

Industrial Worker

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EDUCATION

ORGANIZATION

EMANCIPATION

Miller Capitulates...

3,000 Join Decatur Solidarity March

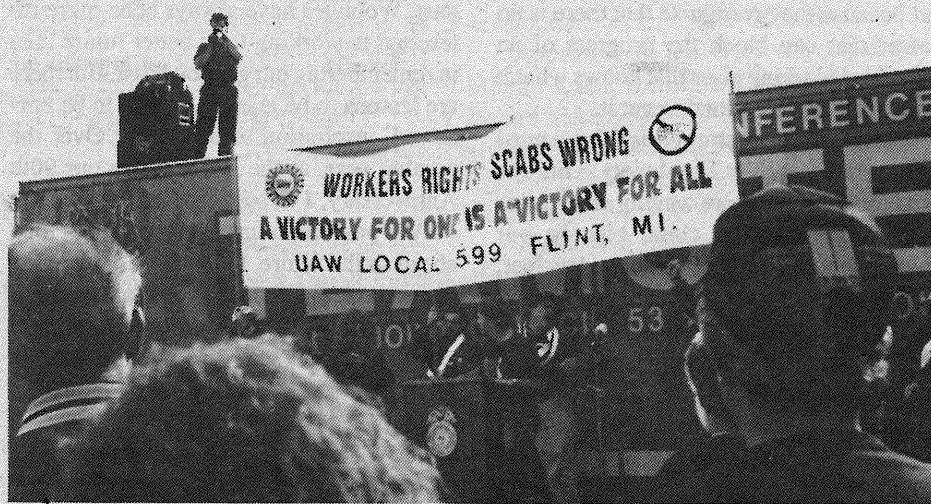
Three thousand workers jammed the streets of Decatur, Illinois, showing their solidarity with striking and locked-out A.E. Staley, Caterpillar and Bridgestone/Firestone workers. All three plants, which have been running with scabs (A.E. Staley has been running 24 hours a day, seven days a week), closed for the day to avoid confrontation. At an earlier solidarity rally last June one unionist had suggested going in and taking over the plants.

Shortly before the rally A.E. Staley resumed negotiations with UPIU local 7837 after Miller Beer announced its decision to stop using Staley-produced corn sweeteners. Strike supporters recently launched boycotts against Miller and other major Staley customers (Brach Candy, Coca Cola, J.M. Smuckers). Unionists organized Miller beer dumps in several cities, and banned the scabby brew from union halls. While Miller claims its decision was based on price, rather than the boycott, the brewer said it hoped unions would stop actions against Miller products now that it has moved to cut ties with Staley. News of Miller's decision was first released by UAW officials representing Miller workers who used Staley's scab sweeteners to brew Miller's beer.

After speeches from strikers and from supporters around the country, workers marched through Decatur's industrial district, passing by each of the struck plants. One Wobbly marcher says it was like a ghost town; only the ever-present security guards and their video cameras were present. Since the companies closed up shop to avoid confrontations with a few thousand unionists, he suggested that the striking unions mount daily mass pickets — after all nearly 4,000 workers are presently on strike or locked-out in Decatur, apparently more than enough to shut the plants down.

The march ended with a Rogers-style civil disobedience "action" in which demonstrators sat down, blocking an intersection near the Staley plant. There was little traffic since the plant was closed, and so police left the sit-downers alone, waiting for demonstrators to drift away before fi-

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Flint auto workers join October 15 Decatur rally in solidarity with striking A.E. Staley, Caterpillar and Bridgestone/Firestone workers...

Strike for More Jobs...

Auto Workers Stop Whipsawing Each Other And Whipsaw GM

Ever since the UAW-GM national agreement was reached this past summer, GM has been confronted with guerilla war at the plant level. The recent boom in US auto sales has created conditions in which GM workers are taking the offensive against the company for the first time in over a decade.

Contracts between the UAW and GM are negotiated in two stages. First a basic National agreement is settled on, and then local agreements at the plant level are negotiated. Ever since GM forced the UAW to negotiate in this manner, GM has utilized the local negotiations to wring concessions from workers at the local level. A prime example of this practice, called whipsawing, was the Arlington TX, concessions on work rules and shift schedules which resulted in the closing of the Willow Run Assembly Plant in Michigan, in favor of increasing production in Texas.

The '94 negotiations have proven to be a different nut to crack for GM. Local unions have either struck or threatened to strike at

each of the company's major production facilities. As each local agreement has been reached, UAW locals have increased their demands at the next set of negotiations. Strikes have occurred at GM's primary parts manufacturing facility in Anderson Ind., at an assembly facility in Shreveport La., and at its production and assembly complex facility called Buick City in Flint, Mi. GM came within hours of a strike at its Cadillac assembly plant in Detroit/Hamtramack. Further strikes are being threatened in Warren, Mi., Toledo, Oh. and Livonia, Mi.

The key issues raised in all of these disputes have included overtime, length of work shifts, production speed and the need to hire new workers. GM senior executives have been telling Wall Street investors that they haven't added a permanent new social security number to its hourly work force since 1985. And just since March of 94, it has eliminated 5,500 hourly workers.

This elimination of jobs has been an ongoing strategy of GM. The company has been struggling to make its productivity

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Union Scabs Bust Railtrack Strike, Jobs

For the past four months signal operators working for state-run Railtrack, owners of the rail network, have been involved in strike action over a claim for productivity payments. In late September the union, RMT (Rail and Maritime Transport) threw in the towel and settled with management.

The dispute was a strange affair but the outcome is one which underlines the IWW philosophy of industrial unionism. The RMT has 50,000 members in the railways, only 4,600 of whom were signal workers. Over a period of seven years the signaling system has become more automated, leading to a decline in the number of signal workers and a slump in overtime (many workers relied on the overtime to boost their basic earnings of 10,000 [\$15,000]). The union put in a pay claim of 11% for this productivity and has just a greed a 2.5% rise on the basic plus a one off cash payment to buy out a range of allowances. Under the agreement some of the workers will actually lose money!

The railworkers started a campaign of one-day strikes after management withdrew an offer of 5.7% under government instruction. Thirteen one day strikes took place which should in theory have led to the closure of the network. Unfortunately Railtrack brought in supervisors, managers and a few RMT scabs to run the signals. On the first day of the strike they allegedly ran 20% of trains, and claimed 60% by the thirteenth strike.

The scab trains they ran were not timetabled, covered only part of the network, were by and large empty and were subject to cancellation etc., etc. Not a very good advert for Railtrack. That the trains ran at all was due to the unions involved. Drivers belonged to a separate union, ASLEF, and they had their own pay negotiations going on. ASLEF told its members to work normally, robbing the signal workers of significant support.

Many times the RMT told the public that the trains were not safe as the signals

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Canada to Slash Jobless Benefits?

The usual complaints are being voiced about a new policy paper issued by the Canadian federal government. As in the case of "free trade," nobody likes the proposals, but nobody is offering much alternative. The government says it wants to re-structure the "safety net" of social assistance programs to make them more "efficient." The three main elements of the re-structuring are reduced unemployment insurance benefits, cutting post-secondary education, and workfare, or work-for-welfare.

There is no doubt that the current system is a hopeless tangle of bureaucratic barriers that prevent people from getting what they really need. A more comprehensive and accessible system of social support is needed. Canada has traditionally spent a lot of money on training, small business grants, etc., but these programs do not deliver what they promise. Instead, the programs become little empires where a few bureaucrats get jobs.

The trend now is to get private companies to participate in job training. This consists of the government paying people very low incomes, to work for private companies. The new policy proposals stress that people on welfare will be forced to either take part in "training" or to do community work.

This approach could succeed, if only people were given a full range of choices as to what kind of training or community work they prefer to do. Few people enjoy sitting around idle, while being discouraged from working by the deduction of any earnings from their welfare. But there is every reason to expect that any programs set up by the government will be extremely narrow in eligibility requirements, and that a large number of people will be excluded even from the dubious training schemes. These people will end up doing "volunteer" or community service for their welfare cheques, and who knows what "community service" might mean?

The UI system will be gutted, finishing the job started by the former ("conservative" — Canada is now ruled by "liberals") government. Now, workers won't have a right to income insurance, but will have the right to either work a job or "train" in order to receive welfare.

Students are being cheated out of their inheritance. The government wants to stop giving money to subsidize universities, and instead make it easier for students to get loans — through private banks, at double the present tuition levels, with enforced payback with interest, when the student starts making money in the future. Some future! Thanks a lot.

It is apparent that all these measures combined will undermine wages and job security, and destroy workers' rights on the job — unless workers are given free choices and are empowered to organize as worker cooperatives and permitted to bargain collectively.

Yet, one positive outcome may be a

new way of looking at work in society. These policies are being sold partly as a return to the work ethic — all those welfare and UI bums should be forced to work. But unemployment insurance was designed on the premise that everyone could find jobs, any interruption of employment was only temporary. This has proved false, as now the growing unemployment rate is built in to the economic plans of the ruling banks and financial institutions. The government is eager to get rid of UI because it knows there will never, ever, be full "free market" employment.

Instead of free market employment, or socialized employment, we will now have government-subsidized private employment. Everyone will have a "job," but not much will be produced. Would you want a car built by people on forced workfare?

But one result is an inevitable move towards a socialization of work. Government taxes will now support the economy — not directly, but through private companies. Ethics must change, because working will no longer be a matter of individual ambition to earn a living, but will become a rote duty to the state.

Temp Workers Organize

The following is reprinted from the November issue of *The Progressive*:

The Industrial Workers of the World in San Francisco is launching a union for temporary workers. Last year, temp workers in San Francisco started the effort when they decided to create an alternative to traditional employment agencies, which make a profit by exploiting the tight job market and by keeping a share of temporary workers' wages. The agencies, the organizers declared, take almost half of workers' hourly wages "for doing nothing except relieving the employer of the responsibility of providing what we think are basic rights: a living wage, medical benefits, pension plan, worker solidarity, and job security."

The workers created Progressive Temps of San Francisco, a member-controlled not-for-profit employment agency. The volunteer organization lacked organizational experience, and had only moderate success. This year, with the IWW's help, the temp workers are making another run at getting organized. Eventually the Temp Workers Union will include a non-profit temp agency, a hiring hall, an apprenticeship program and a school, according to Ray Levy of the IWW. "Most temps don't want to be temps," said Levy. "We'll be there for those who do, but our goal is to eliminate our jobs [by

Around Our Union

helping people find permanent employment]."

