



# INDUSTRIAL WORKER

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## The Anniversary of a General Strike— Nicaragua One Year Later

by Mary Ann Jasper

During 1990 I worked in Nicaragua from January through September as a TecNica volunteer in a print shop in Managua. TecNica is, or was (in the aftermath of the Nicaraguan elections many U.S.-Nica solidarity organizations lost their grassroots support and went under) an organization that sent people in the skilled trades and computer organizations to Nicaragua to provide training and technical support in their areas of expertise.

The print shop where I worked was associated with INIES, the Nicaraguan Institute of Social and Economic Studies. This Institute was responsible for much of the research and documentation about the social and economic changes taking place in Nicaragua as a result of the triumph of the Revolution in 1979. What with the electoral triumph of the U.S.-financed counter-revolution in 1990 the print shop became, so to speak, an opposition press. My project involved helping to set up a darkroom and train someone to work in it so that this part of

government. These included biweekly devaluations of the new cordoba (the Nicaraguan currency) as well as the first steps in privatizing the national banking system and the state-run industrial enterprises. In the countryside, campesinos and co-ops were facing the new agricultural policies of the UNO government: 15 percent interest on agricultural loans, with no roll-overs for crop failure. As loan collateral they would have to put up their land titles, losing them to the banks or they couldn't repay their loans at the newly inflated exchange rate. Meanwhile the new cabinet ministers were raking in a salary of \$5,000 a month in U.S. dollars (our U.S. tax dollars hard at work)—good wages in a country where the average worker brings home the equivalent of U.S. \$50-100 a month. Sandinista cabinet ministers had been paid the equivalent of \$500 a month in cordobas. The month of May saw a series of strikes by government workers, culminating in the signing of accords between the FNT and the government. The government promptly reneged on the accords and continued firing state workers. The government also chose this time to issue the

*"During the strike, the workers stayed on their jobsites to keep them from being occupied by strikebreakers."*

the printing process would not have to be purchased outside of the shop.

While in Managua I had the opportunity to read a book about the roots of Augusto Sandino's political philosophy and was surprised to learn that Sandino spent much of his twenties in Mexico, both in the capital and working in the oil fields of John D. Rockefeller, where he met some U.S. Wobblies who were helping to organize the Mexican oil field strikes of the '20s. It's no surprise, therefore, that Sandino's flag (still the flag today of the Frente Sandinista) bears not only the red of communism but the black of anarcho-syndicalism. After returning to Nicaragua to run the U.S. Marines out of the country he was setting up the first campesino cooperatives in Nuevo Segovia in the northern mountains of Nicaragua when he was assassinated by Anastasio Somoza.

So, much as Sandino drew on the experience of the Wob organizers in the Mexican oilfields, we can look to the Nicaraguan general strike of 1990, draw some conclusions and apply them to the concept of a general strike here in the U.S.

The general strike began late Sunday July 8 and lasted through Wednesday July 11, when the FNT (National Workers Front—the pro-Sandinista unions) and the Chamorro government signed the accords that ended the strike. But the conditions leading up to the strike went back three months or more, to the first changes implemented by the new UNO

infamous decrees 11-90 and 11-91, setting in motion a process allowing previous owners returning from Miami in large numbers to reclaim their lands and properties that had been confiscated by the FSLN (Frente Sandinista Liberacion Nacional) government. Much of this land had been distributed to cooperatives or private small farmers.

In the UNO-dominated National Assembly the Sandinista labor code and civil service laws were voted down and the old Somoza labor code was reinstated with no rights given to strike or bargain collectively. This was unconstitutional, of course, and would quickly be declared so by the Nicaraguan Supreme Court. The government retaliated by firing the Court's Chief Justice.

Meanwhile the public was suffering through constant devaluations of the cordoba. At the end of April when the government changed hands the exchange rate was 69,000 cordobas to the dollar. By the first of July it stood at 350,000 to the dollar. People on fixed salaries were really hurting. At the beginning of July the government announced that it was cutting back on the basic commodities (such as rice, beans, oil and sugar) previously subsidized for state employees and cutting off the free subsidy of bus tokens to students and teachers.

This was the scenario immediately preceding the general strike. As people saw the revolutionary social gains they had fought and died for chipped away by the new government the cry arose "Ni un



During the second week of the strike, Managua was on the verge of civil war.

paso atras!" ("Not one step back") which became the rallying cry of the general strike. In the last week of May the FNT adopted a tactic of escalating strikes with a new section of state employees going out on strike every few days in an effort to compel the government to negotiate with the workers.

On Friday July 6 Minister of Labor Francisco Rosales issued a counter-proposal: that he would negotiate the five demands that were specifically labor related and would not touch on the larger economic issues. Then he issued a statement refusing to negotiate and declaring the strike 'illegal, illicit and in-existent,' and that any worker that did not show up ready to work as normal Monday morning would be considered a striker in an illegal strike, subject to being fired. On top of all this another devaluation of the cordoba was announced and on Friday night a student was shot and killed at a neighborhood strike rally. Later it became known that the assailants had meant to hit the neighborhood leaders attending the rally.

Sunday night while Managua slept people were busy putting up barricades at every major intersection. The FNT had voted for the general strike. At dawn the barricades to the south on the Carretera Masaya were torn down by the first trucks of armed strikebreakers brought in from Masaya by the government. These

were the strikebreakers responsible for the shootings of strikers in TexNic S.A. and various other factories along the Carretera Norte during the day Monday. That night there were support rallies and marches in many of the neighborhoods although people were nervous about reports of armed UNO supporters sniping at people from cars along the highways.

From Monday through Wednesday the city was effectively shut down. There were barricades at every major intersection and the smoke from burning tires wafted through the city. The international airport was closed down and no one could enter or leave the country by air. International phone calls were shut down by the state communication workers so not even the government or the U.S. embassy could call home.

We spent Tuesday afternoon listening alternately to Radio Ya, the FSLN station, and the right wing Radio Corporacion. It was scary listening to the hate messages being transmitted from Radio Corporacion. They were saying things like internationalists had been seen directing the construction of barricades and that they should all have been kicked out of the country once the UNO had assumed power. They were giving out the names of various leaders of the pro-FSLN communal movement of different neighborhoods with their addresses as though

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## Announcement to IWW Members

The 1991 General Assembly of the IWW will be held in San Francisco over Labor Day Weekend, August 31st and September 1st. The results of the Spring referendum on this issue were as follows:

San Francisco—62 votes  
Ann Arbor—36 votes  
Other—7 votes

August 31—55 votes  
September 7—24 votes  
September 14—23 votes  
No preference—3 votes

There were 105 total valid ballots and 3 invalid ballots. Signed, this 24th day of June, 1991, the Ballot Committee, Franklin Devore (x323303), Obo Day Help (x337768), D.J. Watkins (x340308).

Members who wish to attend the General Assembly may contact the Coordinating Committee in San Francisco at (415) 863-9627 to arrange for housing while they're here. According to our constitution "representation at the General Assembly of the IWW shall be mass membership and delegate on the basis of one member one vote." All members are encouraged to attend. Groups and branches should consider pooling their resources in order to send at least one representative.

# Letters to the Editors . . .

Dear FWs:

Greetings from the bowels of the Gulag. I hope that you all are at least well. I'm in the hole and will be there for another nine days.

While I'm not ready for a class war yet, I'm getting there philosophically. But I believe we must include as much of the middle class as possible in our struggle. When I was free and a member of the middle class, oftentimes I changed roles between being a "worker" and a "boss." But I was always a toiler.

As such, I agree with 90% of your articles and editorial comments. I would go even further. Not only must workers take over the means of production, but we must take over the government and educational operations of this country. But we must resolve now to adopt policies that are environmentally sound. Because if the earth loses its capacity to feed us, all other arguments are moot.

Have you heard from Mr. John Perroti lately? I've not heard from or seen him in over a month. I wonder if he's alright.

These are my current thoughts from the depths of the bowels of the gulag. Until next time I remain with a blessing for a more peaceful and just world.

In Friendship & Solidarity,  
Jacob F.  
Lebanon, Ohio

Dear FWs:

Thanks for the sample copy of *Industrial Worker* and the information on IWW. I would like to become a subscriber. I enclose the subscription part of the paper and a cheque with the proper amount. Unfortunately, any donation is beyond what I can afford because I am unemployed. Please note that I am not working not because I don't want to, but because I am forced to, due to the fact that I am joining the army this summer, which in Cyprus is obligatory.

Just think that the government prevents people from working, thus cuts their income and doesn't even give them an allowance just for the sake of going to the army. Note that the army service is 26 months (!) and the pay of a soldier is 15 pounds, which is about \$30 a month! That means that a workers loses about three years of his life and during that time he can't even save some money for the future. This is criminal. To choose not to go to the army is out of the question because then you are sentenced to two years imprisonment with "special treatment" on the menu. I wonder if you could write something about this situation which exists in many countries.

All Support,  
Christos T.  
Nicosia, Cyprus



## Contribute to the I.W.

The *Industrial Worker* is a collective effort. That means not only the collective members in San Francisco, but you too. We need your contributions—articles, opinion pieces, and, especially, photos, cartoons, illustrations and other graphics.

Send your contributions to: Industrial Worker Collective, 1095 Market Street #204, San Francisco, CA 94103. Or give us a call at (415) 863-WOBS.

