Chicago. March was dedicated to worker environmentalism and we showed a video from last year's Redwood Summer organizing to the two dozen people in attendance. Exploring the relationship between workers and the environment is particularly important in the urban sprawl we call home; mega development wants a third airport, suburban real estate speculators are paving over the best farmland in the U.S., and incinerators are being built in poor and Black



neighborhoods. Upcoming topics in the branch series include direct action and the New York Daily News strike.

Coming up on Saturday, May 25, Dakota Sid Clifford will sing IWW and Earth First! songs at the Heartland Studio (Morse el-stop on the Howard/Jackson Park line). The branch is sponsoring the show as a fundraising and educational event. As Emma said, "if I can't sing and dance, I don't want to be part of your revolution."

Branch members have been heavily involved in local organizing against the U.S. government's imperialistic Gulf war. Local demonstrations were frequent and as large as 10,000 people. Despite the massive U.S. propaganda machine, there is broad opposition to the war here and elsewhere. Now, between wars, anti-war organizing must deepen. Working people throughout the world have more in common with the hundreds of thousands of dead in Iraq than we do with the elite that ordered the slaughter. Bring the war home. Take anti-war organizing to work with you.

Education Under Fire

The first battle in "Operation Domestic Storm," the rightwing blitz on the home front, is shaping up in the field of education. Across the U.S., school districts, colleges and universities are paying the price of living in a social system that places more value on its ability to destroy foreign countries than it does on feeding, housing and educating its own people.

While hundreds of billions of dollars are being earmarked for re-stocking high-tech massacre machines schools are closing teachers and staff are being laid off and students are being told that there is no alternative. In California, where the ruling elite pushed through the notorious Proposition 13, the rightist governor Pete Wilson is pumping money into building prisons and blandly refusing to offer state assistance to floundering schools. The Richmond School District of Richmond, California is on the verge of bankruptcy and may well be shut down by the time you read this. Demonstrating the orchestrated nature of this crisis, Governor Wilson has demanded that the teacher's union give up the right to collective bargaining before he will sign the authorization for a bailout loan. So this is not only an attack on education, it is also an attack on the right of education workers to organize.

Governor Wilson is asking the legislature to authorize a suspension of Proposition 98, an initiative approved by voters in 1989 which guarantees that schools will be financed (an indirect challenge to Prop. 13, which revoked the right of communities to use local property taxes to finance schools). So the assault has 3 elements: a direct attack on education, a direct attack on the right to organize, and an indirect attack on the right of regular citizens to participate in the legislative process (via the ballot initiative).

That the budget for prisons is increasing shows that Wilson at least knows what he's doing. If schools close and social services to the poor are cut, there will be a drastic prison shortage in California.

On April 3rd over ten thousand parents, teachers, students and staff workers rallied in Sacramento to demand that the state provide adequate funds for schools. Gathering outside Wilson's office, the crowd listened to speakers (including union leaders and presidential hopeful Jesse Jackson) and displayed signs calling for the preservation of Prop. 98 and the rescue of the Richmond schools. In the

face of this massive show of protest, Wilson refused to negotiate. His comments in a hastily called press conference confirmed the worst fears of those present. "The fundamental facts are that school boards have to live within their means." So speaketh the shopkeeper mentality.

Education Workers Industrial Union 620 is in the thick of the current battle. Our solution to the current crisis is: Worker and student control of the education system. Let the staff workers run the services, let the faculty teach and let the students learn. Let the bureaucrats and administrators take early retirement. They produce nothing and serve no one. We are calling for the creation of staff, faculty and student coalitions to meet this challenge. If it is the intention of the state to impoverish the education system, it is our intention to build a new system, one based on workers control and academic freedom.

The bureaucrats in the schools and the politicians in the state houses play us against each other: the faculty against the

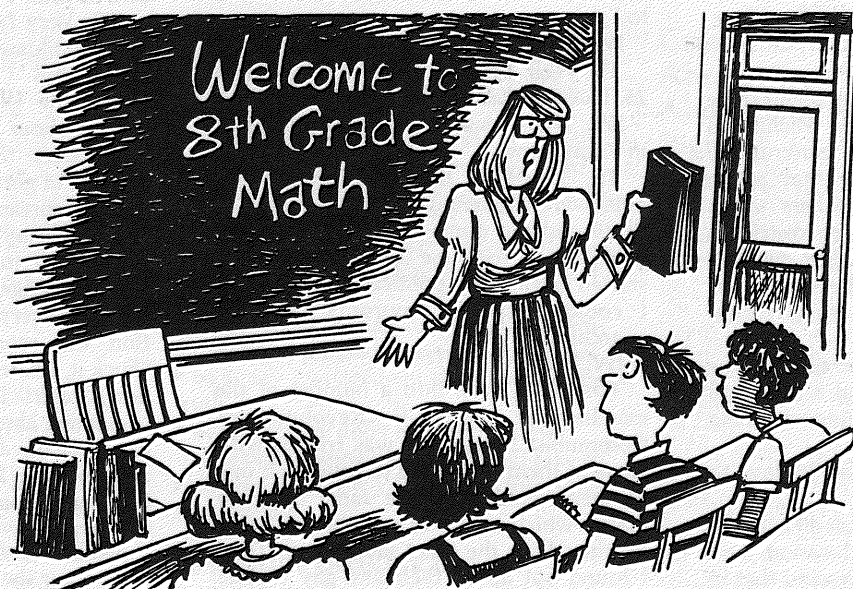
If it is the intention of the state to impoverish the education system, it is our intention to build a new system, one based on workers' control and academic freedom.

staff, the staff against the students, the taxpayer against the faculty and staff. When we want an increase in wages the students are told it will mean increased tuition, the parents are told it will mean higher taxes. But the real conflict is not between the people who do the work and the people who receive the services. It is between the people who absorb and waste most of the funds while producing nothing, and the rest of us who have to suffer the consequences.

The level of change needed in the education system is not confined to a minor adjustment in funding practices. The current situation reflects the need for a major reevaluation of *how* and *why* our schools are operated. If our schools are run like state bureaucracies or business

enterprises (citizen factories) then we can expect nothing more than massive waste and the production of commodities (human resources). Education can and must mean more than the acquisition of job skills. If we are to have a future, our schools must become places of discovery, not programming centers. To make them so we will have to free ourselves from the cost/benefit mentality and the system of top-down management which currently dominates our schools. We must make our schools part of the community at large, capable of serving all the needs of the people, and not the adjuncts of the business community which they now are.

—Mike Kolhoff



"Our first lesson will be IMAGINARY NUMBERS. How do you divide one textbook among 50 students?"

Profile of a Branch continued

IW: I notice you've got four or five new trucks out there in the yard. Is that indicative of the health of the program? Is the funding from the city pretty sure now that they've invested in these trucks?