The agency will not charge any fees for temp workers whose jobs become permanent, and will take a minimal share of workers' wages to cover operating costs. "It's a reality that more and more work is going to be temporary," says Levy. "Employers are looking at the fact that rather than paying a salary and benefits they can have people at home and on call, desperate for a job." By trying to build solidarity among temp workers and providing a model alternative agency, the IWW hopes to combat this employer advantage. The union is currently looking for volunteers and donations. For more information, contact: Temp Workers Union, IWW, 1095 Market St. #204, San Francisco CA 94103. (415)863-9627.

UK Wobs At Work

UK Wobs held a four monthly business meeting on October 22. The meeting agreed to fund the Couriers organising drive (see story page 4). New groups have been set up in Edinburgh and Aberystwyth, Edinburgh Wobs are setting up a job shop at a further education college, the IWW has established 100% membership among employees at the Oxford Claimants Union and among a majority of the volunteers. The meeting agreed to send to ballot proposals to set up a general organising committee although there was discussion around the nature of the committee and its "powers".

FW Lorenzo Kom'boa Ervin spoke about the situation of black workers in the US and the need for a BWO and a FW from Illinois spoke about the strike in Decatur. As a result of this the meeting agreed to invite strikers for the town to the UK and to prepare for an action against Tate and Lyle, the owners of Staley.

The meeting also discussed holding a conference on revolutionary unionism in the Autumn of 1995 to which labour activists from around the country would be invited. British union membership is around 9 million, 7 million in TUC unions and 2 million in mostly conservative independent unions. Union membership is about 35 percent of the workforce. Unemployment is

around 2.8 million (govt. figures) or 4 million (independent figures).

The IWW now has around 50 members (many not in good standing although this is improving), and a growing contact list. If we can get our teeth into a dispute who knows what will happen.

And in Chicago...

Chicago Wobs have been meeting with workers from two jobs (one a factory, the other bike messengers) interested in organizing. Both efforts are in fairly early stages, but we hope to have an organizing committee going at the factory in the near future.

Wobs from Champaign, Chicago, St. Louis and Ypsilanti participated in the October 15th Solidarity Rally in Decatur, Illinois (see story). The bosses closed up shop at all three struck plants, rather than expose their scabby operations to public view.

And a literature table at the Midwest Radical Scholars Conference distributed nearly 200 copies of the Industrial Worker and added several names to our mailing list. The Branch's 1995 IWW Calendar was a hit with many Conference goers. (Have you gotten your copy yet? \$7.50 each: IWW, Box 204, Oak Park IL 60303; 40% off for 5 or more copies. This year's theme is Women Workers: The Struggle Continues.)

PREAMBLE TO THE IWW CONSTITUTION

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 the 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 means of production, abolish the wage system, and live in harmony with the Earth.

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 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 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 everyday struggle with the 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.

Education Workers 620 Organizing Heats Up

Scottish Teachers Sold Out

The Educational Institute of Scotland/College Lecturers' Association is once again selling out its members. Two members have withdrawn from the EIS' Sighthill (Edinburgh) chapter to join Education Workers Industrial Union 620 (IWW), after a September 7th EIS branch meeting where local members acceded to EIS leaders' demand that two planned one-day strikes (approved by the membership) be called off. The Sighthill branch also rejected a motion to ignore the EIS President's committee and honor picketlines being set up by another union.

The day after the EIS branch meeting, Wobblies at Stevenson College (Sighthill) issued the following leaflet urging their fellow workers to withdraw from the craft unions and join the IWW.

When is an industrial dispute not an industrial dispute? When the EIS is involved.

Time and time again the cry of "sell out" comes from the mouths of union members who feel they have been "sold down the river" by union officials. The present chapter in the farcical history of failed lecturers' disputes has reached new depths of tragi-comedy as the token, "non-serious" EIS-CLA strike action of June has been replaced by a "militant ground swell" of industrial activity that has apparently been canceled on the whim of a bloke called Jim Martin and the President's committee.

While union bores go scurrying for the rare copies of unseen rulebooks and suddenly become experts on anti-trade union legislation, it is worth asking a serious question: What kind of union are you in, if one member can overturn a democratic decision of the membership? Quite clearly you are in an organization containing leaders and the led. If this is the case you owe it to yourself to leave such an anti-democratic organisation today. Because after all, this isn't the first time it has happened — is it?

To make matters worse, the EIS-CLA has consistently failed to actively seek the cooperation of the SFHEA to coordinate effective, joint action; so much so that the self-styled radicals within the EIS-CLA would be prepared to cross any picket line that the SFHEA might mount. The management of the Education Business must be quivering with fear at the thought of more industrial action like we've witnessed over the past few months... Any effective organisation to improve conditions requires the involvement of workers throughout the Education Industry. This is where the IWW is different from all other unions, because it is not a trades union, but a union for all workers.

Why you should join the IWW

At the moment the existing unions within the Education industry are demonstrating that they are incapable of defending our conditions and pay. The EIS and the

New Education Workers Organizing Bulletin Out

The Education Workers Industrial Union 620 Organizing Committee has issued the Fall 1994 issue of the *Education WOB*. This issue includes a call for Teaching Assistants to join the IWW, a report on education cutbacks at Texas high schools, an update on the ongoing strike at Marriott/Queen's University in Toronto, examples of efforts to radicalize the math curriculum, a draft EWIU organizing leaflet, and a call for including industry-specific get-togethers on the agendas for regional and general IWW Assemblies over the coming year.

For a copy, send \$1 (copying and postage) to: IWW-EWIU 620, 4043 N. Ravenswood #205, Chicago IL 60613.

SFHEA hardly ever communicate and neither of them ever communicate with non-teaching staff whose members are mostly in UNISON. The recent changes in further education are likely to lead to a situation where all of us will be engaged in local bargaining with our employers. None of us stand a chance if we remain divided in these joke unions and management will have a field day at our expense.

The IWW takes a very different view of things. A very simple view. We think that if janitors, technicians, catering staff, cleaners or teaching staff are in an industrial dispute then they should be able to count on the support of all other groups of workers. That is what being in a union is all about. This is what the IWW is about. As well as encouraging effective strike action we are strongly in favour of local activities that can best be controlled by union members in the workplace such as work to rules and go-slows.

The IWW is a unique union that organises workers in many industries across many countries. It is a small democratic union founded in 1905 to help all workers get better wages and conditions, and to bring about a fairer society in the process. The IWW is different from other unions in several ways. We are independent from all political parties and are opposed to the concept and practice of leadership. Bureaucracy is kept to a minimum so that monthly dues can be kept low. We are not neutralised by the government's anti-union legislation because we operate on a shoestring so have nothing to sequestrate. We cannot wave a magic wand and solve all your problems at work; however, we do everything in our power to help you to help yourself. This is what we would describe as a DIY union! What we lack in cash we make up for in commitment.

All workers in Education are invited to join, except management — they are more than able to look after themselves.

In November I Remember...

Finnish-American Labor Martyr

Laura Luoma Law

Murdered by Lumber Trust Thugs in
Aberdeen, Washington on Jan. 5, 1940

— Harry Siitonen
San Francisco Bay Area GMB

Edward Scissorhands Joins UAW

As the UAW and GM have been engaged in a series of local negotiations and strike actions on the part of local UAW members, Edward has joined the fray, working his scissorhand magic at the Livonia engine plant. Edward, working inside the plant, saw his co-workers being subjected to a grueling work pace as GM attempts to churn out more cars with fewer workers. On his own, or perhaps with the help of a few fellow workers, break time was declared for the entire plant.

Knowing the moronic nature of the plant level supervisors, a little direct action was necessary to convince them of the need for a vacation from the line. One day in late September none of the production equipment would turn on. Edward had cut all of the power lines to the production equipment. The managers directed the skilled tradesmen to figure out the problem, and get the plant back up and running. But when they went to get the blue prints showing how all the wiring ran through the plant, all they could find was a mountain of confetti.

The Livonia plant just so happened to be one of the main facilities where the Northstar engine is manufactured. The unscheduled vacation for the production workers lasted nearly a week. A week in which engine inventories were reduced to keep up with current production at other plants, such as the Buick City complex.

The workers at the Buick City Complex happened to go out on strike, in favor

Strike Against Overtime...

match Ford's. In order to achieve this goal, it must reduce over-all production time for new cars by some six hours. What this mean in human terms is the elimination of 15,000 to 30,000 additional UAW jobs, while maintaining the same production levels.

Despite GM's position on new permanent hires, it has had over 7,000 temporary workers in its production facilities in recent months. These temporary workers and the freeze on new hires have been central to the current struggle.

Both the Anderson strike, and the Buick City complex, strike had the potential to shut down all of GM's production facilities because of the parts they manufacture. The result of this series of strikes so far has been the elimination of most temporary workers, and in the Buick City case, the breaking of GM's hiring freeze. To get the over-worked Buick City workers to settle and return to work, GM agreed to hire 550 new permanent hourly workers into that complex. This represents nearly a 10 percent increase in the work force.

Local negotiations at other GM plants are stalled, just as GM needs to gear up for production of the 1995 models.

GM is giving some now in these local negotiations because of the current boom in auto sales. But its long range strategy remains unchanged. Investors have put the company on notice that its stock will not be a desirable investment until the company is "competitive" with Ford. This will require that GM either will return to its whip sawing practices of the past or attempt to break the UAW into a wholesale company union during the next national negotiations.

It seems that this reality has sunk into many rank-and-file workers and local union leaders. As long as the auto boom continues, a do-or-die struggle will probably be avoided. If auto sales slump, the UAW better be prepared for the struggle of the decade. If the union does not prepare itself and its membership now, it is likely to take a beating from which it will be hard to recover.

of hiring new workers, just as the Livonia facility was getting back up and running. Whether Edwards activities helped to make the Buick City strike short and successful, we can only guess. One thing is certain though, and that is, that GM production schedules are breaking down its current work force.

The 12 hour, 6 days a week pace that GM is forcing on its ageing work force can only be maintained by the workers for so long. "People are under tremendous pressure," said one Livonia worker. "The stress is really getting to them."

This stress is manifested in many ways. At its best, it is released through collective actions, such as Edward Scissorhands' and his colleagues at the Livonia plant. At its most desperate it is seen in individual acts

Wobs organize couriers

The first IWW organising drive in London in some years kicked off on October 19. The meeting was aimed at setting up a section of IU 530 for motorcycle couriers. While the meeting was small the level of enthusiasm was very high.

Addressing the meeting were FW Adrian Besly, a courier himself, who chaired, FW Alec, a comrade from the British IWA section, the Solidarity Federation, himself a former courier and FW Kevin Brandstatter, who spoke about the IWW in general and the need for organising.