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# IWW Directory

For those unfamiliar with IWW terminology, we offer these definitions: Job Shop—an IWW-organized group of workers at a particular workplace—either worker-owned, or owned by the bosses. GMB—General Membership Branch, a chartered branch of members linked by locale, rather than workplace. IWW Group—A group of IWW members in the same locale—not large enough to be a GMB. I.U.—Industrial Union, the IWW number assigned to a particular industry. Delegate—An IWW member authorized to collect dues and to sign up new members.

## AUSTRALIA

Jura Books—110 Chrystal St., Petersham, Sydney.

## CANADA

### BRITISH COLUMBIA

Vancouver GMB—110-511 Gatsensbury St., Coquitlam, V3J 5E7.  
Eastside Datagraphics Job Shop (I.U. 450)—1460 Commercial Dr., Vancouver V5L 3X9, (604) 255-9559. John Barker, contact.  
SE British Columbia IWW Group—P.O. Box 54, Balfour, V0G 1C0. Contact: David Everest (604) 229-4978.

### MANITOBA

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

### ONTARIO

Kingston IWW Group—472 Albert Street, K7J 3W3, (613) 544-2382. Delegate: Brad Waugh (613) 549-6094.  
Ottawa IWW Group—388 1/2 Kent Street, K2P 2A9, (613) 231-2922.  
Toronto GMB—26A Oxford Street, 2nd floor, M5T 1N9, (416) 972-6293. Meetings first Thursday, 7 pm, each month, phone for location.  
Blackbird Design Collective Job Shop (I.U. 450)—394 Euclid Ave., Suite 301, M6G 2S9, (416) 972-6293.

## UNITED KINGDOM

### ENGLAND

IWW Delegate—D. Czunys, 13 Wolsley, York, YO1 5BQ.  
IWW Delegate—F. Lee, 15 Melville St., Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent, ST1 3NB, 0782-214915.

## UNITED STATES

### ARKANSAS

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

### CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles contact—Dorice McDaniels, (213) 679-2570.

IWW Local 1/Mendocino/Humboldt GMB—R. Withers, 32321 N. Harbor Drive, Fort Bragg 95437, (707) 961-1953.

San Diego IWW—RMR Kroopkin, 2675 Fletcher Parkway #211, El Cajon 92020.

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

Berkeley Recycling Center Job Shop (I.U. 670)—M. Carlstroem, 2515 Piedmont #8, 94607.

New Earth Press Job Shop (I.U. 450)—1640 Addison, Berkeley, 94702. Delegate: Dave Karoly (415) 549-0575.

Santa Barbara Area IWW—S. Menard, (805) 968-8456.

## 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. Delegates: Cliff Sundstrom, 910 E. 8th Ave. #202, Denver 80218 (303) 832-7602. Dave Frazer, Box 6, Rollinsville 80474, (303) 258-3732.

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

## GEORGIA

Atlanta IWW Group—340 Elmira Place, 30307.

## ILLINOIS

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

Champaign/Urbana IWW Group—Box 2824, 61820.

## LOUISIANA

New Orleans Area IWW Group—R. McCarthy, 609 Jefferson Ave., 70115, (504) 899-0014.

## MARYLAND

Baltimore Area GMB—R. Bey, Black Shield, Box 1681, Glen Burnie 21060, (301) 367-3024.

## MASSACHUSETTS

Boston GMB—Box 454, Cambridge 02139, (617) 629-2922. Meetings, second Sunday, 2 pm. Delegate: Dani Mavronicles.

## MICHIGAN

Southeast Michigan GMB—400 W. Washington, #2B, Ann Arbor 48103, (313) 995-1422. Delegates: Geoff Kroepel (313) 769-8629; Michael Kozura, Ingrid Kock (313) 973-9102.

Ann Arbor Tenants' Union Job Shop (I.U. 670)—4001 Michigan Union, Ann Arbor 48109, (313) 763-6876. Delegate: Jeff Gearhart (313) 994-5477.

People's Warehouse Branch (I.U. 660)—727 W. Ellsworth, Ann Arbor 48108, (313) 769-8629. Delegates: Carol Landry, Mark Kaufmann (313) 483-3478.

N. Michigan—John Patterson P.O. Box 245, Conway 49722-0245.

## MINNESOTA

Minneapolis / St. Paul IWW Group—Box 2391, Loop Stn., 55402, (612) 339-5002. Delegate: Chris Shillock.  
Duluth Area IWW Group—1514 N. 8th Ave. E., Duluth 55805. Delegate: Jack Rosenquist.

## MONTANA

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

## NEVADA

Tahoe Area IWW—Larry Steinberg, P.O. Box 1114, Dayton 89403, (702) 246-3120.

## NEW YORK

New York GMB—P.O. Box 1147 M, Bayshore 11706. Delegates: Brian Mahoney (516) 586-2103. Jackie Panish, Box 372, Rego Park 11374, (212) 868-1121. Rochelle Semel, RD 1, Box 158-B, Hartwick, 13348 (607) 293-6489. Bob Young, Box 920, Wingdale 12594.

Socialist Party USA National Office Job Shop (I.U. 670)—516 W. 25th St. #404, NYC 10001. Delegate: Ken Meyers, (212) 691-0776.

New York Living Arts Job Shop—c/o Living Theatre, Box 20180, New York 10009 (212) 979-0601. Delegates: David Boyl, 93 Ave. B #4F, New York 10009. Robert Hieger, 9 E. 3rd St. #4B.

## OHIO

SW Ohio IWW Group—D.E. Slaton, 4263 Drowfield Dr., Dayton 45426, (513) 854-0051.

## PENNSYLVANIA

Lehigh Valley IWW Group—Lenny Flank, Jr., P.O. Box 55, Bethlehem 18016, (215) 759-7982.

Philadelphia IWW Group—Tom Hill, P.O. Box 41928, 19101.

## SOUTH CAROLINA

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

## TEXAS

Austin IWW Group—P.O. Box 49523, 78765 (512) 416-9619.

## UTAH

Salt Lake IWW Group—Tony Roehrig, 2607 S. 500 East, 84106, (801) 485-1969.

## WASHINGTON

Tacoma/Olympia GMB & GDC Local 4—2115 S. Sheridan Ave., Tacoma 98405, (206) 272-8119.

Seattle IWW Group—P.O. Box 95686, 98145-2686, (206) 525-1336. Delegate: Wayne Taylor.

## WISCONSIN

Madison GMB—Box 2605, 53701, (608) 255-1800. Delegates: Tim Wong, Jerry Chernow. Lakeside Press Job Shop (I.U. 450)—1334 Williamson, Madison 53701, (608) 255-1800. Delegate: Jerry Chernow.

# Black Lung Blues

by G. L. Doebler

Lamenting that she was "appalled at the flagrant disregard for a law designed to protect coal miners against disabling lung disease," Secretary of Labor Lynn Martin announced on April 4, 1991, that her Department is citing more than 500 mining companies for 4,710 cases of tampering with instruments that measure dust levels in mines. The *Pittsburgh Press* described the Labor Department's move as a "federal crackdown," but at best it is

regulations, the mine companies bear complete responsibility for collecting dust samples from their mines, totally unsupervised by either the government or the union. Samples of mine dust are collected inside a filtering device enclosed in a plastic capsule and attached to a pump that sucks air through the filter at the same rate that a miner would breathe. Sometimes these devices are worn by miners while they work; sometimes they are simply placed at worksites. After eight hours, the coal companies collect

*"Under current regulations, the mine companies bear complete responsibility for collecting dust samples, totally unsupervised by either the government or the union."*

a slap on the wrist, at worst a grizzly publicity stunt. The worst case scenario for some of the largest mining companies and multi-national corporations, such as Exxon, Mobil, British Petroleum, Consolidation Coal, Rochester & Pittsburgh, U.S. Steel Mining, and National Steel, is a cumulative fine of \$5 million. Considering that tampering with the devices puts thousands of miners at risk of developing pneumoconiosis, all too commonly known as "Black Lung" Disease, an average fine of \$10,000 per company is hardly punitive and certainly no incentive for companies to improve conditions in the mines.

Indeed, the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA), while praising the Labor Department's action, called for tougher regulations and changes in dust measuring procedures. Under current

the capsules and send them to the Mine Safety & Health Administration (MSHA), where the dust is measured to ensure that the quality of the air that the miners breathe meets federal standards—less than 2 milligrams per cubic meter. Critics, including the Labor Department, accuse the companies of blowing or vacuuming the dust out of the filters, or placing the measuring devices outside, to obtain low readings.

Although Secretary Martin promises improved regulation, UMWA President Richard Trumka asserts that the unsupervised system of collecting dust samples "is so structurally flawed [that] no amount of enforcement can correct it. The health of too many miners is at risk to allow an industry with the safety and health record of the U.S. mining industry to police itself." James Weeks, the

UMWA's Deputy Administrator of Health and Safety, underscores this criticism and claims that expecting the coal operators to perform the dust sampling without any controls is "like asking the fox to guard the chicken coop." He contends that the mine companies are using "Middle Age techniques" to lessen health risks in an industry that increasingly applies high-tech solutions to its production problems.