SR: By no means. No. That was budgeted several years ago, it's taken them this long. We need to modernize our fleet. These old trucks, while they symbolize recycling in that it's very resourceful to keep repairing the old trucks, they're not good for the body, for the workers that use them. That is by no means the final size of our fleet. If we really had the blessings of the city, according to the old management's plan we'd probably have twice that many trucks. However, if you want to go into recycling theory, I would argue that it's not trucks we need, it's a different, more resourceful system. Instead of vast fleets of motors and engines, we'd have neighborhood collection efforts, appropriately-scaled neighborhood recycling centers.

IW: You mentioned that there hasn't been much turnover in your curbside crew, that you haven't had to activate the hiring committee because of the stability and longevity of the crew. Do you think that this is in any way a function of being unionized?

SR: Oh I'm sure, yea. The job compensates us pretty well now for what we have to do. We have a minimum eight hour day, we have bonuses, and I think we feel a little more empowered because of the democratizing of the procedure. People feel pretty secure in the job — like me, I fell out of a truck, I was thinking "Boy, I'm going to have to find new work, this is just too dangerous." But it's going to be hard for me to find something I like as well. I enjoy physical work. I don't enjoy falling off of trucks, but there are enough pluses to really make it attractive, and you feel good about what you're doing because you're involved in promoting the idea of environmental responsibility by being a recycler.



Dianne Driscoll begins another schoolday with her students at New Traditions School in San Francisco.

Dianne Driscoll joined the IWW in 1989. She teaches third grade in a public alternative school for the San Francisco Unified School District. Her bargaining agent there is the United Educators of San Francisco (UESF), a local amalgamation of two formerly competing trade unions, the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) and the California Teachers' Association (CTA).

IW: You recently got a layoff notice, didn't you?

DD: Yes.

IW: The education industry seems to be under attack all over. The Richmond (CA) district just declared bankruptcy, and the Governor is using that as an excuse to try to bust the teachers' union there. And the San Francisco district is looking at a \$20 million budget cut next year. What are the teachers in your district, and in your union, doing to fight these cutbacks?

DD: There's a rally in Sacramento (the state capitol) tomorrow, and a thousand districts from around the state are going to show up.

IW: What does Proposition 98 have to do with this?

DD: Prop 98 guarantees that 40% of the state budget is spent on education, and Governor Wilson wants to rescind that in order to balance the budget. That's going to the Legislature this summer.

IW: The teachers in San Francisco have a rather unusual arrangement, don't they, where the two teachers' unions, the AFT and the CTA are joined together in one union, the UESF?

DD: It is unusual, and I think we're stronger for it. They've organized all the teachers and the paraprofessionals into one union, and they're trying to organize the substitutes into that union as well. They're negotiating with the substitutes' union now.

IW: It sounds like the beginning of an industrial union...

DD: Yep, one big union!

IW: Where do you see education headed in this country in the next ten years?

DD: If it keeps going like this, I see the quality of education in the urban centers declining. It's the urban centers that need the special services, yet they get less money than the suburban school districts. They have a greater need for bilingual, special ed, and counseling services.

IW: What's a long-term approach to improving education in this country?

DD: People need to spend money for it, just like they need to spend money on health care and housing, and less money on the military. A complete restructuring of the system is needed, where local communities and teachers have power and resources to structure their schools in ways that work best for their students. All aspects of the community need to get involved in education, even if they don't have children.



Tommy Strange plays a solo set at the Covered Wagon Saloon in San Francisco's South of Market district.

We talked with local Wob and punk-rocker Tommy Strange backstage after his solo acoustic gig at the Covered Wagon Saloon in the South of Market district of San Francisco.

IW: Are you a rebel?

TS: Yea.

IW: Why?

TS: It started early when I was in high school. I made problems for my parents, and the high school too. Nothing illegal, I just rejected authority from the beginning. Must be because I had very authoritarian parents. My dad was a doctor — he was booksmart, but he was also very stupid. And he was very mean, I connected that with authority.

IW: Was he religious?

TS: Well, they made me go to church, but they weren't Christian if you consider Christians following the ten commandments. They tried to force me to go into the military. I said, "I don't want to kill anybody," and my dad said, "But you have to."

IW: So you split the Midwest then?

TS: Well, I stayed there 'til I was 24 or 25. I went to Kent State.

IW: That was after the factory closings in Youngstown?

TS: When all the shutdowns in the mills were happening, I was still only 18 or 19 and too dumb to know what was going on. It took me 'til '80 or '81 'til I started getting any political ideology that I could grasp. Of course I came to anarchism.

IW: Why?

TS: Well, I ran into a number of the members of the RCP (Revolutionary Communist Party) and was friends with some of them. I listened to how each one of them would say the same spiel no matter which corner of campus you went to, they'd say the exact same thing. Then I found out about their anti-gay stance. So I approached my best friend and said, "What about that?" She said "We see that as a symptom of the bourgeoisie, that there's more homosexuality when there's more oppression." I said, "Bullshit, there's been homosexuals since day one, y'know, don't give me that shit, you can't tell me

there's something wrong with that." And then I started spotting the party line. Plus I was a punk rocker at the time, I've been in punk rock bands since '78.

IW: How did the acoustic set you played tonight grow out of your punk rock?

TS: The reason I got into punk rock in the first place was the ideas in it. I was into the Clash and the Jam, some of the more intelligent bands, 'cause they were telling me something I never got out of Journey or Styx.

IW: You said you were drawn to anarchism. How does being a Wobbly express that side of yourself?

TS: If you'd asked me ten years ago to be a Wobbly, I would've said no, 'cause it was an organization and I was into the punk rock side of anarchism which is very limited and unknowledgeable. When I started reading about it, I had a good enough professor at Kent State that made us read a Wobbly's book, from then on I was really interested. I didn't even know they were still around 'til recently. It was a history I'd never heard before in my life, I had no idea there was this huge union. Lately I've just realized unions don't mean Teamsters or AFL-CIO, which every American has as their idea of what a union is. It's bullshit though, the leaders of those unions are just another government. The Wobblies offer an alternative.

IW: How is it relevant to you when you're not represented by the union at your work? It's more of an idea than anything, right?

TS: Yea, at this point it's more just like another flag to wave. But in the future, I think, things will get so bad that people will question the economic system. The union's not going to do anything for me at my workplace, 'cause I work for a real

Lately I've just realized unions don't mean Teamsters or AFL-CIO, which every American has as their idea of what a union is. It's bullshit though, the leaders of those unions are just another government. The Wobblies offer an alternative.

small business (an independent record distributor) with a bunch of lefties and they don't feel a need to join it because we're practically a collective at this point. But I feel we really have to organize in this country. I run into a lot of leftists who think there has to be another party. They're still stupid enough to think they could work through this representative democracy.

IW: You don't think that'll work?