Both Adrian and Alec were organisers with the now-defunct Despatch Industry Workers Union which was formed by members of the IWA a few years ago. They spoke of the lessons learned from the last attempt to organise and the need to get a Union going among couriers.

The meeting had only been advertised by flyer direct to couriers and a few posters at sites around London where couriers congregated. The couriers who attended made concrete suggestions for the future. These included:

• Advertising a future meeting in the Trade Paper Motor Cycle News and in the paper of the Motor Cycle Action Group, a national body fighting for the rights of motor cyclists;

• Addressing issues such as arbitrary fines imposed by employers, the level of pay and the high level of insurance demanded by the insurance companies (one company has 90% of the market);

• The need for attractive stickers, flyers and posters promoting the union.

For its part the IWW in the UK will fund a number of meetings, pay for advertising, establish an office with answerphone, and use the network of UK wobs to spread the word on organising once the London section is properly established.

Judging by the enthusiasm the Union may grow quite quickly. One courier joined on the spot and other took away literature.

All those that were there thought that word of mouth advertising would bring a meeting of 50+ next time and a properly advertised set-up could lead to hundreds joining!

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North of the 49th...

Canadian Labor Struggles

Ottawa bus drivers are set to strike October 23. Their dispute has been simmering for some time, with drivers not wearing uniforms in protest. Management refuses to budge on pay and benefit cuts, and the workers are equally committed to not accepting any cuts.

Canadian hockey players are locked out because of a dispute with owners. The issues in Canada's biggest sport are similar to those that cancelled the baseball season: owners want a pay cap, and the players say, no way.

In September a jury was selected in Yellowknife, NWT for the murder trial of Roger Wallace Warren, a gold miner charged with setting a fatal explosion during a strike against Royal Oak Mines company.

Federal public service workers are worried about job cuts yet to be announced. PSAC union hopes to gain public support to prevent the cuts.

Ontario's minimum wage rose to CDN\$6.85 in September, the highest in Canada. That's about US\$4.40.

Canada's first Environmental Illness Clinic opened in Halifax Oct.1. The aim is to provide a toxin-free clinic, and to help sufferers obtain medical treatment through health insurance. Wholistic non-insured healing methods will also be recommended. A similar clinic is to open soon at the Women's College in Toronto.

350 public service workers demon-

strated in Toronto Oct.5 to protest the NDP (labor) government's suspension of bargaining rights with an imposed "contract" last Spring.

Separatists Win Quebec

The province of Quebec recently elected a government that says it wants to form a separate country. The situation is made interesting because the largest opposition party in the federal parliament also consists of Quebec separatist politicians.

Quebec's CNTU union federation supported the separatist Parti Quebecois. But polls indicate the majority of Quebecers will not vote for separation in the referendum, for which no date has been set.

A major problem for the separatists, who insist that independent Quebec retain all its territory, is the dozen First Nations who together claim 85% of Quebec territory under old treaties with the French and British colonial governments. Mohawk leaders have already said that if Quebec forms an independent nation, they will do the same.

PQ leader Jacques Parizeau has established a handpicked "council" of regional representatives who report to him personally — bypassing the normal cabinet and to some extent, the elected regional representatives.

The separatist tendency plays on differences of culture and language, and is supported by socialist elements in the prov-



Decatur Rally Hits Staley, Caterpillar...

nally clearing the intersection.

While Staley has returned to the bargaining table, thus far it is refusing to end the lockout or drop its demands for concessions that would destroy its workers' lives and living standards. The need for solidarity is thus as pressing as ever.

Adopt A Family: After 16 months on the streets, many Staley workers and their families are in dire financial straits. The union's adopt-a-family program asks unions and other supporters to adopt a Staley family for \$600 a month (though they gladly accept contributions of any amount). For details call 217/872-2209 and ask for the Adopt-a-Family committee.

Boycott Coca Cola, Brach Candy, and J.M. Smucker. These Staley customers use Staley's scab sweeteners to make their products. Write and let them know what you think of such scabby products: Richard Condie, Brach Candy, 1 Tower Lane, Oak Brook Terrace IL 60181; Robert Goizueta, One Coca Cola Plaza, Atlanta GA 30313; Paul H. Smucker, Chairman, J.M. Smucker Co., Strawberry Lane, Orrville OH 44667.

Caterpillar Holds Out

Meanwhile, Caterpillar claims it's getting along just fine without 13,000 union workers who have been on strike since June 22. Cat claims that office and management workers, new hires, contract workers and the hundreds of UAW members who have crossed the picket lines are keeping its plants running smoothly.

But health and safety stats tell a different story. After an accident at the Denver warehouse, strikers heard a call for medical help on the radio. Asked about it the next day, Caterpillar labor relations manager Kris Nunn said it was nothing: "Some people just panic when there's a lot of blood." Job injuries jumped 150% at Cat's Mossville engine plants and 90% at the Mapleton foundry since the strike began, according to Caterpillar reports. Since the strike began, Cat has repeatedly refused to allow OSHA inspectors to tour its plants.

Sources in Cat's Pontiac plant tell strikers fuel pump production is down to eight a day despite 12 hour days — the plant produced 230 pumps daily before the strike. The Decatur plant is backed up more than a year. Although Cat's Joliet plant is not on strike, production of transmissions has fallen from 16 daily to three because of parts shortages.

But while Cat is hurting, so is the UAW. The union admits that at least 2,000 UAW members are crossing picket lines, forcing the union to triple strike pay in hopes of stemming the defections. Cat plants in Europe and elsewhere around the world are continuing normal production, and thus far Caterpillar has shown little interest in returning to bargaining, let alone offering a decent contract.

ince who naively believe that an independent Quebec would be socialist. Separation would benefit the wealthy Hydro-Quebec corporate empire, and enable it to dispense with native resistance to environmental destruction, since natives and the environment would no longer be "protected" by the federal government.

Rebuilding Labor's Power

Anyone familiar with United States labor history will recall that the country's greatest depression produced

widespread calamity and an escalating upsurge of union militancy that pressed the government to assume an expanding role in the industrial sphere. Out of this came the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA), which promised that "employees shall have the right to self-organization, to form, join or assist labor organizations, to bargain collectively through representatives of their own choosing, and to engage in concerted activities for the purpose of collective bargaining or other mutual aid or protection."

Business interests called the NLRA the most radical labor legislation ever enacted. Most in the labor movement cheered it. Almost all Americans agreed that the NLRA represented a great advance for the labor movement. Did it?

When Congress passed the NLRA in 1935, union membership stood at 3.2 million. In 1937 the U.S. Supreme Court validated the Act and unions signed up more than three million members. Between 1940 and 1945 membership rose from just under 9 million to almost 15 million, or from 27 to 36 percent of U.S. nonagricultural workers.

But these gains were short lived. In the mid-1950s the percentage of unionized workers began to plummet. Union membership in the U.S. has dropped from 31 percent in 1970 to about 15 percent today. Why has unionism been declining? What does that decline mean? And even more urgently: How might working people end the decline?

Congress passed the NLRA in order to contain the intense labor strife of the 1930s by channeling workers' insurrectionary energy into elections, negotiations and contracts. But the scheme never worked perfectly, it was not enough to absorb the labor upsurge of the next decade. In the mid 1940s over 8 million workers went on strike when bosses refused to grant workers relief from frozen wage scales and rising inflation. Business and its congressional allies responded by portraying labor as a selfish special interest led by communists seeking to overthrow the U.S. government. Their anti-union campaign led in 1947 to the Taft-Hartley Act, which undermined many of the rights workers had won in years of bitter struggle.

The NLRA has been restricted by the courts, frustrated by the NLRB which fails to enforce provisions against union-busting, and perverted by Taft-Hartley. During the last 47 years, labor's lot has gotten worse mainly because employers have capitalized on the feeble existing labor law. Labor's road to a board election, for example, appears simple on paper. If workers in a particular shop wish to organize a union, they must demonstrate support from at least 30 percent of their fellow workers by signing union authorization cards.

But in practice lengthy delays between when a union files its petition and the election afford time to crush union organizing activity. Capitalists seize every opportunity to create an atmosphere of fear in which they misinform, harass and intimidate workers about unionism. While companies can fight union activity within the framework of the existing law, many violate it. For example, employers illegally fire workers for attempting to organize unions. As unionism has declined these discharge rates have increased sharply. In 1950, employers fired one worker for every 200 who tried to organize. Thirty years later the bosses fired one worker for every 20 pro-union activists. By 1990, of the approximately 110,000 workers who voted for unions in NLRB elections, 12,000 workers were illegally fired — nearly one in 10. Adding insult to injury, the board often takes two years or

more to reach final decisions on illegal discharges. (The worker, meanwhile, stays out on the street.)

Organized labor not only faces unjust obstacles in filing for representation elections, it also faces difficulty in obtaining certification and first contracts. Just as company lawyers commonly stall elections, so they often challenge union electoral victories and thereby delay certification. Even when unions win (unions have lost most representation elections since the mid 1970s), there is no guarantee that they will secure protection for their members.

Why? Sometimes employers refuse to bargain collectively, even shutting down the plant. On other occasions they use the same tricks during negotiations that they use in election campaigns, particularly the exploitation of the media and public forums to circumvent the union and "bargain" directly with workers to convince them that unless they accept management's terms both they and the community will suffer.

We cannot blame the decline of U.S. unionism entirely on existing labor law. But it has played a major role. Nobody can deny that U.S. labor law provides fewer protections against exploitation and union-busting than do the labor laws of most other Western industrial nations. The U.S. has no federal law protecting workers' rights to paid vacations (most U.S. workers get 12 days a year, most European workers get four or five weeks). The Occupational Safety & Health Act supposedly guarantees every U.S. worker the right to a safe and health workplace; since 1980 60,000 workers have been killed in the job. U.S. workers are 36 times more likely to be killed than Swedish workers, and nine times more likely to be killed than our British fellow workers. Many more are injured or disabled on the job. As the House Committee on Government Operations put it, a corporation that "recklessly violated federal OSHA laws stands a greater chance of winning the lottery than of being criminally charged by the U.S. government."

As the U.S. labor movement declines, more and more workers have lost the right to bargain for better wages. Between 1973 and 1991 real earnings declined by 18.4 percent. The U.S. minimum wage does not provide a minimum level of dignity; it is a starvation wage that has declined in buying power by 23 percent since 1980. In 1970 the minimum wage was \$1.60 an hour; had it risen in line with the general rate of inflation it would now stand at \$5.78 an hour (instead of the current \$4.25).