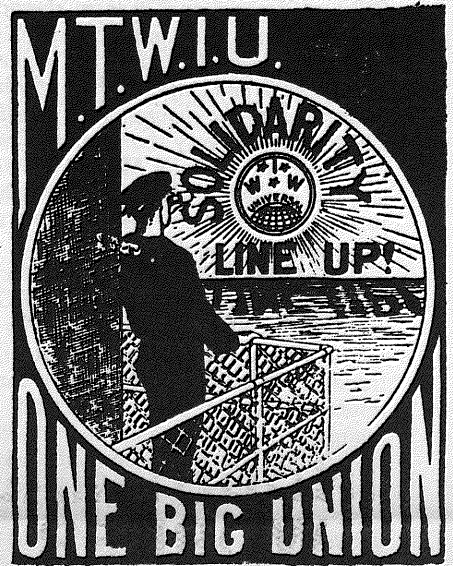
Rank and file miners go even further and claim that management systematically cheats the system. Mining companies, workers assert, clean up the air in the mines only when government inspectors are present. The rest of the time, air quality is well below regulatory standards. Ron Dennis, chairperson of UMWA Local 6159's safety committee in Greene County, Pennsylvania, states, "whether the samples come back good or whether they come back bad, it doesn't matter because nothing is ever done."

The grim wisdom of Dennis' observation is demonstrated in the Labor Department's latest citations. "The operators will pay the fines rather than clean up the mines," commented Dave Whitman, a UMWA miner from West Virginia. Whitman continues that "the technology exists to keep the dust down, but if it comes to operators choosing between safety and profits, profits win." Davitt McAteer, Director of the Occupation Safety and Health Law Center in Washington, D.C., calculates that the fines can be paid off in less than one eight-hour shift, since the companies normally take in \$20,000 in profits every eight hours. Meanwhile, many of the corporations cited, including the oil companies British Petroleum, Exxon, Mobil, and Occidental, are claiming profit increases of over 40% for the first quarter of 1991.

Coal operators respond to the charges by claiming that they have been asking the Mine Safety and Health Administration for nearly a year to develop a tamper-proof measuring device and stricter sampling procedures. "Apparently," said F. Hoffman of Consolidation Coal, "MSHA is more interested in making headlines than in making progress in the area of mine health and safety." While it may be true that Secretary Martin's "crackdown" on mine safety violators will be more effective in creating favor-

able public relations than it will be in saving the lives of miners, it is all too clear that the coal operators are more interested in maximizing profits than in mine safety. The idea of coal companies badgering the government to make it more difficult for them to break the law is certainly an irony of the highest order, for implicit in the mineowners' swipe at MSHA is the admission that they will continue to circumvent or break mine safety rules until they are forced to stop.

Only somewhat less ironic is the reliance of some workers on the government's ability to control the mining companies and to improve mine safety. The government might mandate tamper-proof air testing devices, but who can ensure a tamper-proof government? Surely, the fox's representative will be no more protective in guarding the chicken coop than the fox is. As miners have learned time and time again, the answer lies in their union. Only the miners themselves can adequately determine the safety of their workplaces. Only the miners themselves can make sure that the quality of the air they breathe won't be jeopardized by decisions made in air-conditioned offices and boardrooms. Only the miners themselves can stop a recurrence of widespread Black Lung Disease. And won't that be a breath of fresh air?



## Reactivating the Industrial Unions— Building Blocks of the IWW

The original purpose of the industrial unions within the IWW was to unite all workers in a given industry in the same combative organization. These unions were then united under the umbrella of the Industrial Workers of the World. The General Administration of the IWW was traditionally a coordinating body charged with serving these industrial unions. The ultimate goal of this form of organization was to provide a directly democratic structure, run by working people, which would not only be able to seize the means of production from the capitalists, but would in fact be able to immediately begin the functioning of the free society, redistributing the wealth of society equally and fairly to all. The logic and effectiveness of this idea is evidenced by the great lengths to which the capitalist state went to destroy it. Arrest, deportation, torture and murder were used to beat the IWW back into the earth from which it sprang.

Ironically, the IWW was simultaneously attacked by the rightwing of the socialist movement, who saw in the idea of socialism from below (syndicalism and anarcho-syndicalism) a threat to their own plans for seizing state power in the name of the working class.

The IWW, caught between the twin powers of the capitalist state centered in Washington DC and the authoritarian communist state centered in Moscow, was reduced over a period of decades from a federation of industrial unions to a primarily political organization with a few scattered job shops and no industrial base. The industrial unions, which once had memberships in the tens of thousands, became numbers on membership cards. The IWW, without the industrial unions, was like a vehicle without an engine.

Right now moves are being made to

correct this situation. Three of the IWW's industrial unions (Marine Transport Workers IU 510, Education Workers IU 620, and General Distribution Workers IU 660) are in the initial stages of reactivation. The potential effect this will have on the IWW cannot be overstated. Other than increased membership and a presence in the above industries, it will also mean a refocusing of the union's attention on the daily lives of working people and away from the various causes and issues that have traditionally confused leftist politics. Hopefully these causes and issues can be channeled into, and combined with, the one single struggle: the fight for self-emancipation from the system of mindless toil and exploitation within which we live.

The destruction of the world's environment, the reduction of the world's living conditions, the war and slaughter of innocents that occurs regularly, speaks of the boot that presses down on all our necks. The lifting of that boot cannot be accomplished piecemeal, one cause at a time. It requires a range of vision which sees the whole picture, the leg connected to the boot, the torso connected to the leg, and the rotten head which directs the whole enterprise.

**The Current Status of the Reactivation Efforts**

**IU 510:** A member of the Marine Transport Workers Union is currently circulating a letter (see sidebar) to other members of 510 with hopes of beginning internal networking. People interested in finding out more about this effort should write to 510 care of the GA here in San Francisco.

**IU 620:** The first issue of an education workers newsletter (*News & Comments*) was published in April of this year. A second issue will be out by the time you read this. This fall will be a season of

struggle within the education industry as the state cuts back and private capital steps in. People interested in receiving a copy of *News & Comments* can send 50 cents in stamps to: EWIU News & Comments c/o IWW, 1095 Market St. Suite 204, San Francisco, CA 94103.

**IU 660:** The driving force behind this effort is coming from Ann Arbor and the People's Warehouse Job Branch. Outreach is being made to other warehouse workers in the southeast Michigan area, with the goal being a fully reactivated industrial union by the end of the year.

It's ridiculous to assume that the reactivation of three industrial unions within the IWW will bring about the transformation of the world. But it is guaranteed that it will bring about the transformation of the IWW. This reactivation could take a number of forms. In areas where the majority of working people are unorganized, it could mean the establishment of Job Shops which would directly negotiate with management. In areas dominated by the AFL-CIO, it could mean the formation of industrial networks (a union within a union) that would challenge the bureaucratic structures. Given the "two card" status of many current IWW members (sharing membership in both the IWW and an AFL-CIO type formation), these types of industrial networks, open to both members and non-members, could be created fairly quickly. Any member wishing to take on the responsibility of starting up her or his industrial union, or any non-member wishing to network with others in the same industry, is invited to write to me care of the *Industrial Worker*. I would be happy to help out.

For working class revolution,  
Mike Kolhoff

(The following are excerpts from a letter sent to all members of Marine Transport Workers Industrial Union 510 -I.W.W.)

As I'm sure you will all agree, many problems in our type of work are not really understood by the landsman. I write this letter as a sailor, but I am of course aware that IU 510 includes longshoremen. As seamen and longshoremen, I can only assume that you all must work in an AFL-CIO union, as I must.

Some problems that I believe we must address (to mention just a few):

Why haven't we had a shipping commissioner for the past few years? We know why the capitalists don't want one. I suspect why the AFL-CIO doesn't want one. Hell, even the baseball players have a commissioner of baseball, and we're a bread and butter industry!

Can't we do something about that? Do the companies pay you off according to union (AFL-CIO) contracts at the end of a voyage? I know that ain't so. No industry on the beach in the USA would get away with not paying earned wages in full, and at the time wages are due.

Can't we do something about that? Don't we get fired, put off the ship in a foreign port, and not be re-patriated? In truth being marooned! Perhaps the captain takes money from your pay (earned wages) to buy your ticket back to the states.

How about that? Can't we do something about that?

Many ships carry only one ordinary seaman, call him/her a G.V.A.—General Vessel Assistant, who receives no real training for either deck or engineroom, and the capitalists are already screaming: "We can't find trained personnel to man our ships". Hell, they're the ones that are setting it up that way! You know why, and so do I. What are the capitalists planning to do four or six years down the line? We know what this set-up is all about. Why would the AFL-CIO seaman's union go along with this?

Yeah, we got problems all right.

# Reclaiming Our First Amendment Rights —S.F. Style

by Zimya A. Toms-Trend

The Pledge of Resistance was interviewed for the June issue of the IW as one of the two organizations responsible for calling and coordinating anti-war demonstrations. The National Lawyers Guild maintained a presence at these demonstrations and provided legal aid from arrest through trial. Prior to the January 19th and 26th demonstrations called by local coalitions, large spontaneous demonstrations numbering from 15,000-25,000 persons occurred before the bombing of Iraq and shortly thereafter. Out of 1,648 arrestees at January and February demonstrations, 929 went to trial and 26 were convicted. This amazingly low conviction rate (2.8%) must have been the straw that broke the camel's back and convinced the city prosecutor to drop the charges of the remaining 719 arrestees on very short notice. Federal trials were to begin on May 30, for those arrested at the Presidio (currently military property), but at the last moment were cancelled.