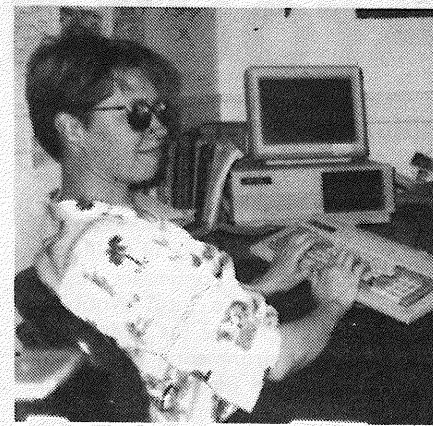
TS: No way. The only way you can get elected in this country is if you're a millionaire. That's obvious to anyone you talk to, whether they're rich or live in the projects. But people still believe in benevolent billionaires, which is a joke.

IW: So if party politics doesn't work, where does revolutionary unionism fit into all this?

TS: Very far in the future. To me it's like a building block. When me and my friend Bill ("Big" Bill Dunham) first joined the Wobblies, I told him, "I'm excited about it, but I really don't see us doing much 'til five or ten years down the road." I'm gonna be a member to support it, and spread it, and maybe I'll get a couple of my friends to join, though I doubt it. I just know Americans. Even bike messengers, they're rebels and they question everything, but they don't question the economic system. They say "Fuck it, I hate 'em all, the rich bastards, I don't vote." I say "Why don't you do something about it?" and they say "What can you do about it?" Americans have always been known as TV babies, just looking one year ahead.

Melissa Roberts is corresponding secretary for the Bay Area Branch. She works halftime at the IWW's General Administration with General Secretary Treasurer Jess Grant. The IW caught her on a coffee break at the union's office.

IW: You've been in the union for quite a few years. You didn't start out here in the Bay Area, did you?



Melissa Roberts, the office worker at the IWW's General Administration, enjoying the sunshine.

MR: No, I started out in the Tacoma/Olympia Branch in Washington state. I lived in Olympia. The Tac/Oly Branch meets together because the two cities are close enough, and the membership is small enough, that we had a dual city branch. I worked there for a number of years and then relocated to the Bay Area and became active in this branch.

I moved to San Francisco because I wanted to be more active in issues, to be in an urban environment that offered me more choices, so I could be in a place where I didn't feel like I had to do everything, where there was enough activity that I could do a portion and not feel like I was saddled with the entire responsibility...

IW: Of changing society by yourself?

MR: Right. So the SF branch is very active and I had met a couple of people, Louis Prisco and Franklin Devore, a couple of years ago, I came and had dinner with them. And I looked them back up. Franklin told me where the branch meeting was, and there I was, right in the midst of Redwood Summer organizing. It was a happening thing.

I did live in New York for a few months last year and met one of the Wobs there,

Jackie Panish, that was very fun. She's actually a stand-up comic.

IW: Nice view you have here at General Headquarters. You can see City Hall from where you sit at your desk.

MR: Yea, but the windows need a little cleaning. I talked to the guy downstairs and he told me where I could get some window cleaner if I wanted, but to be really careful because of all the birdshit on the ledge 'cause I might slip and fall to my death.



Wobbly recycler Vickie Thomas prepares to begin her curbside route through the hills of Berkeley.

Mike Kolhoff is the IWW delegate at New College of California, where an organizing drive is currently underway among the staff. Here Mike talks about New College and the state of education generally.

IW: We've been reading in the April IW about the organizing drive here at New College. Where does that stand now?

MK: We're on our way. We've got approximately a quarter of the staff signed up at this point. When we get half we're going to go to management and negotiate.

IW: When you say staff, you're referring to the faculty?

Beat the Boss

This section is a forum for workers to share their direct action experiences and is intended to spur other workers to employ similar tactics on the job. We have all participated in such actions and submissions are essential—so write!

Monger for a Day

by Chudaman Royale

I was actually a monger for an entire month thanks to the generosity of my boss, an expert rug dealer who could see that I had great potential as a salesman and that this skill was being wasted as long as I was restricted to the role of stock boy. Now I too would be able to earn big bucks working for commission, ripping off ignorant customers, and really contributing to the welfare of my loyal employer, Rugs, Rugs, Rugs. "People come in here for one reason, and one reason only, Chudaman," my boss told me during my training. "They may be unsure about such trivial matters as quality, style or color, but they are definitely certain about purchasing a rug. They wouldn't be here if they didn't want one. Therefore, it is our duty to help them. We are providing a service by assisting them in their decision-making. And they always can be convinced to spend a little more than they intended to."

This little pep talk made me realize not only that my boss took me for a fool, but also that being a salesperson was going to be more degrading and demeaning than being a stockboy. Yet I was prepared to sacrifice what little self-respect I had for the big money that comes from being a rug monger. Furthermore, I was sick and tired of being the company grunt, fucked over by the management as well as the sales people. This promotion wasn't just about money, it was about pride and working conditions, too.

Stock clerks were looked down upon by the sales people, treated with contempt and utter disregard. We got paid much less than they did and we had to do all the shit work like cleaning the bathroom, vacuuming, hanging sales posters, fetching lunch for everyone else, and making coffee. And the sales people generally treated us as if they were the boss class, though in reality they were just as exploited as we were. When a customer was present we were expected to follow the sales people around like lonely puppies, squatting or kneeling quietly, flipping back the corners of rugs so that customers could see each rug in the stack. Stock clerks were expected to keep their mouths shut during the sales pitch, but to act as a "yes" person when the hard sell was about to go down. "Sure this rug is elegant, and superbly hand woven, too, but it will go nicely in your kitchen with the linoleum floors and

formica cabinets," a salesman would say with a straight face. "Don't you agree, Chudaman?"

Oh yes, as nicely as a tuxedo jacket with a leather thong and golf cleats, I mutter under my breath. For my agreement and the clinching of the sale, Bill the Salesman would receive 6% commission. I received a pat on the back. Yet for the \$100 in commission Bill earned, the owners made \$1000 in profit. Bill would also get a pat on the back, and the owners would laugh all the way to the bank at Bill's gullibility and stupid loyalty. "What a chump that Bill is," they'd chortle, "He actually believes that crap about quality."

Being a stock person was also quite physically demanding. Spending hours squatting or kneeling, hunched over and flipping rugs is harsh on the back, knees, and shoulders. I often left work in a lot of pain. Sales people were not generally subjected to this type of physical abuse since they could stand, or sit comfortably on the rugs, while doing their sales pitch. Yet they were expected to be on their feet most of the time, particularly when soliciting customers as they entered the store.

Needless to say, life as a rug stock clerk, as with most other similar jobs, was demeaning, monotonous, and dreary, and I soon found myself sabotaging the work place at every opportunity. On errands for the company I would take as long as possible and complete as many personal errands as I could. Whenever I had the chance I would sneak upstairs and crash out on the comfortable piles of rugs. I spent inordinate amounts of time in the restroom doing homework or just reading. And I only worked when the boss or sales people were looking, and even then I worked as slowly as possible. I also did jobs poorly or incorrectly whenever I could get away with it, such as hanging posters upside down or backwards, and mispricing rugs.