It is no coincidence that in the U.S., where unions are weak, purchasing power has decreased while in countries where workers' rights have substantial protection, workers' purchasing power has increased. In Germany, for example, 43 percent of workers are unionized. In 1990 the average German factory worker made \$6.15 more per hour (in U.S. dollars) than the average U.S. factory worker. In Canada, where most provinces certify unions by checking authorization cards, unionization is more than 36 percent. In 1990 the average Canadian factory worker made \$1.25 more per hour than the average U.S. factory worker.

What might be done about the pitiable state of the U.S. labor movement?

A radical change in federal law is required. The Workplace Democracy Act (H.R. 6041) now sits on the desk of author Bernie Sanders, the congressman from Vermont. It would establish a card recognition system so that when a majority of workers at a plant sign cards declaring their desire to be represented by a particular union, that union would be recognized without an election. It would guarantee the right to a first contract by allowing unions to request binding arbitration. It would repeal prohibitions against strikes, secondary boycotts and hot cargo agreements. It would prohibit state preemption of federal labor law, repealing section 14(b) of Taft-Hartley. It would grant workers the right to serve as trustees on pension plans covering their retirement. It would extend U.S. labor law to cover state and local workers.

It would enable the NLRB to issue

We have a historical commitment to fighting together with other members of the working class and the community who are devoted to fighting for both the underprivileged and justice.

In deciding whether to support the Sanders Bill, Wobblies may wish to recall the lyrics of one of Joe Hill's inspirational songs: "There is pow'r, pow'r in a band of working folk when they stand hand in hand. That's the pow'r, pow'r that must rule in every land.... Come on! Do your share. Lend a hand."

Blaise Farina

There Is Power

FW Farina's ellipses cut out FW Joe Hill's suggestion as to how our power might best be wielded: "One industrial union grand." While U.S. anti-labor law is un-

questionably weighted against the working class, it does not necessarily follow that we should therefore devote our energies to seeking better laws.

When U.S. workers in the 1930s found themselves facing injunction-wielding judges and a complete absence of any legally recognized right to organize, to strike or to control the conditions of their labor, they did not respond by going to Congress to seek better laws. Instead they organized unions on the job, reached out to their

fellow workers (employed and unemployed alike) in the community, struck, occupied their workplaces where necessary in order to prevent the bosses from herding in scabs. Unions were built despite the laws. Congress responded first by outlawing anti-labor injunctions, forcing employers to hire their own goons instead of relying upon police (the only progressive piece of labor legislation in U.S. history). When workers stepped up their organizing efforts Congress passed the NLRA in an attempt to regulate labor and to redirect our struggles into safer channels. The fact that it was later able to impose Taft-Hartley on a reluctant labor movement is a testament to the success of this strategy.

It would be easy to downplay the Sanders Bill by pointing to Congress' inability to pass even Clinton's watered-down pro-boss health care reform plan, which has the backing of major sectors of the employing class as well as what passes for an organized labor movement in this country. Under the present political regime there is no prospect of Congress passing genuinely pro-working-class legislation.

But the Sanders Bill is not merely a waste of time, a diversion from the pressing business of organizing to fight for better conditions and a better world through our own direct industrial action. In the unlikely event that it is approved it would enmesh U.S. unions even more firmly in the state's grip than they are now. Effective unions rely on their own power, not on gifts from the state which can be taken back whenever the interests of the employing class dictate. The IWW did not support the NLRA, recognizing that it was a weapon aimed against the working class — and in particular against revolutionary industrial unions such as the IWW. Workers would do well to steer clear of all political fakery, and stick to the time-tested remedy of working-class organization at the point of production.

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injunctions against unfair labor practices, to order the immediate reinstatement of illegally fired workers, allow triple back pay for workers injured by unfair labor practices, bar companies found guilty of unfair labor practices from federal government contracts, and provide for fines of at least \$10,000 for each willful violation of the Act. "This legislation does for the American worker what European workers already have," Sanders says. "It is many years overdue and the time is right for it."

But Sanders has not introduced the Workplace Democracy Act because it can not pass Congress without an "enormous grass roots effort." Such legislation will not come through the generosity of elites or the workings of the market. It will come only through the direct struggle of the workers themselves, organizing, protesting, striking, boycotting, engaging in politics and in civil disobedience, and devoting ourselves to cultivating broad support by framing labor issues as community issues. The working class must reclaim the spirit of labor radicals of a century ago, who contributed more to the lives of the nation's workers, families and communities than any other American institution.

Back in early twentieth century America, when socialists and other radicals talked of wresting control of the government through the ballot box and transforming the state apparatus into a cooperative commonwealth, the IWW contended that "a wise tailor does not put stitches on rotten cloth." This Wobbly assertion made much sense back then, and it makes much sense today. Wobblies usually shun reform laws, for we want wholesale change of the prevailing order. The Sanders bill does not aim to effect such change; the same capitalist system which brought the current crisis — the system of waste, inequality, and profit over human need — will remain intact if the Act becomes law.

Clinton Breaks Soo Line Strike

After an attempt by Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers (BLE) leaders to break the strike against the Canadian Pacific-owned Soo Line Railroad failed, President Clinton intervened on August 29th, ordering members of the United Transportation Union (UTU) to return to work. The strike began July 14, and was the longest U.S. rail strike in 16 years.

BLE President Ronald McLaughlin invited engineers to cross picket lines August 19th, claiming that the UTU was invading the BLE's craft jurisdiction. The other railroad crafts condemned the BLE's decision to scab. More importantly, the BLE rank and file showed that — whatever their "leaders" might think — they were not union scabs. Only 15 of 450 Soo Line engineers crossed the picket lines.

When the BLE's scab-herding efforts failed, the UTU announced that it would extend the strike to connecting railroads over which the CP/Soo was diverting its traffic. (While the craft unions into which rail workers are misorganized generally honor each other's picket lines, they have historically had no objections to handling struck work once it leaves the struck system.) Picketing struck work is legal under the Railway Labor Act, and could have quickly forced the Canadian Pacific to the wall.

Now the government is stealing the victory the Soo Line workers were on the verge of winning through direct action. Under the 1926 Railway Labor Act (passed as a result of a major lobbying campaign by the railway craft unions and upheld by the Supreme Court only under threat of a national rail strike), the U.S. president can order the suspension of any railroad strike for a 60-day "cooling-off period." While the bosses cool off, their sweaty foreheads fanned by the flow of dollar bills back into their coffers, a so-called Presidential Emergency Board investigates the dispute and makes "nonbinding" recommendations to settle it. Theoretically, the union could reject the PEB recommendations and resume its strike. But in every such strike since 1948, Congress has passed a law forcing rail workers back to work under the terms recommended by the Emergency Board — terms which invariably favor the bosses.

The Soo Line is seeking concessions from the UTU even deeper than those which were imposed on rail workers after the government busted its 1991 national strike. If the Soo Line succeeds in getting deep concessions, the other national railroads will certainly demand even deeper concessions when their contracts are renegotiated next year.

If rail workers are to escape this endless series of government-imposed concessions they need to revisit the question of industrial unionism. More than 100 years ago, IWW cofounder Eugene Debs withdrew from the railroad brotherhoods to organize the American Railway Union, recognizing that rail workers could defend their interests only through organizing and fighting together, as a united body.

Since then, rail workers have learned the importance of honoring each others picket lines. But they continue to rely on politicians and arbitrators, rather than on their own industrial power. The Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees has instructed its leaders to defy any future back-to-work orders. Every rail union should do the same. Let the government try to run the rails with machine guns and neutron bombs.

Direct action can get the goods, while government arbitrators will only deliver the shaft. But while solidarity and direct action can help alleviate the weaknesses imposed by craft divisions, only industrial unionism

Railtrack Strike...

were being operated dangerously and by untrained staff. By luck rather than judgment no one was killed and the government's own safety inspectors questioned some of Railtrack's practices. Despite these dangers to the public and to the train drivers themselves ASLEF did nothing. Indeed many members were told that if they did anything to support the signal workers they would not get union backing in the event of any trouble.

The RMT itself instructed all its members not signalworkers to work normally including those on trains whose lives were threatened by potential disaster. The RMT also did little to discourage its members who were supervisors from scabbing. A ballot of supervisors was held to bring them into the strike but the union went down to a humiliating defeat alleging acts of management harassment of members. But in truth the ballot was poorly organized, mistimed and suffered a poor turnout. The defeat cost the union dear and was a blow to the signalworkers. From then on the dispute was doomed to failure.

The dispute was doomed to an ignominious ending. A small section of the workforce was involved in a dispute, without the full backing of the union, in practice if not on paper. The employers, Railtrack,

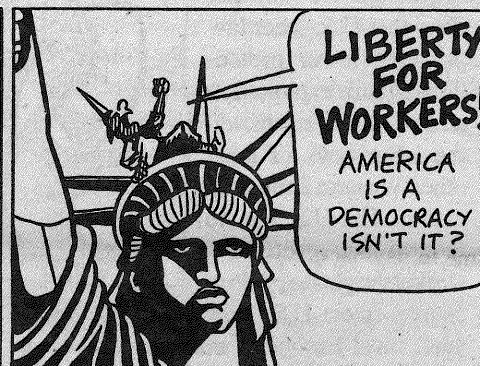
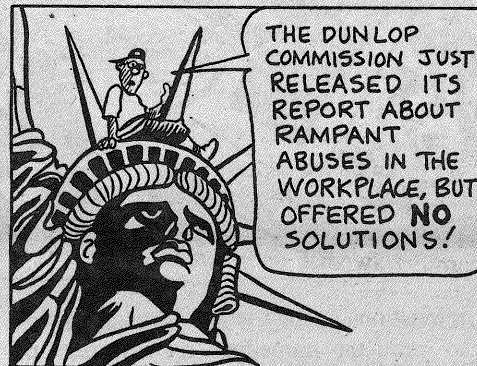
got the full support of the government in a dispute which cost them 100m. The RMT did not get around to asking for support from other unions until half way through the dispute. The union leadership instructed other union members to act as if there was

Union Scabbing

no strike. All these factors together led to the inevitable defeat which right up to the last the union was claiming as a victory.

The dispute shows that industrial unionism backed by solidarity action might have led to a victory. Were it an IU520 dispute the tactics would have been simple - no safe signals = no trains! No union manned signal boxes = no trains! Scab operators = no trains! That would have won the dispute. Competing unions spells trouble, competing reformist unions spells disaster.

In the end however the problem of the wage system remains. The wage system ensures that the workers are exploited, that workers will always get paid less than they are worth because that is the nature of capitalism. However unions seek to resolve problems within the confines of a wage hierarchy the money available will still not be worth the value of production or service delivered. The abolition of the wage system needs to return to the working class agenda for all these simmering problems to be laid to rest once and for all.