Justice was ours! The May 17 victory party hosted by the Pledge and the Guild reminded us that we were indeed the true victors. We'd challenged the system, refused to be silenced, yet won a hands-down victory in their courts. We also maintained a presence at their "victory" parades in San Francisco and Oakland where hundreds of thousands of taxpayer dollars were spent on celebrating yet another senseless invasion by the U.S. military. Our nonviolent resistance movement is growing and we look forward to future victories.

The following interview was conducted with Riva Enteen, Demonstrations Committee Coordinator for the National Lawyers Guild.

I.W.: How long has the National Lawyer's Guild been around?

R: The National Lawyer's Guild is a 53-year-old organization which withstood the witch hunts of the McCarthy Era and has been the most progressive legal organization involved in such issues as civil rights, Attica, Wounded Knee, the labor struggles, student struggles and through the anti-nuclear and anti-intervention movement. It's basically been in the forefront of people's struggles since 1948.

The local chapter opened after the San Francisco State University Strike in 1969. A Demonstrations Committee was formed in 1984 in response to the mass arrests during the Democratic National Convention in San Francisco. I've been involved in the Demonstrations Committee since that time.

I.W.: Did that long history prepare you for the war against Iraq in mid-January 1991?

R: We've been dealing with mass arrests and developed a pool of attorneys who are able to represent those arrested on demonstration-related charges. I've been working here since April 1990. Since then we've been able to respond to crises because someone's here that's accessible. It was a big relief that I was already positioned here when the war broke in January because if that had not been the case, it would have been much harder. It was a monumental effort, as you'll find out from Darla and the Pledge who referred to it as the epitome of an organizing task.

Eighty attorneys were involved with court appearances and trials for the 1500 people facing state charges. My list has grown to include 200 attorneys who have



contacted us to say that they wish to help with demonstration-related cases.

I.W.: How many "loaner" attorneys from the law firms, offered their services to the D.A.? What is the perspective of the Lawyers Guild on this phenomenon?

R: There's an important point that gets missed a lot on the "loaner D.A." issue. The District Attorney's Office has a program where they get private law firms to volunteer to help the D.A.'s office. The advantage to the law firms is that it gives their new associates trial experience. This program has been going on for many years and operates like this—the firms say "take these guys, use them as you need them." This is the first time that they've said "use them only for these particular cases." This is really "selective" prosecution. The Guild believes that these private attorneys have been volunteering for these particular cases because they have a political agenda.

People say: "doesn't the Lawyer's Guild have a political agenda?" We need to be clear on the roles of the defense attorney,

on January 15 at the Federal Building. It was planned, but it wasn't quite an emergency response because it happened BEFORE the fact.

Our legal observers and attorneys showed up at 5:30 A.M. at the Federal Building because the federal workers were told to come in early that morning. There were hundreds and hundreds of arrests that day. When the war broke out on Wednesday night, January 16, there were spontaneous demonstrations.

In addition to having called a demonstration on the January 15, the Pledge also planned to have a demonstration 24 hours after the war broke out, which was Thursday, January 17. It was really like a de ja vu experience, because we had just been there. In the course of 11 days (January 15-26), there were over 2,300 arrests. That Thursday, January 17, broke the record for the number of arrests in San Francisco for one day—which includes San Francisco General Strike (of 1934).

We've (the National Lawyer's Guild and the Pledge of Resistance) been working together for years, but there was nothing

Those demonstrators who consciously chose civil disobedience are accused of clogging up the courts and abusing the judicial system. It's the District Attorney's Office who chose to clog the judicial system with those bogus arrests which should not have been prosecuted, and have never been prosecuted in comparable situations. The onus is on the D.A. for clogging the courts and not on the defendants who chose to have their day in court, and say their piece. More than half of the 1,500 people were illegally arrested, and should never have just peacefully accepted a deal and done their community service. Those that might have engaged in conscious civil disobedience and chosen a trial, have a right to be there because of their First Amendment issues. It's Arlo Smith and his boys who chose to make this kind of imposition on the judicial system, not us.

I.W.: Why did Arlo Smith drop the charges of some of us demonstrators less than 24 hours before trial? What was the political situation in San Francisco since the war began?

*"It is insurrectionary when we escort the police off the bridge, instead of the other way around."*

and the District Attorney. They're not the same. A defense attorney is an advocate for the defendant, and their role is to get an acquittal for the defendant. The role of the District Attorney as the agent of the State is NOT to get a conviction but to insure impartiality, fairness and truth. Thus, they're not advocating conviction. It's therefore legitimate for the Guild attorneys to have a political agenda, because it's part of their role.

I.W.: Why the discrepancy in the numbers of arrests? I've heard figures of 1,500 to 1,600.

R.: It was 2,300 arrests. Of these, 500 were for federal charges. If you get busted on the sidewalk, it's a State charge; if it's in front of the door (of the Federal Building) it's a Federal charge. The Feds decided not to press charges and dropped them all. Long after the Feds dropped the charges, Arlo Smith publically stated: "That doesn't influence me. We (the City and County of San Francisco) will still prosecute those people to the fullest extent of the law."

I.W.: What happened in your role as Demonstrations Coordinator since January 1991? How was it working with the Pledge of Resistance, and how were both organizations able to coalesce their agendas?

R: Jan 16 was the day when the U.S. declared that it was legitimate to start the war, so the Pledge had a demonstration

like those demonstrations to have us more organically and logistically tied together. They (The Pledge) hired a full time legal coordinator at the beginning of February because of the 2,300 arrested. Fifteen hundred went through legal meetings and the court process. "Organic" is a good word to describe our relationship. It became obvious which was their domain and which was ours. Neither of us could have done it without the other. It was totally symbiotic.

They basically called the meetings, although we sometimes found the place. We had legal meetings every two weeks after the arrests. There were four or five legal meetings every two weeks with hundreds and hundreds of demonstrators present. It was amazing. I got the attorneys for each of these meetings and literally we could have up to 500 demonstrators at these meetings. It was standing room only and New College wasn't big enough.

In the first few meetings, the defendants were oriented to the judicial process. First we had to find out if the D.A. was going to drop the charges on those picked up on the illegal "sweeps." Since 1983 there have been mass "sweeps" in San Francisco. What's different in this situation (1991) is that they (the D.A.'s) chose to prosecute everybody, rather than dropping those "swept-up" and prosecuting only those who did conscious civil disobedience. They chose to prosecute the full 1,500 people. That's why people are so outraged.

R.: Some considerations are certainly that he had just been elected as D.A. and perhaps wanted the reputation of "Mr. Law and Order." In the heyday of the war mania, he may have wished to be buddies with the "boys in the yellow ribbons."

Another interesting fact: Richard Held, the son of the leader of CoIntelPro (they have the same name but different middle initials), was moved up to the San Francisco F.B.I. from Los Angeles F.B.I. about 3 years ago. The left took it as an ominous sign. The son has been surprisingly silent, not taking positions on anything.

However, in the first days of the war, he was quoted in the San Francisco Chronicle as saying that (Mayor) Agnos and SFPD had lost control of the city. Held spoke of 2 women from his office who were harassed by demonstrators, and he believed these cases should be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. Given who he is and his statement, and given the fact that Agnos and the Board of Supervisors had said earlier that they opposed the war and expressed sympathy for the demonstrators, I think we need to look to potential political pressure outside the city government and the FBI is certainly a factor.

As you know, the Bay Area is in the forefront of progressive movements nationally, if not internationally. In the first week of the war, there were about 4,000 arrests nationally but we (in the Bay Area) had half of that locally. So there's a

(continued on page 7)

# Women Workers in El Salvador

by Kris Peterson and Dave Karoly

In El Salvador, a country approximately the size of Massachusetts with a population of about 3 million people, the abuse of workers' rights and the extreme poverty of the people are consequences of a "low intensity conflict" financed and advised by the United States. Despite extensive repression, the popular movement—of which women play an integral role—continues the struggle to bring peace and justice to El Salvador.

Due to the poverty and an 11-year civil war which has claimed the lives of 70,000 people, families often migrate and disintegrate in order to find work. This reality has left women primarily with the responsibility of caring for children and the elderly. It is in this capacity that women have become the backbone of El Salvador; 67 percent of all households are headed by women who also work in the formal and underground economies.

In the formal economy, workers—especially women—face tremendous repression. Workers must work long hours for little pay, rarely receive health benefits, endure grueling working conditions, are not allowed to organize, and pay into a social security system that is systematically syphoned by the ruling elite. The most perverse consequences of worker exploitation are faced by women. For example, a woman can be fired for

having a lover or husband who becomes an obstacle to sexual advances made by a boss. Moreover, many women who seek work are subject to a pregnancy exam; if the test is positive, she will not be hired. If a woman becomes pregnant while employed, she can take up to three months maternity leave without pay and will probably not have a job when she is ready to return to work.

The situation is becoming increasingly difficult for women workers, especially in education. In August 1990, the National Assembly completely privatized education by passing the General Law of Education. This law succeeded in both further limiting access to education as well as transferring money earmarked for public education to the war effort. The result is that education is made unaffordable to almost all Salvadorans. The National Association of Salvadoran Educators, the largest teacher's union in the country, predicts that the law will hurt women the most, for 70 percent of all primary and secondary teachers are women. Moreover, the literacy rate will continue to drop as most children no longer have access to education. Women who are not in the education industry are hurt as well; although women could work while their children were in school, now they must care for their children and leave their job, thus aggravating their situation.