I also learned to amuse myself, and waste time, by kicking back and just tripping on the everyday weirdness that went on in the store. For instance, Bill the salesman's pseudo-concerned facial expressions and "helpful" tone of voice seemed to be a grotesque caricature of a salesman that entertained me to no end. His lizard-like eyes would bug out pruriently when a customer ventured near the \$2000-3000 rugs as he slithered up to them, saliva escaping from between his lips. "You have excellent taste, my dear," he'd threaten menacingly. "That rug was hand woven by 8 year old Indian girls who worked 12 hours a day for two months straight, in a tiny shack high in the mountains of Kashmir!", he would tell wealthy Berkeley liberals.

Another source of amusement and time theft resulted from the various addictions of my coworkers. Most of the salesmen smoked pot and several did cocaine in the bathroom. Their drug breaks provided

me with the opportunity to plot diversions for future amusement. A favorite game of mine was to move their personal items or important pricing guides and stash them somewhere inconvenient. Then when they returned from their breaks and couldn't find these things I'd play dumb and say, "Gee, it must be that dope you guys smoke," and they'd swear a few times and quickly forget what they were looking for.

Even the owners did drugs. William did so much coffee and cigarettes that his odor made me nauseous before he even entered the store. He smoked 4-5 packs of Parliaments a day, while pounding cheap coffee (generally from MacDonalds) at a rate of several quarts a day. His partner, Ken, preferred Jesus as his drug of choice, as did many of the other rug mongers. They all did Jesus together on the weekends at the same Jesus house, but they also brought the stuff to work and tried to sell it to me. One of my least favorite (but most effective) ways of wasting time was to get one of the Jesus freaks to explain some christian (sic) concept to me, like how Jesus could die if he was god (sic), or why people believed god, and not Joseph, was his father. This would usually end up being a 30 minute oratory, ending with some sort of invitation to their house of abuse.

As if the day to day routine of a rug stock boy were not already exciting enough, there were occasional instances of extraordinary weirdness that made me down right glad to be in the rug business. For instance, one day a woman came into the store with identical twin boys, one of whom was intensely hyperactive and obnoxious, bounding across the rugs, knocking signs off the wall, kicking garbage pails over, and wreaking all kinds of havoc that I was expected to clean up. Meanwhile, his autistic twin was forced to wear a leash, though he stood quietly (and catatonic) by his mothers side the entire time. The horror and injustice of this made me cringe, yet I couldn't help wondering what kind of mutant thinking this woman engaged in. Could she not tell them apart, putting the leash on the wrong one by mistake? Or perhaps the quiet one was generally far more rambunctious and terrifying than his free brother, hence the leash, but at the moment he was subdued by a near lethal dose of Ritalin.

My big break in the business occurred as a result of another instance of rug weirdness. One afternoon a prudish saleswoman came running downstairs and screamed to me in a hushed whisper, "Chudaman! Chudaman! There's a crazy man in the rugs."

I followed her upstairs to the stack of rugs of interest, thinking who around here isn't crazy. "Don't worry Ethyl," I reassured her, bravely. "I'll take care of this." And I climbed onto the top of the stack and peered over the edge, where there was, indeed, a person snoring away

peacefully. "Excuse me," I whispered gently.

The lunatic looked up at me matter-of-factly and asked what time it was. It was then that I realized that the lunatic was not a man, but a young woman, in her late 20s, with short hair and a boyish figure. "Its almost five," I answered her. "Did you have a nice nap?"

"Oh yes, it was wonderful. I love these rugs." She started to get up. "They looked so soft and comfortable that I just had to lay on them. Then I guess I fell asleep. How much are they?"

"Well, they range from \$600-2400." I figured she was just being polite.

"I'll take this one here, with the dragon," she said, pointing to a \$2400 rug.

"That's a \$2400 rug, Ma'am," I stammered.

"Yes, I realize that. And its perfect for my living room... What's your name, I want to make sure you're given credit for this sale." And she began to write out a check.

The next day I was receiving individualized sales training by one of the owners, learning everything from our standard 600% mark-up policy, to the ropes of the infamous bait and switch scam. By the end of one week I had learned all there was to know about selling rugs and making a fortune on commissions. By the end of the second week I realized that there was no way in hell that I could make a living from commission without enormous luck (like several lunatics with big wallets) or by resorting to the same sleazy and dishonest sales tactics used by the other sales clerks.

I soon found myself subverting sales by intentionally pushing cheaper items or by selling the 'bait' instead of the 'switch.' I'd bargain with the customers, allowing them to make a bid and then, laughing psychotically, I'd offer it to them for even less, throwing in as many freebies as I could. I would tell the customers the truth about everything, even if they didn't ask. And when they came in looking for the specials advertised in the Chronicle, and the specials "happened" to be sold out because the owners intentionally purchased only three, I'd give them any rug in the store at the advertised price, explaining that this was the law.

As you can well imagine, even this grew tiring. Eventually I became fed up with all the crap that I had to put up with in the rug industry and I found a better job selling useless scientific gadgets to biotech companies with bloated budgets (and egos). Bill the salesman eventually got canned for calling Ken the bossman a festering carbuncle in front of customers. And Ethyl had a nervous breakdown. Meanwhile, the entire business fell apart after William was caught sleeping with Ken's wife, a veritable Tammy-Faye Baker look-alike. Rugs, Rugs, Rugs outlets began to close all over the San Francisco Bay Area and the world subsequently became a little safer for rug connoisseurs.

Briefs, Shorts, and Other Dirty Linen...

Where the Recession Isn't

The recession certainly hasn't touched U.S. executive pay. Despite the first signs of the recession, rising layoffs and weak corporate profits in 1990, pay for the nation's top executives rose by 8%, a larger percentage than any other group of salaried American workers. The average U.S. worker got raises of 5% or less that year, not enough to keep ahead of inflation.

Average pay of chief executives of large companies is often 70 to 80 times greater than the annual wages of the average worker. The 100 largest U.S. companies pay their CEO an average salary that is 99 times the average salary of those companies' employees. This gap between executive and worker pay has more than doubled in the last 15 years, as has the spread between U.S. executives and those of other nations.

CEOs in the U.S. earn almost twice as much as their counterparts in Canada and Germany, which rank second and third, respectively, in CEO pay. The higher U.S. CEO pay reflects stock options and other special long-term payments that add millions to base salaries. The theory is that

the people on top need incentives and the people on the bottom are excess costs.

Widespread Auto Layoffs

In the middle of March about 37,450 Big Three auto workers in the U.S. and Canada were laid off because of the shortage of dealer orders. Earlier in March, some 64,000 General Motors, Ford and Chrysler workers were not working as plants were closed and shifts reduced.

U.S. Productivity Woes

According to the Labor Department, U.S. productivity (the amount of work done by an employee each hour) fell 0.8% in 1990, the biggest decline since 1982. Predictably, this has triggered a chorus of laments for the eroding work ethic. More sophisticated capitalists concede that company loyalty is a two-way street, and is decreasing on both sides.