— democratically controlled by the rank and file and uniting all rail workers — enables rail workers to truly bring their power to bear.

If the Soo Line had confronted a genuine industrial union, it would not have dared to force workers out on strike. Had the strike begun, it would quickly have ended when other rail workers refused to handle Canadian Pacific/Soo Line freight. Had Congress or the President intervened to try to force workers to surrender, they would have been met with a general strike, shutting down the entire transportation system. This is industrial power, this is solidarity. Join the IWW, and help make it a reality.

Happy Days?

The following is from the latest newsletter of IBM Workers United, *The Resistor*:

Lou Gerstner, Chairman of IBM, compares the new IBM with a train ready to leave the station, but to get on that train according to Lou, we must be committed to win in the marketplace, committed to change, and committed to each other.

The important question, though, is is Lou committed to IBM employees?

Instead of tickets to his train, employees are given pink slips, while others feel they are being tied to the tracks.

Chairman Lou, in his letter to employ-

ees, cautions us not to sing "Happy days are here again" because we had another good quarter. Get serious Lou. The letter goes on to remind us that the "good old days are gone forever." No one knows this better than the employees and former employees who have gone through the worst period in IBM's history. Certainly we know better than a multi-millionaire Chairman who has only been with the company 16 months.

Yes the good old days are gone forever, along with: pay raises, job security, a benefit package better than most, retirement for many employees; concern for the well being of employees. This list could go on and on. It's been rumored that even the \$1000 given to employees when they reach 25 years service will be eliminated, as well as a reduction in retirement benefits. Some employees don't feel they will get that far anyway. How about eliminating executive bonuses instead?

For the rest of the year many will still have layoffs hanging over their heads and the torture of waiting continues. Many employees have already been fired this summer. Others are to follow in corporate scrambles to make their promised number of 35,000 firings to please Wall Street. 1500 let go from IBM PC; Kingston plant to close; 320 fired in Rochester, Minn. and San Jose, Ca. from Systems Storage (the disk drive assembly and test group will

AFL For Arbitration

AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Thomas Donahue recently told the federal Dunlop Commission on the Future of Worker-Management Relations that the AFL is willing to give up the right to strike in exchange for mandatory arbitration. "In negotiating the first contract, the public interest is better served by modification of the right to strike" in return for arbitration, Donahue said.

Asked if that meant giving up the right to strike over the first contract in return for mandatory arbitration of differences, he said, "sure." Donahue said arbitration would eliminate much of the rancor and employer bitterness now found in union campaigns and negotiations.

Donahue also backed larger penalties for labor law violators. Under present law "crime pays," he said. The AFL backed away, however, from earlier proposals to trade off the prohibition against company-dominated unions for rules that would expedite union recognition.

Commissioners welcomed the suggestion that they recommend new limitations on workers' right to strike, chiding business representatives who advocated no change in federal labor laws, including no arbitration, for "not living in the real world." The commission will recommend changes in labor law—with the objective of increasing "cooperation" and "productivity"—after the November election.

Donahue blamed present labor law for much of the rancor and confrontation that occur in organizing campaigns and workplace elections. The law does not heavily penalize employers who violate it. In 40 percent of all cases, companies refuse to negotiate a first contract after unions win NLRB elections. "Nor is this surprising," Donahue said. "'No contract' is the employer's desired outcome. He wants negotiations to fail..."

Donahue called for "taking the sting" of confrontation out of unionizing by "guarantee[ing] workers contemplating union representation that if they choose to organize they will be assured a fair, first collective bargaining agreement and will not be forced to put their jobs on the line" by a strike. The AFL's press release did not explain why they believe government arbitrators, with their history of union-busting, would give workers "fair" contracts.

Donahue advocated employer neutrality in organizing campaigns. "Employers generally call on us to be cooperative only after we've knocked them down a third time and pinned their shoulders to the floor," he told the commission. "If your first encounter with me is a fistfight, it doesn't help."

We are hard pressed to explain how AFL-CIO affiliates have been giving in to so many "cooperation" schemes if this is the case. It has, after all, been a long time since the business unions were in the habit of pinning the bosses' shoulders to the ground. And a union strong enough to do so has no reason to cooperate in the exploitation of its members.

move production to Asia with 800 workers losing their jobs); LORAL (which stands for Laid Off Right And Left, according to workers) fired over 600 former IBM employees in Manassas, Rockville, Gaithersburg and Owego. Some were offered their old jobs back at lower wages as contingent workers. ADVANTIS fired 270 employees. Meanwhile its CEO said they had a profitable first year and continued success is expected.

What does the "improving" bottom line mean for IBM employees? Probably not much...

So don't worry Lou, upper management may be singing "Happy days are here again," but IBM workers certainly are not. But we are hearing some old Labor movement songs being rehearsed.

European Syndicalists Face the Crisis

European syndicalists are carrying out a series of actions Nov. 4 to protest the attacks on the working class taking place throughout Europe. The theme is "Solidarity Against Social Exclusion," which might be rephrased as against the marginalization, staggering unemployment, homelessness and pauperization of new social groups which is increasing throughout Europe. A joint leaflet and poster were distributed across Europe with space for organizations to add subjects and demands of local national importance. The action was decided upon at a European syndicalist conference hosted by SAC (Swedish Workers Central-organization) in June in the Swedish town of Östersund. Conferees agreed that our movement must define what we want and don't want and be able to present our visions as an alternative to the compromises of the gutless mainstream unions.

The conference was held at the same

and story teller who has achieved mainstream popularity in Sweden performed the last day. Evert is Sweden's Utah Phillips and the crowd loved him. Saturday night, about one am, with the party lapsing into a beery blur, Stockholm's Mollys took the stage and cranked everyone up with their unique Icelandic-Irish-Swedish-Ska-Rock. Hard to explain but this band named for the Molly Maguires is irresistibly danceable.

Josh, a young anarchist from Austin

International Workers Aid to Bosnia

This report is excerpted from a presentation to the European Syndicalist Conference by Eva X:

I'd like to present to you a very concrete example of international solidarity and a proof that it really works. I'm here as a spokeswoman for International Workers Aid but I'm also a member of SAC which has played an important role in developing this idea into reality.

International Workers Aid started last summer with a plea for help from mine workers in TUZLA — a mining town in Central Bosnia — to comrades in Britain. The miners of Tuzla have a long history of solidarity. During the British miners strike in 1984-85, members of the Kreka Miners trade union sent one day's payment each during the whole strike

in spite of their own poverty. So when the plea for help came in the midst of burning war, the Englishmen thought it was the right time to pay back.

This was a very abstract idea which was caught up by unionists and Trotskyist groups. When the call came to Sweden it was through the Socialist Party and it was like it always is: when you need to get some hard work done, send in the anarchists.

This was the initial idea:

- To collect money and aid (food and medicine) for the workers of Tuzla
- To develop an international solidarity network between trade unionist, peace and women's groups and other radical, anti-nationalist movements throughout Europe in order to give political support to those forces in former Yugoslavia striving for peace, multi-ethnicism and democracy.

Tuzla: A Mining Town

Tuzla is one of the major industrial cities in Bosnia, with a population of 170,000 counting the refugees. The principal industry is mining — coal and salt.

During the war, Tuzla has profiled itself as a symbol of so-called human values in all this madness — it is a city where people still live together irrespective of ethnic and religious origin, and have many, many times expressed their determination to keep doing so.

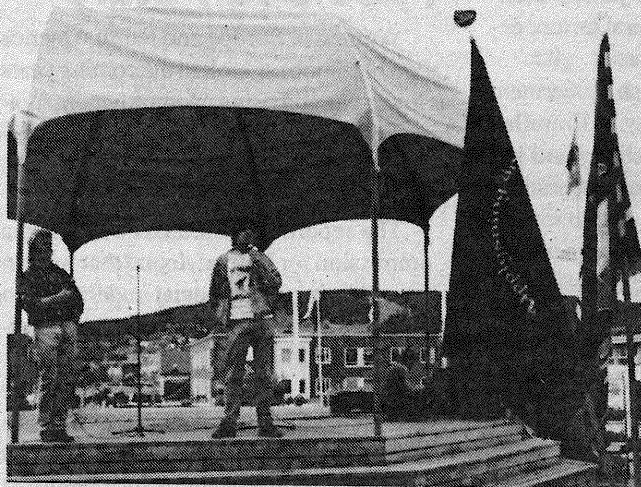
So far the dark powers of the war, meaning the national chauvinism, the hunger for political power, territory and economic supremacy, have not yet managed to corrupt this profound conviction in Tuzla. I didn't dare to believe it before I actually got there. But it is true.

Tuzla is also a city where the unions are and have always been extremely strong. Three days ago I spoke to a gentleman who came to Sweden from Tuzla 31 years ago. He told me a lot about the role unions played in people's lives. They were social security, education and survival. In Tuzla, the Kreka Miners union has been the very heart of the city. The system for monitoring, taking care and organizing was already there — it was a perfect partner in our project.

Texas, joined me for the obligatory Wobbly pilgrimage to Gävle and the boyhood home of Joel Haaglund, better known as Joe Hill. When we got there I had a phone message waiting from Carolina, a SAC member in Uppsala. "Yeah," I told Josh, "Joe's an old buddy. Folks know they can call me at his house." The building is now maintained by the SAC as a small museum with Hill memorabilia and furniture of the period in part of the home, with Carlos Cortez' poster of Hill

among the items. Most of the space is used as SAC offices while the garden space behind the home provides open air meeting space. From Gävle we took the train back south to Uppsala. The talk that night on the condition of unionism in America was attended by both students and working folks from the town. At some point I demonstrated the foolish American right wing metaphor that individuals should "pull themselves up by their bootstraps". Doing that meant I had to fall on my ass, folks laughed

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Jeff Ditz, Speaking at the SAC Rally in Östersund

time as the SAC's 25th Congress. Independent unions were invited to participate as a continuation of earlier meetings held in Paris, Barcelona, Madrid and Stockholm. Participating were KAS (Anarcho-Syndicalist Confederation, Russia), the Regional Trade Union Association of Lithuania, CGT (General Confederation of Workers, Spain), LAB Basque, CGT-Corr France, A Bathalia (Portugal), Lönsslaven (Norway), UNICOBAS (Italy) and SAT (esperantistas).