Women are also exploited in the underground economy. This is especially true in the countryside where unemployment and underemployment are extremely high and where the people are marginalized from education and adequate health care. Women who cannot find seasonal labor on coffee plantations or domestic work must turn to prostitution to support themselves and their families. The repression faced by women in the underground economy is compounded by the psychological abuse and physical violence against prostitutes by pimps.

Although women face almost insurmountable obstacles, working women are organizing, literally to save their own lives and the lives of their families. In addition to playing a major role in the labor movement, women are developing sewing, baking, rabbit raising, and other producer cooperatives. Organizations such ADEMUSA (the National Association of Salvadoran Women) raise money internationally to finance the start-up costs of these ventures. The women in these cooperatives train each other to share in the running of these cooperatives while at the same time develop a sense of self-worth.

In a country where there are three doctors for every 10,000 people, where girls between the ages of 11 and 17 are giving birth to 20 percent of the population, where 427 children under the age of five



die each week of curable diseases, and where public education has nearly disintegrated, the struggle of workers—especially women—has become the struggle for basic human needs in El Salvador. The demand for worker's rights and the desire for enough food, decent housing, education, and adequate health care are intricately interwoven; it is this relationship that is at the heart of the revolution in El Salvador.

## Nicaragua (continued from page 1)

they were directing their supporters, via the radio, to go shoot these people. Then they read vice-president Virgilio Godoy's proposal to create right wing vigilante groups in each barrio, to be known as 'Civic Brigades of National Salvation.' Around 10:30 that night we were all frightened by the sound of an AKA shootout in the direction of the northern and eastern neighborhoods. It turned out to be armed Contra and UNO supporters shooting it out with the police in one of the city bus depots. Meanwhile we had heard on Radio Ya that right wing members of the government had brought in 200 armed Contra from Yamales and that many of them were encamped around Radio Corporacion in Ciudad Jardin. This was where N.Y. Times reporter Mark Ulrich was shot as they were sniping at cars going by. A few days later these Contra took refuge at Cardinal Obando y Bravo's home, waiting for safe conduct back to their enclaves in the countryside. The barrios in which most of the shooting took place were Rubenia, Ciudad Jardin, Zuma, along the Carretera Norte, and some others I don't remember. Meanwhile Daniel Ortega had been negotiating unofficially with the government since Sunday p.m., trying to create a situation in which the government could negotiate with the FNT. Despite this it was clear that the FSLN was not directing this situation. Things were happening too fast and too spontaneously and the workers were out ahead in this one, not to mention the students and the supporters of the workers in the various barrios. So Wednesday a.m. the barricades were up again but there was an anticipation, with everyone waiting to see whether the negotiations would resume. The strikers and their supporters desperately needed a rest, too. It was as though the city was holding its breath. You could feel it.

Early that evening it was clear that the government and the FNT would negotiate and at 7 a.m. the next morning the accords were read over the radio. On paper the FNT got quite a few concessions:

1. A 43 percent pay increase.
2. No firing of the strikers, 1-3 months severance pay for those fired between April 25 and the beginning of the current strike.
3. Renewal of free bus tokens for students and teachers.
4. Revocation of decree 10-90; all lands not yet given back to the old owners would remain as they were.
5. The government promised to reactivate (i.e. stop decapitalizing) the state enterprises.
6. The formation of a tripartite commission (government/FNT/owners, em-

ployers) to determine and implement a minimum wage law with automatic inflation adjustments.

7. Government compliance with the accords signed in the last strike.

The workers in turn promised the following:

1. To return to work, maintain the public order and establish calm.
2. Speed up production to obtain the annual productivity goals.
3. Maintain open communication with the state through the FNT.

And that was basically it. Everyone went back to work and there were big parties at the union halls. It's funny, reading the accords it would seem like the workers got a lot...but the UNO government propaganda tried hard to convince people that the FSLN was weaker than in the previous strike, that they had to resort to violence to achieve their ends, etc.

A year later what are some of the conclusions that we can draw and what are some important things to be aware of in regard to the tactic of the general strike?

The strike had both positive and negative consequences. On the plus side:

1. The workers experienced their power as workers. The capital and other parts of the country were shut down and the government was effectively if briefly cut off from the rest of the world.
2. The discipline of the workers was demonstrated. During the entire strike there was no looting; this was not a riot.
3. The government was forced to sign accords in which they agreed (on paper at least) to significant concessions. The memory of the strike was a strong factor in the government's decision to agree to "concertacion" (a type of "bipartisanism") with the FSLN last fall.

On the negative side the strike exacerbated the polarization of Nicaraguan society. Many people in the middle (the middle class, some older people, etc.) were inconvenienced by the strike and blamed the workers and/or the FSLN, not the UNO government, for the strike. Also a lot of right wing elements came out of hiding and took this opportunity to form alliances with the Contra who had been brought in from the country by the ultra right wing Godoyist elements of the UNO government. It is more dangerous now than before to be a well-known FSLN supporter, neighborhood leader, etc.

And finally, some important things to remember about factors that contributed to the success of the Nicaraguan strike of 1990:

1. Many members of the police and the army were on the side of the strikers, although in their actions they tried to remain neutral. They did a good job at

trying to maintain calm and order in a very tense situation. A common sight throughout the city at the barricades: the police or army would show up, tear down the barricade; the people would stand aside, cheering them on and then put up the barricade again as soon as they'd left. The head of the Army, Humberto Ortega, said as long as the army and the police remain Sandinista they would not fire on their own people: this is the essence of a popular army. Here in the U.S. we don't know what this is like. This is one reason why the U.S. and the UNO governments want so badly to get rid of Humberto.

2. During the strike the workers stayed on at their jobsites to keep them from being occupied by strikebreakers. People did not stay home from work (except those who did not support the strike) during this time. They maintained their solidarity by sticking together as workers.

3. Finally, it was their strong prior organization, gained through 10 years of workplace organizing, that enabled them to be so effective in shutting down the ministries as well as the factories. The neighborhood supporters of the strike also played a key role by bringing food, etc. to the worksites and raising money for the strikers.

These three factors played a critical role in the success of the Nicaraguan general strike. It is questionable, in my opinion, as to whether the solidarity that brought victory to the strikers can be achieved by any means other than effective long-term grassroots organizing in the neighborhoods and on the jobsite.

Note: The first three months of 1991 saw another series of strikes, beginning with the historically underpaid health care workers and spreading to other areas of the public sector. This strike was not as widespread as the general strike of 1990. The main issues had to do with who will bear the brunt of the economic adjustment program designed by the government to gain the approval of the IMF. The government made some concessions such as higher pay for health workers and the passage of a minimum wage law. In return the workers have agreed to a truce regarding wage increases for two months, to allow the economic adjustment program to work. I hope it does. The most recent devaluation slashed wages by approximately 50 percent. It's hard to imagine how people are surviving down there.

A part of TecNica is still functioning. For more information contact the Skilled Trades Task Force, 755 E. 19th St., Brooklyn, N.Y. 11230.

## Chronicle of the General Strike El Salvador, 1960

by Tirso Canales

This day there were no train whistles, nor bread in the bakeries because the working class was standing armed guard. While life continues it's been found necessary for a time to slow the growth of buildings.

The builder took down the plumb line and the bricklayer cleaned her trowel. The strike is a ghost traveling all the streets.

The statisticians consult witches and seers. The bosses have called out the Guard and trusted "the last resort to God."

The strike is a storm of sulphur and ammonia.

This day the strike swells our lungs, our voices deepen and there is no rest. Today the carpenter works no wood nor does the roofer weave a roof. The foundryworker weeps no fire since no one smelted iron for three weeks. Today the dressmaker will break no needles

since no one smelted iron for three weeks. The boiler doesn't sweat the oven doesn't crackle nor does the gear grind; the continual chain

is detained like a dead serpent. The wave of flesh and blood is raised. The ships sleep in the port of the bay. A wave of hands has grown! Longshoremen won't work the docks. An unbreakable wave has risen. The street sweeper isn't sweeping the usual garbage because today is the day to sweep up history.

The tourists have left us. Let them go! The waiter isn't waiting in the hotels. They aren't showing films, no cowboys in the diet since there's a general strike today. It's an emotional time and there's no beer: the beer maker made no beer today. Now they aren't frying food at home since the oil vendor didn't make oil. It's hot today, no water. The water carrier didn't fill the fountain since there's a general strike today.

What great wind strikes our faces since there's general wind today!

—translated by Clifton Ross



On July 12, 1917, several thousand armed vigilantes rounded up 1,200 Wobblies in Bisbee, Arizona and herded them into boxcars to be shipped off and dumped in the New Mexico desert. The IWW had called a strike against the Bisbee copper mines two weeks earlier over health and safety issues. Patriotism, and the war effort against Germany, were the excuses for this gross violation of civil liberties.

## Exxon Deal Runs Aground

by Ruth Sheridan

Before the war in the Middle East, the environmental disaster of the century was the 11 million gallon oil spill in Alaska's Prince William Sound on March 24, 1989. An outrageously low settlement was reached in secret in March of this year in Washington, DC between the Justice Department, the State of Alaska and Exxon which called for Exxon to pay only \$1 billion—\$100 million for criminal penalties and \$900 million in civil damages.