According to *Fortune* magazine, 30 million workers were laid off, forced to move or were involved in a corporate takeover in the '80s. Faced with the business swap shop of acquisitions and divestments, employees are apt to become "dis-

affected." But the best corporate advice to employees who feel they may be victims of the next round of cost cutting is to try to learn portable skills.

One study of 1,000 workers by the authors of *The Cynical American: Living and Working in an Age of Discontent and Disillusion* found that:

- 72% of the workers surveyed say managers try to take advantage of employees.
- 68% believe management makes an unfair salary compared to average employees.
- 66% say management does not tell the truth.
- 40% say they don't have job security.

The only question is what it will take to enlighten the 28%, the 32%, the 34%, and the 60%.

Argentine Strikers Fired

BUENOS AIRES, MARCH 14—The Argentine government fired some 1000 train workers who joined a wildcat strike at the state-owned railway company. About 5000 of the company's 84,000 workers walked out.

Courts Says U.S. Companies Abroad Can Violate Employees Rights

WASHINGTON, MARCH 26—The U.S. Supreme Court ruled 6 to 3 that the Civil Rights Act of 1964 barring discrimination in employment does not apply to U.S. citizens working overseas for U.S.-based companies. The decision that the Act does not apply beyond the country's borders leaves hundreds of thousands without legal protection against discrimination on the basis of race, religion or sex.

The high court upheld a lower court's dismissal of a suit brought against the Arabian American Oil Co. by an American engineer born in Lebanon. The engineer, Ali Boureslan, charged that his 1984 dismissal was a result of discrimination on the basis of his ethnic origin and Islamic religion. He said his supervisor ridiculed him because of his heritage and refused to let him take time off on Muslim holidays.

Justin Finger, associate national director

continued on page 6

Reclaiming May Day (continued from p. 1)

go purchased a \$2,000 machine gun for the Illinois National Guard to be used against strikers in case there was trouble in May.

By May Day, the movement had already won gains for many Chicago workers, including brewers, bakers, furniture workers, clothing cutters, shoemakers, and packing-house workers. On May 3rd, the mood among workers turned bitter when police fired into a crowd of workers at the McCormick Reaper Works Factory, killing four and wounding many. That evening, anarchists called for a mass meeting the next day in Haymarket Square to protest the police brutality.

Toward the end of the Haymarket meeting the following day, it began to rain. By the time the last speaker was on the platform, only a few hundred people remained. To everyone's surprise, 180

police officers marched into the Square and ordered the meeting to disperse. As the speakers climbed down from the platform, a bomb was thrown into the police lines, killing one and injuring about seventy. The police regrouped and shot into the crowd of workers, killing one and wounding many.

Although it was never determined who threw the bomb into the police ranks, the incident was used as an excuse to launch an intensive campaign of repression against the Left and labor in general. Police ransacked the homes and offices of suspected radicals and hundreds were arrested without charge. Knowing that anarchists had been the principal organizers of the Chicago eight-hour movement, the police arrested eight anarchists and charged them with conspiracy to murder.

What ensued was a kangaroo court of

anti-anarchist hysteria lacking any substantial evidence linking the anarchists to the Haymarket bombing. In fact, only one of the eight arrested, Samuel Fielden, had been at Haymarket Square May 4th, and he was on stage when the bomb was thrown. The lack of evidence against those arrested did not deter the jury from finding them guilty. Seven were sentenced to death. Despite international condemnation of the framing of the anarchists, four—Albert Parsons, August Spies, Adolph Fischer, and George Engel—were hanged on November 11, 1887 in Cook County Jail. Another, Louis Lingg, committed suicide in prison. The others remained imprisoned until Governor John P. Altgeld pardoned them in 1893.

After the trial, police repression increased nationwide against leftists and the labor movement, crushing most of the strikes and forcing workers back to their jobs. Despite this repression, the May Day movement of 1886 guaranteed the eight-hour day for thousands of workers and shortened the workday for many

others. However, the movement was much more than just a fight for the eight-hour day between individual workers and employers. It adopted a class character and questioned the basic relationship between labor and capital. The movement was both an assertion that the worker was a human being whose life should not be consumed by toil and an attack on the deliberate policy of keeping hours long and unemployment high in order to get the most work for the lowest wages. Workers challenged capitals self-proclaimed right to totally control the work process and asserted, through collective direct action, that workers should and could have some control over their working lives.

The 105 years of class struggle since the first May Day have been rich and proud ones for working people. In order to realize our goals of the abolition of the wage system and the building of a truly democratic society, we must preserve our history, of which the May Day movement is an integral part.

by Dave Karoly

Profile of a Branch (continued from p. 4)

MK: No, when I say staff, I mean clerical and technical workers.

IW: I would assume it hasn't been easy breaking through the artificial sense of "We're all one big happy family here?"

MK: Well, non-profit organizations in particular seem to have an ideological bent to their management so that anyone who opposes the decisions of management is seen not only as a rebel worker, but as a heretic. So, we're "enemies of New College" because we opposed the actions of management.

IW: But in fact, New College management has precipitated New College into a financial crisis that it may or may not be able to squeeze out of.

MK: That was one of the major thrusts of our organizing drive. Management has proven themselves unable to run the business of the school, so let us do it. One of our major goals is workplace democracy, participation in the decision-making process.

IW: Is the staff willing to take on that extra responsibility?

MK: The staff is here, not only because they need a job, but because they believe in what the school is about, it's a progressive institution with a strong sense of social activism. The people here could be making more money somewhere else. These people would be more than happy to participate in the decision-making process.

IW: So the unionizing drive is consistent with the very reasons they're here.

MK: Exactly. It's perfectly in keeping with the principles on which this school was founded. The school is founded on the ideal of empowering people, and that's what the staff is doing — it's self-organizing, it's self-empowering.

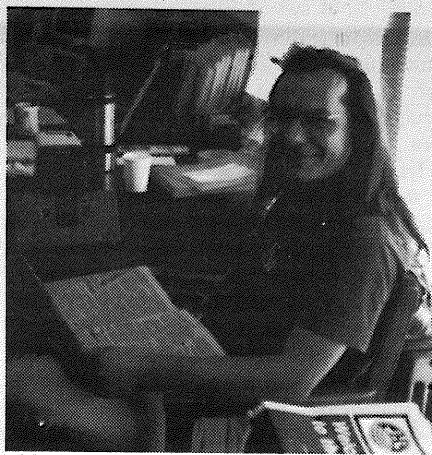
IW: Anything else?

MK: I think the education industry in general is under attack, the entire education system is suffering. When that happens, the first people to suffer are the people who work there. In the past, New College has used the staff as the people on whose backs they would balance the budget.

IW: This affects the students as well, obviously.

MK: Oh yea, the students are the reason why the doors are open. The students here have been very supportive of what we're doing. We've actually got commitments from some of the student organizers that if we march in a picketline in front of this building, they'll be out there carrying signs with us.