Building closer relations between the IWW and our sister unions around the world is a long-standing IWW project. This year, at the invitation of the SAC and anarchist organizers, I was able to travel to Sweden to attend Anarkistisk Mässa and the SAC Congress. The three day Anarchist Fair (Anarkistisk Mässa) outside Gothenburg was a marvel of organization. A soccer field was turned into a small village through volunteer labor. A huge circus tent provided space for groups to set up tables, included a beer and wine bar and a music stage. Smaller tents provided space for debates and speeches, eating and meeting. Numerous reports, discussions and debates covered the broad range of political and cultural concerns among Swedish anarchists. Discussions on workplace organizing, developing alternative economy and culture, anti-nuke work, feminism, anti-fascist organizing, along with lots of music were ongoing from ten in the morning till midnight every day. My talk on the IWW, which began at 10 pm, drew about sixty people.

Participants addressed questions like: how do we address the crises presented by the capitalists, how do we reach a range of people, what does outrage, vision and culture have to do with our media. One of the participants in the media panel, a professional journalist, burned his leftist bridges by publishing an attack on anarchists in the national daily he works for. Taking note of controversies around feminism and a separate space for women, this journalist sought to portray the diverse group of Swedish anarchists as anti-free thinking, anti-free speech and dogmatic.

Evert Ljusberg, an anarchist singer

Tuzla has also been flooded with refugees from all over Bosnia — and Serbia and Croatia — people fleeing from ethnic cleansing, military conscription and nationalistic mayhem.

As the military situation is right now, Tuzla is surrounded on three sides by Serbian forces. Since the federation between the Croats and the Bosnians was agreed upon there has been a more or less peaceful corridor through Bosnia from the Adriatic coast. But shelling from the Serbs is not unusual, and the newly opened airport has been a popular target. Tuzla suffers mainly from the effects of siege and isolation, and there is a constant fear that Tuzla will be cut off from the rest of Bosnia; if you look on a map this fear seems to be well-founded.

Humanitarian Aid & Power

When we started this campaign we were amateurs. We didn't know anything about this vast field of political, economical, social and technical complications called "humanitarian aid." We just loaded up everything people gave us, and didn't give the political implications much thought.

Convoy 1 dissolved after months of hopeless struggle, but three trucks (among them the Swedish one) decided to give it one more try. In November of last year they succeeded. This was our first personal contact with the miners of Tuzla, and this is when the real work started: a rebuilding program in cooperation with the miners union.

Humanitarian aid is a political factor of power in all disaster or war situations. Food is used to black-mail against unwanted developments or parts of the population. Starvation is a very powerful weapon and the ones in control of the food are also in many cases the ones in control of the entire situation. We had to avoid this trap.

Dumping tons of corned beef in the streets of Tuzla is not a way to help rebuilding and re-enforcing the civil society the inhabitants have been fighting for. Neither is it very respectful. We wanted to show that we support the civil society still functioning in Tuzla. The civil society — as an antipole to the military perverted societies that are now blossoming out all over Bosnia in the tracks of the war.

These are societies where all normal, inter-human structures and frameworks have been totally destroyed. Often well-meant humanitarian aid in fact helps to prolong and entrench this deeply disturbed situation. The big organizations, including the UN, very soon get institutionalized. The bureaucracy surrounding each kilo of milk powder is enormous. A lot of money is plowed into the humanitarian aid business, but not much comes out of it.

We decided to stick to one singular, very concrete project: the Bread Program. The concept is simple. We deliver flour, oil, sugar and yeast in regular, smaller convoys directly to the miners union. From the union's warehouse these ingredients are to be distributed to local bakeries where the bakers produce bread — a staple of the Bosnian diet. The bread is distributed to people in need. In doing this we hope to help strengthen a civil society where people still

work, where some machines still function in civil production, and where some people can bake bread that other people can eat.

It may look symbolic. But the Bread Program would be of no value if it only worked on a symbolic level. One ton of wheat flour means 2,000 loaves of bread. Ten tons means 20,000 loaves of bread. This is not, as we say in Sweden, cat shit. So far we have delivered 70 tons of flour.

It was from the very beginning very important to us to be in total control of every link in the chain, from the collecting of money and aid in our home countries to the actual delivery in Tuzla. We cannot, as was recommended so many times, just deliver our aid to another UN warehouse. Too much aid ends up on the black market...

It was around the Bread Program and the political impact that Tuzla stands for that we tried to get support. Here in Sweden the campaigning went, and still goes, remarkably well. SAC played the leading role in this work, but we cooperated with other groups: Bosnian clubs, trade unions and organizations on the political left. The organization is also alive and well in Denmark, Belgium, Germany, Netherlands, Britain and to some extent in Spain and Italy.

We have tried to strengthen our contacts in this fragile network in Europe and also with independent unions in Croatia and Serbia. The practical arrangements with the actual convoy driving (for which the Stockholm office has been responsible) have been so overwhelming that too little work has been done to make these contacts really creative.

It is nevertheless a crucial part of International Workers Aid and one of the things that separate us from ordinary humanitarian aid organizations. With an active, functioning solidarity network we have enough political power to act against war, neo-fascism and nationalism in the future.

I finally reached Tuzla in April and it was an overwhelming experience. After months and months of sometimes absolutely hopeless work, we did manage to get our first Bread Convoy on the road. By then we had an office and warehouses in Split in Croatia, three ex-army four wheel drive trucks and over 100 tons of bread ingredients waiting to be delivered. We also had the necessary contacts and endorsements from the governments concerned and from the UN.

The welcome was very, very warm. The people in Tuzla have been starving for a long time. Last winter was absolutely horrible with very little aid getting through. Still the miners union has managed to support its workers and their families with food packages and meals, as is its tradition.

I spent three days in Tuzla and I have never met such hospitality, warmth, pride and courage anywhere. The situation in Tuzla is a bit better now, but our friends are still in need of absolutely everything. To keep this project going we need to reinforce our efforts until the war is over and we can start working on the revolution.

I think it is just about time to put some action behind the slogans and try to re-establish the political potential of the unions!

Solidarity Works

York (England) postal workers went on lightning strike on July 1 after a shop steward was suspended — he was reinstated the same day. And on the 20th July a bus driver, sacked after arguing with his boss over proposed roster changes, was reinstated when his colleagues staged an immediate one-day strike.

Newsboys Backed

One of Norway's largest newspapers, *Aftenposten*, pays the boys that deliver the paper to subscribers early in the morning very poorly. The Transportation workers union is backing the newsboys, and says that if they do not get a better agreement with the newspaper within 14 days the union will start a sympathy strike and stop all transportation for the newspaper.

TV Techs Fired for Refusing Overtime

150 technicians at Tyne Tees-Yorkshire TV were sacked last week for refusing to sign new contracts which would have meant them working unpaid overtime. Support for the union has been muted and the company have threatened the mass sacking of a further 600.

TYTV as it is called was formed by the merger of two independent companies in the north east of England. A spate of mergers in the TV industry is leading to monopolistic concentration of the media. The most successful is Rupert Murdoch who owns the only UK satellite company, the *Times* newspaper and the gutter press *Sun*. The combined media interests in the UK amount to about 25% of the market.

Workers Charged to Use Bathroom

Employees at Gainers Inc. are now docked pay for every bathroom break visit made outside of breaks and lunch hour under regulations brought in last week by company owner Burns Meats Ltd.

A notice posted in the meat-packing plant tells workers that abusing washroom visits has lowered productivity. If employees need to use the washroom outside of breaks, they must report to a supervisor, who records the time of departure and return. The time is tabulated at the end of the week and pay cheques are deducted based on an employee's hourly wage.

"How can they charge you for going to the washroom?" asked one angry employee. The man said one worker at the plant had a kidney transplant and has to use the washroom often. "Because of this system, he had to hold it in [between breaks] for a whole week. He went once for three minutes and was charged 43 cents."

Nukes Unsafe

It has just emerged that the UK atomic weapons facility at Aldermaston, southern England was closed for a long period in 1993 after the Government's own Health and Safety Inspectors halted production for safety reasons.

At Burghfield, another plant involved, essential safety tasks were postponed in order to speed up weapons production.

The HSE revealed that safety was so bad if Aldermaston were not run by the military it would not get a licence. Under British law the owners of the facility, the Ministry of Defence, cannot be prosecuted. The HSE is demanding a change in the law because of the seriousness of the situation.

4650 people are engaged in building warheads in England, and the attitude of the business unions has been that the jobs must be protected whatever the consequences.

Turkish Labor Struggles

Contracting Out

80 workers were fired by the Sariyer municipal government for participating in a July 20 labor demonstration. On July 27 the workers held a press conference in front of their work and said that after the local elections when the Refah Partisi (RP) (Islam fundamentalist Prosperity Party) got elected it started conducting business with the contracting firm Albayrak, which was laying off all union workers. The workers said that if they were not unionized they would still be working today, and accused the RP of complicity in the firing: "Those who keep on talking about a just system or being a Muslim have fired us to have workers from Romania take our jobs." Workers have started a sit in at the steps of the workplace and have said that they will continue their struggle.

Solidarity Illegal

Singer Bilge Erenus and OZDEP Istanbul Branch President Orhan Kaya are on trial for a meeting they attended to support the workers fired from the Kagithane Municipality. The municipality is run by the RP which came to office in the last elections and fired hundreds of workers.

Bilge Erenus is on trial because some people chanted slogans while she was singing, and Orhan Kaya and Hasan Sincar are on trial for the speeches they gave at the meeting. They are charged with speaking against the indivisibility of the Turkish State. If convicted, they could get jail terms ranging from 1 to 3 years and fines up to 100,000,000 TL (\$3330.00). A state policeman who monitored the meeting says everything was under control. He said if there were any subversive activities he would have included that in his report.

Concessions Lead to Layoffs

226 workers fired from the BMC plant in Izmir showed up in front of the plant recently to protest the firings and call for the management to resign. The president of Turk Metal Sendikasi (Turkish Metal Workers Union) said negotiations have gone nowhere for seven months, and that after every negotiation more workers are being laid off. There has been 593 lay offs since January at BMC. The workers had agreed to take a leave without pay for the last three months; the last lay offs of 226 workers were from those on unpaid leave. Workers estimate that their concessions gave the boss access to a 60 billion TL (\$2 million) credit, but he fired them anyway.

Police Attack Labor Meeting

Police attacked a commemoration marking the 13th anniversary of the killing of Kenan Budak, who was president of DERI-IS (Leather workers Union) under DISK (Confederation of Revolutionary Workers Unions). About 100 people gathered by the grave and observed a minute of silence. After several short speeches by unionists police attacked the crowd as it began to disperse quietly. Police opened fire when people started to flee. One person was injured by the police bullets, 10 people were arrested.