To almost everyone's astonishment and pleasure, the deal unraveled. U.S. District Court Judge Russel Holland rejected the \$100 million criminal fine on the grounds that it was too low and would send the wrong message to corporate polluters. According to the *Anchorage Daily News* on April 25, 1991, he said: "I'm afraid these fines... suggest that spills are a cost of business that can be absorbed... I feel very comfortable saying the fines that were proposed to me are simply not adequate."

The crude oil from the spill contaminated 1200 miles of shoreline, four national wildlife refuges, two national parks, a national monument and a national forest. It destroyed bird habitats and salmon hatcheries, as well as several hundred bald eagles, 500,000 birds and several hundred thousand chicks. As many as 5,000 sea otters and 200 harbor seals perished. Serious harm was done to the hunting and fishing lifestyles of at least 15 native villages, and more than 26 archaeological sites were damaged.

The complaint filed last year by U.S. Attorney General Dick Thornburg sought fines of \$600 million against Exxon for criminal environmental misdemeanors such as killing birds, improperly disposing of refuse and polluting the water.

Of course, Exxon's chairman, Lawrence Rawl, was pleased with the proposed settlement. He assured his shareholders that it would have no significant effect on corporate earnings and explained that the \$1 billion expense was a "mere cost of doing business." Given its ability to pay, and the enormous destruction, the fine would have been minute. Over the past four years, Exxon has averaged profits in excess of \$4.7 billion annually.

The Natural Resources Defense Council, Greenpeace, National Audubon Society, Sierra Club, Alaska Center for the Environment, Trustees for Alaska and the Prince William Sound Conservation Alliance all opposed the settlement. Several members of the state legislature were also angered by the "sweetheart deal."

Some of its major flaws:

- It allowed payment of \$900 million in civil penalties to extend over 11 years with tax deductions allowable for part of the settlement. This cut Exxon's actual costs to about \$508 million in 1991 dollars.
- Scientific and economic studies gathered by Exxon, the U.S. Coast Guard and the

State of Alaska over the last two years have not been released. This has led to the suspicion that more is known than the public is aware of. While Exxon and the Coast Guard claim that the information being withheld may have to be used in court, and thus is subject to withholding, it is impossible to decide if the settlement is adequate without having access to the data.

- The agreement failed to address unresolved claims against Exxon from native villages, fishermen, food processors and environmental groups, leaving them all to fend for themselves legally.

- Alyeska Pipeline Service Co., a consortium of the five oil companies operating on Alaska's North Slope, escaped without penalty because of the focus on Exxon. Yet, Alyeska did not have proper-

## Redwood Summer II

Last year over 3000 people came from all over the country to join in Redwood Summer. Before the summer even began, Earth First/IWW organizer Judi Bari was maimed and nearly killed by a car-bomb assassination attempt. Despite our shock and horror at this attack, Redwood Summer went on. Demonstrators chained themselves to logging equipment, sat in trees, blocked logging roads and marched through timber towns to protest the over-cut and to demand worker ownership of the industry.

Redwood Summer brought national and international attention to the destruction of the redwoods. It has helped bring about a changed political situation in which both timber industry and government officials admit the need for regulation and reform. But the redwoods are still going down at 200% the rate of growth, and 100-year-old trees are still being cut to pay off junk bonds. We have made a dent in their corporate power, but we need to continue if the forest is to survive.

The schedule for this year's actions will be as follows:

**July 5-12.** Redwood Action Week. Tree-sitting, log-road blockading, and other actions in the forest. Non-violence training and woods action training will be given.

**August 17.** Ecotopia Bike Ride from Willits to Fort Bragg in Mendocino County, to protest the cutting of redwoods along Highway 20, and to promote alternative transportation.

**August 27.** International Day of Outrage at Maxxam Corporation, which is destroying both desert and forest ecosystems to finance a corporate junk bond scam.

In between, we will respond to forest emergencies as needed, and work on ongoing forest restoration and education projects.

Conditions in the redwood region are different this year than last, and our actions will reflect that difference. After last year's logging frenzy, the timber companies began massive layoffs, plunging our already desperate communities deeper into poverty. We cannot ignore the economic devastation that comes with cut-and-run logging. So this year, along with our logging protests, we will be emphasizing the wobbly concepts of sustainable lifestyles and worker control.

We are a small rural community under siege by giant corporations. Both the forest and the people who defend it are being attacked. We have made great gains at great expense. But we still need your help to save one of the most magnificent ecosystems on earth.

You can contact us at: Ecotopia Earth First!, 106 West Standley, Ukiah, CA 95482, phone (707) 468-16610.

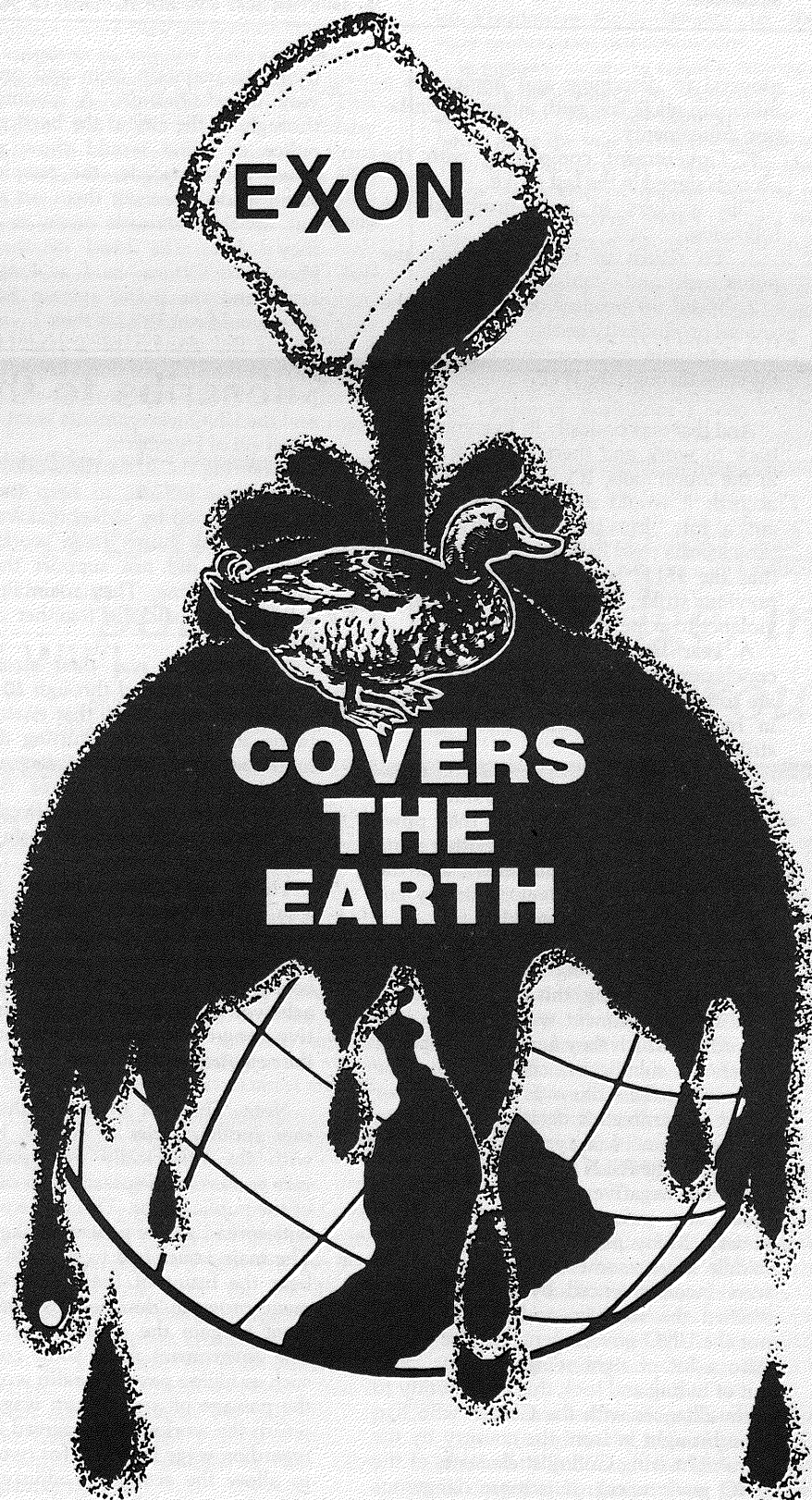
ly functioning equipment on hand at the time of the spill and badly bungled the initial response.

Judge Holland's ruling was completely out of character. A conservative Republican, he was appointed in 1984 by Reagan, and had a 12 year history as an oil industry insider. Among his clients were Mobil, Exxon, ARCO, and Alyeska. Despite these connections, he ruled the proposed criminal settlement inadequate because it neither reflected the enormity of Exxon's crime nor acted as a deterrent to further crimes of a similar nature.

On the contrary, the entire settlement package sent a message that corporate polluters could make deals behind closed doors to buy their way out of messy pollution problems.

On May 24, Exxon decided to withdraw its guilty pleas to the criminal settlement. It hasn't yet said whether or not it intends to negotiate a new plea bargain.

Alaska's governor, Wally Hickel, a libertarian/Republican is finally willing to push for a new settlement, claiming that given another chance he will do what is right for Alaska and its natural resources. Presumably all the parties wish to avoid further litigation, but so far no date has been set for another meeting.



(continued from page 4)

reason why the FBI would want the City to come on strong and maintain law and order—because we challenge that authority regularly...and that's what we do here.