By x334498



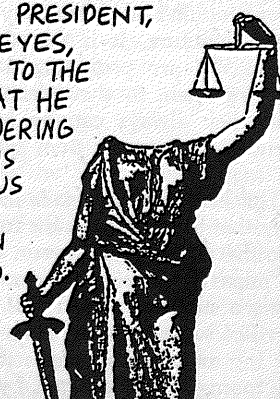
Industrial Worker coordinator "Big" Bill Dunham scours the Classified section for career opportunities.

ECONOMIC JUSTICE

RECENTLY, JOHNSON CONTROLS LOST A CASE IN THE SUPREME COURT BECAUSE IT HAD DENIED WOMEN THE RIGHT TO WORK AT HAZARDOUS JOBS.



SOON AFTER, JOHNSON CONTROLS PRESIDENT, JAMES KEYES, ADMITTED TO THE PRESS THAT HE WAS CONSIDERING MOVING HIS HAZARDOUS BATTERY OPERATION TO MEXICO.



AFTER ALL, WHY BOTHER OBEYING THE UNITED STATES SUPREME COURT WHEN YOU CAN EXPLOIT WORKERS IN MEXICO.



MEANWHILE, GEORGE BUSH IS PUSHING FOR FAST-TRACK PASSAGE OF THE US/MEXICO FREE TRADE PACT...



KONOPACKI
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HUCK/KONOPACKI CARTOONS

Briefs & Dirty Linen (continued from p. 5)

of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, urged rapid Congressional action to amend the civil rights bill to provide that U.S. companies cannot discriminate against U.S. citizens overseas (presumably, they can discriminate against their other employees all they like.)

Judge Upholds Job Rights of Undocumented Workers

SAN FRANCISCO, MARCH 5—A federal judge, Robert Coyle, ruled that undocumented aliens can bring lawsuits under the 1964 Civil Rights Act charging they are victims of racial or sexual discrimination at work.

The case was brought in 1987 by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission on behalf of Alicia Castrejon, an undocumented worker from the state of Michoacan, Mexico. Castrejon charged she was the victim of sex discrimination because her employer, Tortilleria La Mejor, had refused to reinstate her as promised after she tried to return to her assembly-line job after a pregnancy leave.

Judge Coyle's ruling allows Castrejon to pursue her lawsuit against the tortilla factory. She is seeking reinstatement and back pay, the only remedies available under Title VII of the civil rights act. Her trial is set to begin in October.

Lawyers involved in the case acknowledged that most undocumented workers not covered by the amnesty law would be unlikely to bring such discrimination suits because it would expose them to deportation proceedings. But undocumented

workers who have applied for amnesty are not subject to deportation proceedings while their applications are pending. These aliens may legally seek work and the ruling could open the door to many discrimination complaints concerning them.

The majority of the undocumented workers coming from Mexico are male, but increasing numbers of women are arriving. The continuing economic crisis and the breakdown of traditional restrictions in Mexico has driven more women into the paid workforce, where they are subject to the same pressures as male workers to migrate in search of employment.

War Resisters League Training Program for Organizers

August 9-18, 1991. The Gulf War has highlighted the need for effective and knowledgeable political organizers. The War Resisters League is hosting a program to develop organizing skills for non-violent activists. Political philosophy, issues and techniques of organizing are explored through workshops with experienced resource people and personal sharing. The program will be held in Western Massachusetts. Maximum participants 20. Cost \$275-\$450, sliding scale. To receive an application and brochure, contact WRL, 339 Lafayette Street, New York, NY 10012, (212) 228-0450. Preference given to applications in by JUNE 1.



Left Side

INDUSTRY: from Latin *industria* (indu, in -struere). 1) Skill, cleverness, ingenuity. A use of skill or craft; 2) habitual diligence in any employment or pursuit; assiduity; 3) any branch or department of art, occupation, or business; one which employs much labor and capital and is a distinct branch of trade; 4) Economic: systematic labor or habitual employment, esp., human exertion employed for the creation of value.

INDUSTRIAL: from industry. 1) having to do with industry; as relating to industry or labor as an economic factor, or to a branch or branches of industry—derived from industry, or human toil, rather than from natural advantage on the one hand or mere pecuniary profit on the other—pertaining to or aiding those engaged in industries; as, industrial wages, medicine, schools, training.

INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENT: an accident occurring during the course of employment.

INDUSTRIAL DEMOCRACY: control over industry by workers acting democratically; specifically, socialism.

INDUSTRIAL DISEASE: a disease occurring characteristically in a given industry.

INDUSTRIAL WORKERS OF THE WORLD: a labor organization formed at Chicago in 1905 to include workers in all occupations, skilled or unskilled, irrespective of trade or craft. It demands the abolition of the wage system and has declared itself in favor of international socialism. —Webster's Unabridged New International Dictionary

INDUSTRIAL WORKER: official organ of the Industrial Workers of the World.

There will be some of you fellow worker readers who have seen this excerpt from Webster's Unabridged previously in this column, to whom your scribe must beg your indulgence. I shall, however, request that those re-reading, as well as those reading for the first time, use critical thinking.

There is concern that because the "I" word has become associated in the minds of many as referring only to large factories, that the "I" word would thus effectively outdate us — making us an anachronism. The system of communication that our species has —known as speech— has been around for a few million years. While Classic Latin may not be quite as old, it was certainly around before any heavy industrial factories existed—in fact, even before Rome degenerated into a class-society.

Even during the first decade of the twentieth century when the IWW was founded, large factory complexes, as they exist today, didn't yet exist. In the spirit, as well as the true meaning of the word "industry" as explained by Webster's Unabridged, anyone engaged in productive labor is an "industrial worker." Whether you work in a factory, plow potatoes in fields, sweep the barroom floor, flip hamburgers or merely keep the shanty where you live nice and clean for your wage-working mate to come home to, your sweat contributes to keeping a minuscule portion of our fellow creatures in undeserved leisure, and you are still a goddamned "industrial worker". Eventually when enough of humanity takes our message to heart and the classless society becomes more than a visionary dream, still more work will be necessary.

When the last parasite shall be convinced to become a productive member of society, there will be yet more work to do that will require our "industriousness". As the old scribe of many generations past said, "A rose by any other name is still a rose..." The word "industry," as well as "industrial," still cannot engage in productive activity.

If and when this better society is achieved and the factories shall have disappeared from all over the world, we will still have to be "industrious" in order for this better society to function. We must also remember that we are a traditional species of critters who have brought ourselves up from the morass of lower-creaturehood, because only our species has a sense of history. The name



of this paper, the *Industrial Worker*, and our organization happens to be our sense of history. I do not believe that the term "industrial" would turn away anyone who would otherwise appreciate our message. Those who prefer to remain uncommitted and uninvolved will always find an excuse for justifying their lack of interest. Changing the name of this paper will not change the way the latter think and practice.