Fevzi Gercek, the president of TUM SAGLIK-SEN (Health Workers Union) said, "As if the killing of Kenan Budak was not enough, now it is becoming illegal to even mention his name or go near his grave."

Union Teachers Arrested

Plainclothes police raided the home of Emrullah Cin at 3 in the morning on October 13, detaining him and his colleague Mustafa Asig who was visiting him. Suzan Isbilen's home in the same building was also raided, and she and her sister Pervin (a

student teacher) were detained. Police carried out identity checks in other flats in the building before taking the four away.

Amnesty International reports that the detentions have so far not been acknowledged. It is believed that the four are being held incommunicado at Diyarbakir Police Headquarters, where it is feared they are being tortured. The reason for the arrests is not known.

The three Kurdish teachers are all members of the Diyarbakir branch of the teachers' union Egit-Sen.

Following a series of visits to Turkish police stations in 1990, 1991 and 1992, the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture (ECPT - established by the Council of Europe) reported: "The ECPT can only conclude that the practice of torture and other forms of severe ill-treatment of persons in police custody remains widespread in Turkey..." In Diyarbakir police headquarters the ECPT found several torture devices in place and ready for use.

Please write the Turkish government voicing concern for the safety of Emrullah Cin, Mustafa Asig, Suzan Isbilen and her sister Pervin Isbilen; seeking assurances that they are not being subjected to torture or any other form of ill-treatment; mentioning the findings of the ECPT; and asking to be informed of any charges brought against the teachers.

Letters should be sent to: Deputy Prime Minister Mustafa Karayalcin, Basbakanlik, 06573 Ankara, Turkey (Faxes: +90 312 230 88 96 attn: Prime Minister); and the Chief Prosecutor at Diyarbakir State Security Court: DGM Bassavcisi, Devlet Guvenlik Mahkemesi, Diyarbakir, Turkey.

General Strike Hits Italian Government

Millions of workers, pensioners and students participated in one of the largest general strikes to be held in Italy in recent years October 14th. The strike was organised by Italy's three largest union federations, representing a combined total of 11 million workers, to protest cuts in social benefits.

While the strike officially lasted four hours, many sectors, including public offices, banks and schools, continued throughout the day, while journalists and printers suspended activities on Thursday so newspapers would not come out on Friday.

Workers marched with banners expressing their opposition to the proposed 1995 budget. If passed, the bill would cut 18 billion dollars in funds for pensions, health and defence in an attempt to reduce the budget deficit. Strikers protested cuts in pension funds, but union leaders say they would not oppose a social security "reform."

More than three million workers took part in some 90 protests and marches throughout the country, the largest in Rome, Turin, Milan, Florence, Venezia and Bolo-

gna. Employees of Italian Prime Minister Berlusconi's Fininvest company participated in the Milan demonstration.

The protest strike followed an October 5th incident in which 15 people were injured while protesting the budget when police attacked 5,000 protesting construction workers after someone set off a fire cracker in front of government headquarters. Police say workers met the police attack with a barrage of bottles and rocks. Seven protesters, seven police officers and a reporter were treated at a downtown hospital for injuries, according to police sources.

Union leaders harshly criticized the workers for defending themselves, calling on protestors to remain passive when the police moved in. "We have always respected the law and opposed public disturbances," Italian Workers Union (UIL) secretary Pietro Larizza said.

Women Workers 'Face Sad Future'

Women in Europe and North America face a bleak job outlook in the coming years as lower pay and rising unemployment combine with continuing barriers to their entry to key posts, according to a new United Nations report.

The report, from the UN's Economic Commission for Europe, found that women were emerging as a "special underclass" in poorly paid, part-time and temporary positions with little job protection.

Women's pay has dropped since the 1980s, as has the general quality and choice of employment available to them, the report says. "Women continue to be segregated into traditionally female occupations, particularly in the service sector, where they comprise about half of all employees in most countries... largely in lower positions.

"While women's participation in the labor force has increased substantially over the past 20 years, the trend has not been accompanied by a significantly higher proportion of women in managerial or decision-making posts."

Worldwide, the ECE said, women earned an average of 30 to 40 percent less than men for comparable work.

URUGUAY: General Strike

A general strike was called on August 23 by the Uruguayan confederation of unions, the PIT-CNT, to protest the extradition to Spain of three members of the Basque separatist ETA.

The three have been detained since 1992 on charges of falsifying documents, but requested political asylum. When the government announced plans to deport them they began a hunger strike. The PIT-CNT called on workers to support the political asylum request by going on strike for one day.

Leaders of all Uruguayan political parties declared their support for political asylum, based on a strong Uruguayan tradition which began early this century with the acceptance of Italian Anarchists.

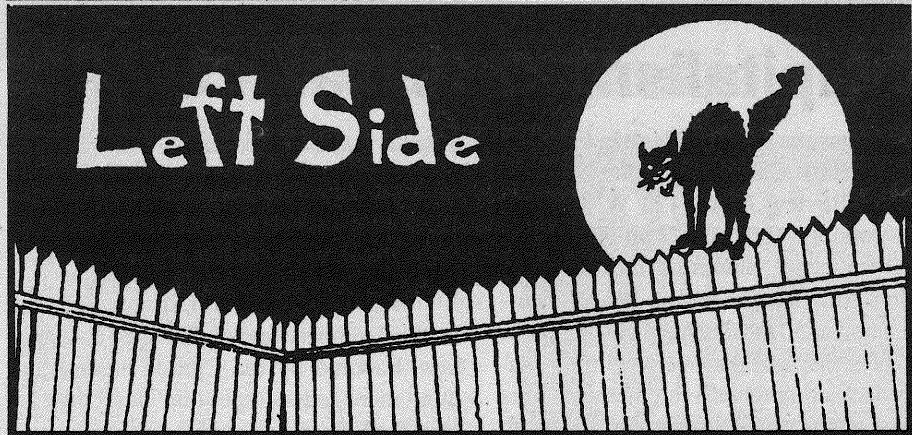
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Slave Labor in Freedomland

We are told in our history books that chattel slavery ended here in Freedomland when Abraham Lincoln enacted the 13th amendment to the Constitution. Contrary to old Abie being touted as a great humanitarian, and despite the fact that he carried on a correspondence with Karl Marx, the 16th president was nothing more than just another president. His humanitarian image is a bit smudged by his participation in the Black Hawk Wars which resulted in the displacement of the last group of Indians from what is now the state of Illinois. It was Abie himself who stated at the beginning of the disagreements between North and South that he had no intentions of disrupting the "way of life" in the South.

The Emancipation Proclamation came about as a means of crippling the economic power of the South when it looked like the Confederacy was in danger of getting the upper hand in the war between the states. A president can be nothing other than a president! This amendment states that: "Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, *except as punishment for crimes whereof the party shall have duly been convicted*, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to its jurisdiction." In other words, slavery was not abolished but merely limited to those who were duly convicted of crimes,

After the close of the Civil War large numbers of newly freed Blacks happened to be "duly convicted" of crimes and found themselves in state prisons where they worked their butts off, being only compensated with their "room and board." These state prisons would "rent" out prison labor to private contractors in a new, improved form of chattel slavery. The Virginia State Supreme Court in the 1871 case of *Ruffin v. Commonwealth* said that prisoners are "slaves of the state." The only things that has changed since then has been that the state has become less honest about its slaveholding practices.

Not only were most state and federal prisons self-sufficient, but much of the surplus production was unloaded on the open market at a considerable profit to the prisons. This situation continued until the 1930s when both manufacturers and labor unions complained about having to compete with prison-manufactured products on the open market. It goes without saying that it was concern for the manufacturers that brought about legislation alleviating this situation.

Also there is one disadvantage to chattel slavery, and that is during slack times or when the market is overcrowded the idle chattels still have to be housed and fed. From there arose the institution of wage slavery where the master owned only the tools of production, leaving the slaves to fend for themselves whenever there was no work to be done. They were still free and had the freedom to go hungry and live in the streets, as hundreds of thousands are doing right now in Freedomland.

Proponents of unpaid prison labor, however, will mask their form of exploitation as "rehabilitation," teaching the prisoners industrious ways so they will be able to make a living on the outside. Yet with the rise of unemployment and the hosts of jobs being exported to cheaper paying countries, such "rehabilitation" amounts to little if anything. Who is going to emigrate to Bangladesh to make brooms to export back to Freedomland?

All such talk about rehabilitation is hogwash since the corporations here and their multi-national colleagues have been transferring all labor-intensive production to low-wage Third World countries. The politicians of Freedomland shed copious crocodile tears over the importation of prison-made goods from mainland China while doing the same things themselves. The politicians in China level the same condemnation at the United States.

Ironically, the California Department of Corrections is marketing its clothing lines in Asia, underselling the already underpaid sweatshop workers in Indonesia, Hong Kong, Thailand and the Chinese. The Prison Blues line of clothes made by inmates in the Oregon Department of Corrections has projected sales of over a million and a half dollars in export revenues.

The prisoners having no collective bargaining rights make this an ideal situation for profiteers. Not having such troublesome things as striking workers, the manufacturers have never had it so good.

However, as long as we permit the machinery of production to remain in the hands of a few of our number, the difference between those of us who are in prison and those of us who are "free" shall remain one of relative degree. When the greater majority of our species, the ones who do the productive labor in our society, sweep the cobwebs out of our craniums and take over the tools for our own use, there can be no more need for prisons, statesmen or politicians, and we can tell Bosso the line from the old refrain, "Chop some wood, T will do you good!"

Some prisoners do have it good. Noriega is growing fat and sassy in the clink at the Freedomland taxpayers' expense, instead of being left in Panama where his compatriots would know the proper way to deal with him.

—C.C. Redcloud

SAC, European Syndicalists Meet...

and the reporter pulled out his camera and requested an instant replay. After that it was time for beer and a chance to finish an interview with an anarchist working for a Trotskyist newspaper. This last is worth some explanation. The current unemployment system provides a year's worth of benefits and follows up by paying wages for working in a non-profit. Arvid explained that working for the Trots on the state's tab gave him a chance to learn the craft of writing while bringing some of our perspective to a paper that wouldn't otherwise print it.

The SAC Congress was held in Össtersund, a town in the center of the country which has three military bases, a university, and according to local legend a Loch Ness type sea monster in its very large lake. On the Saturday the Congress opened we marched to the town square at noon. Black and red flags and boisterous, singing syndicalists took over the sunny summer streets. Your correspondent was honored to be the international guest invited by the SAC to address the public meeting, which opened and closed with music by Billy Shamrock, including a fine tune telling yuppies to leave town. Mattias Gardell of the SAC International Department, who IW readers will remember from a March 1994 inter-

view, spoke on the historic beginnings of the SAC and the important role international solidarity from the IWW and other unions had in launching the Swedish syndicalist union. I was next up and addressed the need to put forth our visions of a better society and build practical international solidarity. Shamrock finished off with a few more songs.