I.W.: What was the number, demographics and violence ratio of the demonstrations in January and February 1991?

R: There was a minimum of 8 major demonstrations. In the days of the January 15, 16, 17 demonstrations, there were many demonstrations at different locations and different groups of people in each of those days, but most were at the Federal Building. On January 17 people roamed around and took over the Oakland Bay Bridge, went to the Stock Exchange and spilled over to downtown First and Mission Streets. There were probably 100 arrests at the latter location.

Let me just skim the geography then I can talk of specific instances. There were also two dates that people were at the Presidio (Army Base) who got arrested there.

The Sunday after the ground war broke (February 24) was another spontaneous demonstration at 5 pm at 5th and Powell downtown. My partner was there and he said it was "insurrectionary." There were over 10,000 people who had control and just roamed—totally outnumbering the police.

When people were on the Bay Bridge with the police, these large numbers provided an insurrectionary feeling. The demonstrators had taken control of the Bridge, the police were pressed up against the wall (barrier) of the Bridge and the crowd was angry. Some non-violent and good souls, realized that the police were in danger, and made a human chain to protect the police—to allow them to get off the bridge. They encouraged people to lock arms and escorted the police off. Now, needless to say it is insurrectionary that we should escort the police off the Bridge, instead of the other way around.

*"Large numbers provided an insurrectionary feeling. The demonstrators had taken control..."*

At a certain point the police said that they no longer needed the escort. My partner replied: "No, I think we should escort you just a little bit further for your own safety."

What a beautiful anecdote to show the current state of the Movement. Certainly we call them pigs, but they're really not the enemy when they're just there doing their job, unless they're beating us up first. I love that story because it took years and years for the Movement to evolve into a non-violent movement. Our goal here is really not to beat up these police. We took power, showed them that we had control and escorted them off the Bridge.

Now, examples of police violence. On the Vermont Street entrance to the freeway, two demonstrators were peacefully sitting and blocking the roadway. The CHP (California Highway Patrol) arrived and ordered them off. As they rose from the ground, the CHP began beating them. "We're leaving, we're leaving," they interjected. One had his leg broken while the other had lacerations on his body. This episode was videotaped and well-documented. The two CHP officers were suspended without salary although they've just appealed to the State Personnel Board. The demonstrators will utilize the videotape for evidence in their civil suit against the CHP.

Another story about police violence on January 15 was also on TV and videotaped. I refer to the story of "the woman in pink." This woman was at the demonstration, but was not really protesting the war. She just sort of ended up there. She's married to a man who was fighting in

Saudi Arabia at the time and lived at the Presidio. She's Turkish and dark. She was on the sidewalk and began screaming at the police about her husband over in Saudi Arabia. She was clearly not against the war.

They pulled her off the sidewalk (where it was legal to stand), on to the street (where it was not legal). She fell. They handcuffed her hands behind her back, then pulled up her sweatshirt and exposed her breasts, arrested her and threw her into a paddy-wagon. This was all videotaped and on T.V. I call her "the woman in pink" because she was wearing a pink sweatshirt and pink sweatpants.

When she was taken to the Hall of Justice, she didn't want to be released with everybody else. Having never been arrested before, she was traumatized. She was afraid to leave because she thought someone might continue to beat her up. It took a special visit by a nice cop who related: "it's safe for you to leave now."

Although she miscarried because of the beating, her miscarriage has not been made public. At least one doctor corroborated the causal relationship between her beating and miscarriage. Her attorney, who is going to be involved in the civil litigation, isn't sure the civil case can be pursued because the Army doctor lost the records. And the videotape alone, without the physician's testimony isn't enough evidence.

R: I want to encourage everybody to be out there and not worry. In the past, they've usually dropped the charges against people swept-up. Those planning civil disobedience had their misdemeanors reduced to infractions, which are like traffic offenses. Some, who didn't have the time for legal meetings and trial, plead no contest at their arraignment. *Nolo Contendere* translates into a guilty plea. It's a political way of not contesting the charges, but saying: "I didn't do anything wrong." After a plea of no contest to an infraction, they were either given credit for time served (a few hours in jail or at Pier 40 warehouse) or 10

hours of community service work. Everyone goes home happy because you can do your community service at any non-profit organization.

People did not plead nolo this time, because the D.A. didn't drop the charges on those illegally "swept-up." It's an exception when people go to trial. Never have demonstrators in San Francisco gone to trial on an infraction charge. In fact, the real reason that the D.A. dropped the original misdemeanor of Failure to Disperse and reduced it to the infraction of Obstruction, was to save the City the cost of providing court-appointed attorneys and jury trials. This backfired because it was harder to convict on Obstruction, than it would have been to convict on Failure to Disperse.

If you're at a demonstration, don't plan to get arrested, and a "sweep" happens out of the blue and you do get arrested, it's very unlikely that they will press those charges. We are hoping that the prosecution of these "sweeps" are the exception. It's the rise of the right and this might be the first sign of the repression. Pier 40 (a cold warehouse where many of those "swept-up" were taken) was an institutionalized detention facility, called Operation Desert Keep. In the past people who were "swept-up" risked nothing because the charges were later dropped.

In the past, even those persons consciously choosing non-violent civil disobedience, had their misdemeanors reduced to infractions. Infractions have no implications for job applications and are small risks for what we're up against.

# 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 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\* Membership includes a subscription to the Industrial Worker.

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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. \$6.00.

**Memoirs 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.

**Bye 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 Riebe. \$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) \$14.00.

**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

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# FAREWELL FW ELLINGTON

*A simple introduction—I knew Dick Ellington only during the last few years of his life, but that being said, I believe that I came to know him, and his life, well. During the course of a handful of intense conversations, Dick spun out the tale of his lifelong commitment to the cause of revolutionary anarchism, a cause which drew him to the IWW in the mid-1950s. I claim no expertise on the specifics of Dick's involvement with the Wobblies, but thanks to the help of his wife, Pat (who herself was the first woman chair of the IWW's General Executive Board), and to the recordings that my friends and I made of Dick's reminiscences, I hope that I can get at least some of the facts straight and try to give some idea of the compass of this man's, this rebel's, life.*

"Nil desperandum" (Do not despair)  
—Latin Proverb

To speak of Dick Ellington is, first of all, to speak of *how* he spoke, his manner of speaking, his way of being in the world through his words. Dick was a man who, even as he was consumed by illness, transcended the limitations of his body (and before lung cancer, he suffered from emphysema and debilitating arthritis) with the power of his mind as expressed through his words. And what words! In an age in which language is degraded on a daily basis by commerce and politics, Dick spoke an idiosyncratic (and idiomatic) English all his own, the kind that most younger American radicals would kill for. To Dick, however, it came naturally: his language reflected a life spent in rebellion, in a search for at least an approximation of the truth, and it reflected his own love of words themselves. He delighted my friends and me by his use of certain long-forgotten (at least to us) phrases drawn from American radicalism. One such expression, "A Jimmy Higgins," mystified us until Dick explained that it came from some distant marxist source and referred to that indispensable person (with a perfectly anonymous name such as "Jimmy Higgins") in any group or organization who kept the whole thing going by doing the unglamorous, day-to-day work of running an office, sending out the mail, checking the p.o. box, etc.

Dick's conversation was replete with such gems of vernacular language, but it was rich also for its iconoclasm: Richard Ellington, at least as far as I know, had no respect for the idols of any ideological camp. He took a particular pleasure in his own contempt for cant and dogma, making us laugh with his anecdotes about how he and his friends used to purposely violate the decorum and conventions of leftist gatherings by the use of a few choice—and outrageous—remarks. His own speech, though it could be as elegant as any, was liberally dosed with the richest of obscenities and punctuated with a forceful body language. When Dick wanted to make a point, he ended his particular remark with a kind of flourish of his right hand, as if he were driving a knife home. And it is well known that Dick had a passion for knives, fighting knives—he had a collection of several hundred.

The bare bones of Dick's life have been covered (by a dubious source, Stephen Schwartz) in the *San Francisco Chronicle* (see the obituary page for June 7, 1991), but such bones barely do justice to the man. As Dick recounted his life, he came to a radical point of view by unorthodox means: military service and an intense interest in science fiction literature.