Being cognizant of the phenomenon of television attention-span that has afflicted far too many of us, I believe that changing the name of our monthly newspaper would do more harm than good. If the *Chicago Tribune* or the *Wall Street Journal* (with their antique mastheads and trite titles) still manage to sell millions of copies of their newspapers, keep their press workers in three-squares and their honchos in gravy, the word "industrial" does not happen to be our problem.

Call your humble scribe a sentimentalist, if you wish, but let us recall that we have long been associated with the "I" word; to abandon our sense of history in these perilous times would not be in our own best interests.

While watching the spoon-fed distortion of current events that passes for the boob-tube news reports, while sipping my morning cup of coffee, there was an interview with a child psychologist who regaled the viewers with new phrases. He noted that some children, whether at school or at home with parents, never appear to learn anything or have concentration skills; these same children are anxious to go out and play and/or are otherwise restless. This problem is now termed "attention-deficient hyperactivity" and any child diagnosed with this deficiency is in need of counseling. Leave it to child psychologists to drum up business for themselves.

Your not-so-humble scribe feels that "attention-deficient hyperactivity" is not a problem restricted solely to children, but could easily have been passed on to them by their elders. The sage who said that those who ignore history are doomed to repeat it would likely never make it as a television newscaster; not out of a lack of forensic aptitude, but out of an overabundance of integrity. Our contemporary sequence of events most eloquently testifies to the wisdom of his words.

We certainly have no justification for criticizing the lack of memory of the younger members of our species when made to look at our own conduct as responsible elders. It was my Uncle Hornplanter who observed that *man is the only creature that can be skinned more than once*. Our daily boob-tube fare guarantees that we remain in this condition. Commercials fed to us during newscasts are designed to cause the viewer to forget the nature of the disaster aired previously.

When the conquistadores came to this hemisphere, their task was to destroy as many pictographic records as they could get their greedy hands on. When the cavalry swept over the villages on the plains, the first ones to fall to the musket were the elders who passed on their nation's history to the young. Conquerors throughout the ages have learned this lesson well; in order to truly subdue a people, you must rob them of their own history.

With all the history that organized labor has written for itself here in Freedomland, how, otherwise, could working-stiffs' average earnings have been reduced to that of a McDunhill's hamburger flipper? Has the blood, sweat, and tears of countless union women and men been flushed down the drain by the beer and soda pop commercials?

If you wish to know more about this phenomenon, be sure to read your next copy of the *Industrial Worker*—unless the name is changed by then.

—C.C. Redcloud

IWW Preamble

The working class and the employing class have nothing in common. There can be no peace so long as hunger and want are found among millions of working people and the few, who make up the employing class, have all the good things of life.

Between these two classes a struggle must go on until the workers of the world organize as a class, take possession of the earth and the machinery of production, and abolish the wage system.

We find that the centering of the management of industries into fewer and fewer hands makes the trade unions unable to cope with the ever growing power of the employing class. The trade unions foster a state of affairs which allows one set of workers to be pitted against another set of workers in the same industry, thereby helping to defeat one another in wage wars. Moreover, the trade unions aid the employing class to mislead the workers into the belief that the working class have interests in common with their employers.

These conditions can be changed and the interests of the working class upheld only by an organization formed in such a way that all its members in any one industry, or in all industries if necessary, cease work whenever a strike or lockout is on in any department thereof, thus making an injury to one an injury to all.

Instead of the conservative motto, "A fair day's wage for a fair day's work," we must inscribe on our banner the revolutionary watchword, "Abolition of the wage system."

It is the historic mission of the working class to do away with capitalism. The army of production must be organized, not only for the everyday struggle with capitalists, but also to carry on production when capitalism shall have been overthrown. By organizing industrially we are forming the structure of the new society within the shell of the old.

Join the IWW

No Bureaucrats—Aside from the modestly paid General Secretary-Treasurer and the office worker who staff our General Administration, the IWW has no paid officers. The General Executive Board is elected annually by the entire membership, and its job is to oversee the running of union affairs, not to set policy. All officers may be recalled at any time by referendum.

Real Democracy—All Policy decisions are made by the members themselves by referendum. All branches maintain full autonomy on matters within their jurisdiction. Job branches (IWW groups composed of workers at a single job-site) set their own demands and strategies in negotiations, free of meddling internationals or sell-out business agents.

Low Dues—Our dues are structured on a sliding scale basis. Unemployed and low-income workers pay \$3 a month; those making between \$800 and \$1,700 per month pay \$9; and members making more than \$1,700 per month pay \$12 monthly dues. Initiation fees equal one month's dues, so a low-income worker can join for as little as \$6.

To Join—Fill out the questions below and mail this form with your check or money order to **IWW, 1095 Market Street Suite 204, San Francisco, CA 94103.**

- I affirm that I am a common worker without direct power to hire and fire.
- I agree to abide by the constitution and regulations of this organization.
- I will study its principles and make myself acquainted with its purposes.

Name _____ Occupation _____

Address _____ City _____

State/Prov. _____ Zip _____ Phone _____

Total amount enclosed: \$ _____ Initiation \$ _____ Dues \$ _____

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IWW Literature

Available from Chicago

1476 W. Irving Park, Chicago, IL 60613

IWW Songs of the Workers: To Fan the Flames of Discontent (*Little Red Song Book*). \$5.00.

The IWW: Its First Seventy Years: 1905-1975, by Fred Thompson & Patrick Murfin. \$9.00 paper, \$15 hardbound.

The General Strike, by Ralph Chaplin. \$3.00.

The One Big Union. \$2.00.

Unions and Racism, by Shelby Shapiro. \$2.00.

The Yale Strike of 1984-1985, by Gilpin, et al.

Memories of a Wobbly: On the Road for the Revolution, by Henry McGuckin. \$6.00.

Roll the Union On: Pictorial History of the Southern Tenant Farmers Union, by H.L. Mitchel, \$8.00.

By American! (Labor Cartoons), by Gary Huck and Mike Konopaki. 150 cartoons, \$8.00.

Labor Law for the Rank and Filer, by Staughton Lynd. \$3.00.

Labor Law Handbook, by Michael Yates. \$8.00.

Rebel Voices: An IWW Anthology, by Joyce Kornbluh, editor. \$19.00.

The Flivver King: A Story of Ford-America, by Upton Sinclair. \$8.00.

War at Home, by Brian Glick. \$5.00.

Mr. Block: 24 IWW Cartoons, by Ernest Ribbe. \$5.00.

We Have Fed You All for 1000 Years, by U. Utah Phillips. \$10.00.

Available from Denver/Boulder GMB

2412 E. Colfax, Denver, CO 80206

IWW T-Shirts (black & red, M, L, XL, 50/50) \$10.00.

Out of the Depths (Ludlow Massacre). \$10.00.

Columbine Memorial Video (scattering of Joe Hill's ashes). \$20.00.

"Workers' Solidarity" suspenders (red, Reg., XL-XXL). \$12.00.

Prices are postpaid. Make checks to:

Denver-Boulder IWW

Available from S.E. Michigan GMB

Domino's Pizza Boycott Info Packet. \$10.00.

Make checks to "Domino's Coalition—LASC,"

and mail to AATU Job Branch,

4001 Michigan Union, Ann Arbor, MI 48109

Available from New York GMB

P.O. Box 1174M, Bayshore, NY 11706

A Workers Guide to Direct Action. 75¢.

Collective Bargaining Manual. \$2.50.

Postpaid. Make checks to IWW, NY GMB

Oil Wars & Class War

It is fitting that May Day comes in the wake of one of the most brutal massacres in the history of the world. The Iraqi civilians killed in the war were workers and their families. The U.S. and Iraqi military personnel killed in the fighting were also workers. And the Palestinians, Yemenis, and Sudanese who were killed, tortured, and deported by the Saudi and Kuwaiti governments were workers, too. International Workers Day commemorates the struggles of workers throughout the world. The Gulf war and the struggle to control the international petroleum industry amount to war on the working people of the world.

Petroleum production is high stakes, with governments and corporations competing aggressively for bigger and bigger profits. Work in this industry is dangerous even without this competition, but it is made much worse by the unscrupulous business practices and inadequate or non-existent safety controls that help oil producers increase their profits. Death and mutilation are common in the petroleum industry. In 1989, 1000 Egyptians were killed in Iraqi oil production. Over 600 people were killed that same year in the Soviet Union as a result of a gas pipeline explosion in the Urals. 167 workers were killed in the North Sea in 1988 when a production platform exploded. In 1984, over 300 people were killed in Mexico City after a gas storage facility exploded, and over 500 were killed in Cubatao, Brazil, when an oil pipeline erupted. Most recently, the oil tanker explosion off the coast of Italy caused the deaths of 5 workers.

Oil is considered a basic commodity on the international market because it is essential to so many industries. Its price affects the prices of virtually every other commodity. Therefore, the price of oil also influences inflation, wages, profits, and policy-making. The high price of oil in the 1970s led to increased worker demands and to worker struggles in oil-producing regions. It also led governments and oil companies to an increasing reliance on repressive and violent methods to maintain high profits without buckling to workers' demands. As a result, in the 1980s we saw the large-scale bloating of military budgets, police forc-

es, and prisons world wide.

The decline of oil prices in the mid-1980s led many local governments to denationalize their oil industries and forced them to rely on outside sources of investment. Countries like Nigeria and Algeria, which received up to 95% of their export revenues from petroleum production, were increasingly forced to accept IMF austerity plans that cut dramatically into wages and the standard of living. It has even been suggested that Perestroika is directly tied to this decline in oil prices, as the Soviet Union's massive petroleum industry was consequently bringing in less income.

They have to be sponsored by a local employer, they cannot legally organize in trade unions, own property, switch jobs, nor remain in the country without working.

The impact of the international oil economy on workers is phenomenal. The oil crisis of 1973 led to a world-wide devaluation of wages. This exacerbated the already large third world debts and intensified the poverty that exists in much of the world. The cholera epidemic in Peru, which has already claimed over 700 lives, has been blamed on the increased oil prices that accompanied the Gulf conflict. Money that should have been spent to improve sanitation, health care, and other living conditions was being spent servicing Peru's huge debt and paying for inflated oil to run its industries. It should be noted that cholera epidemics are now rare in this "modern" era, due to improvements in sanitation. The current cholera epidemic in South America (it has now spread to Columbia and Ecuador) is the first we've had this century!

Poverty has forced many workers to leave their homelands for higher wages in the oil producing states of the gulf. Foreign workers make up over 80% of the labor force in Kuwait, 25% in Iraq, and 90% in the United Arab Emirates. Similar

conditions exist in the other Gulf states, but exact figures are difficult to obtain because the officials often alter census statistics in order to make it seem as though there are less foreigners living there. (*Z magazine*, 4/91, p. 32) These workers come from Egypt, Pakistan, Bangladesh, India, North Africa, and the Philippines. They will come in even greater numbers in the future to earn a living in the various industries working to reconstruct Iraq and Kuwait.

Working and living conditions for foreign workers are horrendous, and in some cases amount to indentured servitude. In fact, Kuwait is the only country

thousand lives.

Military violence has accompanied this unrest, with coups threatened in Venezuela and Algeria; a military dictatorship in Nigeria; and a threatened U.S. intervention in Trinidad. The current military crisis in the Gulf has been used to justify a host of oppressive policies in the region. In Saudi Arabia, one and a half million Yemenis (15% of the total Saudi population) have been expelled. And many were tortured or imprisoned, according to Amnesty International. Jordanian, Sudanese, and Palestinian workers are being refused entry into Gulf states because "their governments supported Saddam Hussein." Widespread famine is threatening Sudan, while aid to this country is being blocked because of its "role in supporting Saddam."

Particularly hard hit are the Palestinians who have been expelled from Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Oman, and the United Arab Emirates. In Israel, Yitzak Shamir wants to strictly enforce its labor laws requiring work permits and minimum wages for Palestinians. This could lead to a loss of 80,000 out of 120,000 Palestinian workers in Israel. (*Z*, 4/91, p. 36) Add this to an already long list of atrocities including: arrests, torture and murder of Palestinians in Kuwait; the detention of 14,000 Palestinians in Israel without charge or trial; over 700 killed by Israeli forces; bulldozed homes; schools closures; curfews; and house arrest for everyone in the occupied territory during the gulf war, effectively leaving most Palestinians without access to work or income.

The relationship between oil, worker struggles, and military violence is deeply embedded in the present world economy. The ubiquitous influence of oil on the world economy, in fact, helps to explain Bush's relentless pursuit of his violent and imperialistic Gulf policy: control of oil is essential to control over the international economy. This has obvious far-reaching consequences for all workers and points out the oppressiveness of oil addiction. Ending the universal dependency on oil, and seeking ecologically sustainable alternative energy sources is essential to the struggles of working people, as it is to the fight to save the earth.

by Michael Dunn



excerpt from *Le Cheminot*, bimonthly publication of a French railroad workers' union

Panel 1

"The surveillance equipment is ready, Admiral. There seems to be something up ahead..."

"Yes? What then?"

"Here it is, Admiral."

Panel 2

"Look... there."

Panel 3

"GOOD LORD!!... BUT!?"

Panel 4

"What is it?"

"Three hospitals and an infant daycare center, Admiral."

Panel 5

"And the Colbert?"

"No news."

"And the other ships?"

"They're seeing the same thing that we do, Admiral."

Panel 6

"It's sorcery. We must be seeing things."

"Not quite. For the price of one battlecruiser, you could buy three hospitals and a childcare center."

Panel 7

"AND SO? WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY THAT?"

"Nothing, Admiral."

"And the escort ship Arras—where is it?"

"Over there, Admiral."