It might be worthwhile to reflect on the experiences which radicalized a former chairman of the Executive Board of the IWW. Although he was born in Seattle (in 1930), Dick did not come to the anarchist movement through some mythical encounter with a hobo on Skid Row, nor did he grow up in a household which preserved a memory of the Seattle General Strike. As a 17 year old with few prospects (his middle class Catholic family having been reduced to poverty by the

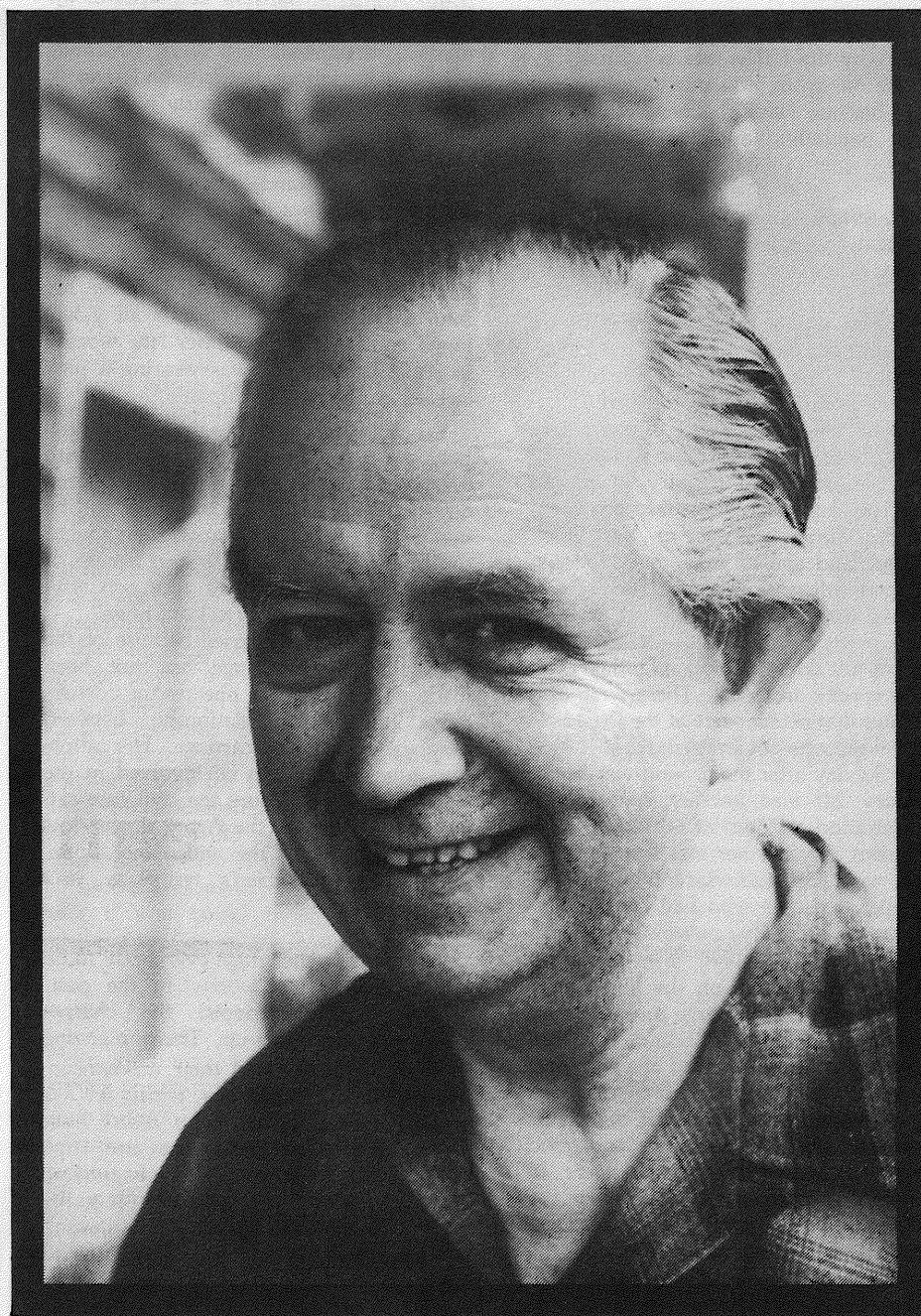
death of his father) but with a high I.Q., Dick was recruited by the Army; little did the Army know what it would discharge when it let loose a changed Richard Ellington.

The Army's discharge pay and his own inclinations led Dick to trade Seattle ("nothing but fucking water sports") for the somewhat more cosmopolitan horizons of New York, a city which would transform Dick into that most dangerous of creatures, a rebel with a cause. Dick's love of science fiction (a lifelong love, one which he devoted much passion and thought to, giving my friends and me another *bon mot*, "publish your ish," meaning "publish the issue of your fanzine") motivated him to join an informal club of offbeat types into the same scene, a scene that bordered on an even more radical kind of alternative reality, that of revolutionary anarchism. Through the sci-fi crowd, Dick met the "legends" (and they were always real people, with real faults and limitations, to Dick) of the New York anarchist milieu: Sam and Esther Dolgoff, Russell Blackwell, Boris Yelensky, Bob Calese. It was also the place where he met his companion, collaborator and wife, Pat.

As he reminisced about this period of his life, Dick exhibited an almost sentimental fondness for his participation in the Libertarian league, a group which in the 1950s (a grim time, to say the least, for anyone daring to be a "libertarian," when libertarian still meant "anarchist," "anti-authoritarian revolutionary," sworn enemy of Stalinists, fascists, cops) kept a certain black flag flying when all seemed dark. Dick lovingly described the personalities, conflicts, adventures of an unusual, international (and internationalist) group of people who tried to shed a little light on questions that were proscribed during the deadly "peace" known as the Cold War—questions such as the nature of social revolution, free association, freedom itself. Trifling matters to be sure—issues that were virtually excluded by the dominant ideologies of Cold War liberalism and Stalinism.

Through the Libertarian League—and Dick movingly described what he felt when he finally met people who "had the same fucking ideas I did politically, but they had a fucking political theory about it... and a history!"—Dick met up with History itself, in the sense that he came into direct contact with Spanish anarchists, with Americans who had fought in Spain on the anarchist side, with people who had known Kropotkin and Nestor Makhno, with the friends of Carlo Tresca and Emma Goldman. His and Pat's interest in the ideas behind this history would lead them into contact with the English anarchists around Freedom Press; history would also give them the name they chose for their daughter, Marie Louise, named for the anarchist Marie-Louise Berneri, who is unjustly known today more for being the daughter of Camillo Berneri (the legendary Italian anarchist who died during the Spanish Revolution [probably murdered by Communists—typesetter]) than as the thinker and activist she was in her own right.

If the recent Gulf War has done anything, it should give pause to those that think they are revolutionaries. Unlike Vietnam, no one can comfort himself or herself with tales of how they "stopped" the war; those who do comfort themselves with the stale platitudes of the left do so at their own peril. It is clear that a new epoch of warfare (remote controlled and "legitimized" by mass support) and of social warfare (authority holds almost all the cards) has opened up before our stunned eyes. In a different, but equally dark, time, Richard Ellington and others found the courage to persevere, to keep on, to transmit something to others of another way of life, another way of thinking. And life was very much what Dick Ellington was about: Even as he faced a certain death, Dick chose life, chose to deny death any victory other than that which everyone must cede some day. My friends and I never heard one word of remorse or self-pity. To the end, there was the inimitable black humor of



Dick Ellington, who could even make jokes about how many friends he met every time he was hospitalized (the friends were other patients facing their own ordeals).

Dick left a lot behind, including a lot of medical bills. IWW members and supporters who would like to help defray these expenses may send checks addressed to:

Pat Ellington  
6448 Irwin Court  
Oakland, CA 94609

An archive assembled out of Dick's collection of radical literature is also in the process of being established. Please address inquiries to:

Dick Ellington Archives (DEA)  
c/o Alternate Routes  
P.O. Box 391733  
Mtn. View, CA 94039

In all his years as a Wob (and he joined up in the mid '50s, serving a number of times on the Executive Board), Dick never thought that he was continuing some lost cause. He always hoped that others would take up the challenge that confronted him in his youth: How to respond to the world in a radical way, a real way. Dick's life offers one such answer; there are undoubtedly many other ways to respond (and Dick was as non-exclusive as they come on the "anti-authoritarian" left, preferring a sense of the "movement" to any particular label). Dick didn't tolerate bullshit from others; he wouldn't have wanted any funereal incense to enshroud his name. The old s.o.b. died on Memorial Day weekend. Anyone for a barbecue in his "honor" next year?

—David Jacobs

## Julia, Goodbye

Julia Ruuttila died on April 5 in Anchorage, Alaska just a few weeks before her 84th birthday. A small, vibrant woman, she had a long history in the labor movement in Oregon. Her father, John Godman, was an organizer for the IWW; her mother, Ella, was a teacher turned Socialist Party worker, pacifist, suffragette and distributor of birth control information. Ben Reitman once stayed in their house.

One of Julia's early actions was with the Free Ray Becker Committee, set up by the Woodworkers Union to get the last of the IWW prisoners out of the Washington State Penitentiary after the Centralia Massacre on Memorial Day in 1919. Becker held out for a full pardon which was not granted until 1940.

By 1935, she was a militant advocate for labor. On a picket line that year at a sawmill in Linton, she was beaten by a scab after she called him a cowardly sone of a bitch. For her courage and leadership during the lumber and sawmill workers 1937-38 lockout, she received an honorary life membership in the CIO. An organizer, radical journalist and poet, Julia had an infinite amount of history to share.

She worked on defense committees for Tom Mooney, Sacco & Vanzetti, Harry

Bridges and Angela Davis. In Anchorage, despite her failing health, she took part in teach-ins and demonstrations against the war in the Middle East. One cold, windy January day, she joined me to speak before a high school class about her labor experiences.

With the encouragement of her grandson, Shane, one of the more militant union members with the Anchorage State Employees Association, and his wife Betty, she published a book of poetry last year—"This is My Shadow." The plant closings in the sawdust belt inspired:

### The Lay-Off's Shadow

The 6:30 whistle shattered the dreams  
Of the slaves in the Sawdust towns.  
I hear it still  
Though the headrig no longer screams  
Through No. 1 Clear at the mill.

You can hear it's ghostly echo  
Where men who are working still  
Wait for the lay-off's shadow  
To cover the Sawdust Belt.

Julia, farewell.

—Ruth Sheridan