The Congress opened with greetings from numerous sister organizations around the world. I presented a brief greeting of solidarity on behalf of IWW members in Australia, Canada, Great Britain and the United States. It was great to hang out with the Congress delegates. Many praised the Industrial Worker, with folks from several countries saying they look forward to it and reprint articles from it. The *Wage Slave* didn't always make sense to Swedes or Russians but many praised the IWW for using humor.

We have sisters and brothers who appreciate the IWW in Sweden and elsewhere. Folks who want to build a libertarian socialist world where working folks not capitalists are in charge. Small steps of informal solidarity help along the road to revolution in our life times.

—Jeff Ditz

Pity the Poor Boss

The gap between workers and top corporate executives continues to grow. Last year the average CEO "earned" \$3.8 million in compensation — about 149 times the average worker's pay of \$25,317.

Since 1980, executive pay has risen 514 percent (before inflation), as measured by an annual Business Week survey. Corporate profits rose by 166 percent, consumer prices grew by 75 percent, and factory workers' pay rose by 68 percent, lagging behind inflation.

Break Our Union, Please

Amalgamated Transit Union Local 757 is circulating petitions to place an initiative on the Eugene, Oregon, ballot that would require contract disputes to be submitted to binding arbitration. The union recently reached a four-year contract with the Lane Transit District after working without a contract for more than a year. The contract, which extends medical and other benefits to part-time workers (but also allows management to increase the number of part-time workers), was reached only after the local voted to strike for the first time in its history.

Working Overtime is Scabbing on the Unemployed

Steelworkers Local 1104 at the USX-Kobe plant in Lorain, Ohio, has forced the company to retreat from its policy to slash workers. Instead, management recently hired 100 additional workers.

The hiring came after a six-month struggle by the 2,500-member local against USX's massive use of forced overtime while other steelworkers are laid off. The grievance committee filed several plant-wide grievances over undermanning and forced overtime, and more than 7,000 grievances against the use of outside contractors. (That's a lot of paper; might a bit of direct action on the shop floor saved some trees?)

The announcement of the hiring was greeted by workers who'd been forced to put in six and seven 12-hour days per week. But local leaders note there is still a need for additional workers in the plant in order to protect workers' health and safety and avoid mandatory overtime.

Fascist Group Run By Government Agent

The Canadian spy establishment has been embarrassed by the leak of a document proving that a paid CSIS agent helped set up an influential white supremacist group, the Heritage Front. This group attacked and harassed people and spread hate literature, as well as coordinating with fascists in other countries. The agent also allegedly illegally spied on the postal workers union and the right-wing Reform Party. Parliament's oversight committee knew about the illegal activities for some time.

The news has had the effect of fracturing the neo-Nazi movement, as the groups now know that CSIS knows a lot about them, plus they don't know who else might be a spy. This follows the scandal of about a year ago, when Canadian Armed Forces in Somalia were found to have members of white supremacist groups in their ranks.

It must be a coincidence, that fascists are found in both the police and military organizations of the state.

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Haitian Workers Face Uphill Battle

The Haitian labor movement is organized into three main federations: the General Confederation of Workers (CGT), the Federation of Unionized Workers (FOS) and the Center of Haitian Workers (CTH, formerly the Autonomous CTH). The CGT, the most radical of these union centers, was formed Oct. 7, 1990, by labor activists who wanted to wrest control of the movement from bureaucrats and politicians and return it to the rank and file. Most CGT affiliates emerged from the CATH, whose leadership was moving ever closer to right-wing forces eventually landing them in an alliance with the military dictatorship.

CGT General Secretary Cajuste Lexius has been a labor organizer since 1986. He is also secretary of the Union of Public Transportation Drivers for the Metropolitan Area, which represents "tap-tap" drivers in Port-au-Prince (whose participation has long been central to the success or failure of Haitian general strikes, as these small pick-up trucks are the main form of public transport). Other CGT affiliates represent factory assembly workers, government workers and peasant groups.

"The CGT is not the only union here," Lexius notes. "But we made a choice to form the CGT. Some of the others are more bureaucratic and we don't necessarily agree with them. But when we organiz... we see that we can build liasons between our laborers, peasants and drivers, and between all other workers... because the bureaucratic approach is not necessarily the one chosen by the people in the bases.

"There is a big task ahead for us... Even if we can't make alliances with the bureaucracies at the top, we need to make alliances with all workers in all unions, because we are all in the same fight. That would help us create a big, democratic union that would be a backbone to help change the corrupt state we have here in Haiti."

Unions were illegal under the Duvalier dictatorship. But in 1984, the military dictatorship established the FOS in response to international pressure to improve its human rights record. The FOS was set up with assistance from the AFL-CIO's American Institute for Free Labor Development (financed by the U.S. government). Although other unions continued to be brutally repressed, the existence of the FOS was enough to persuade the U.S. government to grant Haiti various trade privileges. However, independent unions continued to organize and played a key role in the anti-Duvalier uprising that toppled the dictator in 1986.

The series of interim governments that followed continued to attack workers rights, focussing their repression on non-AIFLD unions such as the CTH that were signing up thousands of members. CTH became

increasingly militant between 1987 and 1989, and it was briefly outlawed under the Namphy regime. Union leaders were arrested, beaten, tortured, killed and fired en masse. Many CTH activists were fired from assembly plants after a wave of nationwide strikes.

But in the months leading up to the December 1990 elections that briefly brought Aristide to power, the CTH dropped "autonomous" from its name and aligned itself with the "social-democratic" PANPRA party (a member of the Socialist International), which backed the candidacy of Marc Bazin—later installed as "Prime Minister" by the military junta.

The formation of the CGT was fueled by widespread revulsion over these ties, and the CGT quickly became a leading union center during Aristide's brief tenure in office and in the immediate aftermath of the coup. The CGT encouraged inter-union struggle against the dictatorship, a strategy at least formally supported by most unions (although the CTH leadership leaned towards supporting the coup).

The resumption of repression against the unions after the September 1991 coup means a new round of murders, disappearances, arrests, torture, dismissals and exile. Company owners used the cover of the coup and the ensuing trade embargo to eliminate unions from their plans, fire activist workers, cut wages, and install spies and goon squads to keep the remaining workers in line. Unions responded by forming associations of the unemployed and with a series of general strikes.

On April 23, 1993, Lexius and two other CGT members were arrested outside of a radio station after dropping off a press release supporting the call for an April 26 general strike. All three men were severely beaten by the military. Lexius was left unconscious for two days and nearly died from damage to his internal organs. He was kept in military custody for a month (the two CGT members arrested with him were released April 29), and was released only after an international pressure campaign. Shortly after his release, Lexius was forced to leave Haiti for the U.S. to seek medical treatment for his injuries.

The August-October *Industrial Worker* published an appeal signed by Cajuste Lexius in behalf of the CGT and the Haitian International Committee Against Repression (CICR) protesting the U.S. threats of invasion, and instead calling for a program to assist Haitians in securing their own freedom. The IWW's Southeast Michigan GMB (Box 2056, Ann Arbor MI 48106) has launched a program to raise funds to assist the CGT in rebuilding the labor movement during the present occupation.

Capitalism and Health Care

Dangerous to Your Health: Capitalism in Health Care, by Vicente Navarro. Monthly Review Press (122 W 27th St., New York NY 10001), 127 pp., \$10.

By Vicente Navarro's reckoning 38 million Americans have no health insurance, another 50 million have major gaps in their benefits, and the overwhelming majority lack comprehensive coverage. This state of affairs causes, or hastens, the death of 100,000 Americans each year. So much for the health care system that vampires like Bob Dole proudly call the best in the world.

But **Dangerous to Your Health**, Navarro's analysis of the U.S. health care system, is not merely a catalog of the absurd and often horrific failings of the system; the book's aim, he says, is "to help people understand not so much *what* is wrong with the U.S. health care system—the majority of Americans already know this because they suffer from it—but *why* it is wrong." He adds that "A whole academic and media industry exists to obfuscate rather than clarify this critical question," a point aptly borne out by the coverage of Congress' debate over health care "reform."

To understand the why, says Navarro, who is a professor at Johns Hopkins University and an M.D., we must look at the U.S. economy as a whole. In a clear style, aided by a multitude of charts, Navarro sketches out the great open secret of American society; i.e., that one percent of the population owns 40 percent of the nation's wealth. This one percent, which Navarro calls the corporate class, owns and manages ever major segment of the economy. It relies on a compliant government, run to a large extent by members of its own class, to regulate and legislate in its behalf. It looks to government for hundreds of billions of dollars in revenue as well, either through subsidies or contracts.

The insurance companies, drug companies, medical equipment manufacturers, hospitals and medical professional organizations which make up what Navarro calls the medical-industrial complex are largely owned or administered by this same class. Given that variations exist within the different segments of this complex, the institutions that comprise it—and the people who own or administer those institutions, are driven by the imperatives common to capitalist enterprises, such as the need to maximize profits while minimizing risk, often with the help of sympathetic government regulation. Navarro compares the medical and defense industries, noting that some of the major players in the medical sector are also defense contractors, and pointing out that like the defense industry, the medical

industry has been extremely successful in converting public funds into private profit; government contracts with private health providers account for about 40 percent of all health care expenditures, he says.

What type of reform, if any, does the medical industry favor? Managed competition. Favored by the Clinton administration, managed competition has come to marl the leftward edge of the congressional health care debate, a drastically reformist option that must be defended against "mod-

Book Review

erates" like *Love Boat's* Fred Grandy and die-hard conservatives. Navarro traces the origins of this industry-friendly concept to the Jackson Hole group, whose members are drawn from the large insurance companies and pharmaceutical firms, along with some medical professional associations and major employers, together with their hired guns the academic economists. This concept would funnel the lion's share of the national health care outlay into medical networks run by the large insurance companies. Competition would thus be allowed to do its magical work, making things better and cheaper for everyone.

Convinced? *The New York Times* is. By 1993, when this book was published, the paper had run nine editorials and 62 articles in support of managed competition. Navarro also notes that four of the 12 members of the *Times'* board of directors also sit on the boards of health insurance firms. In April 1993 Clinton was presented with a petition in favor of a single payer plan—"socialized medicine"—that had one million signatures, but "not one of the major media reported this event."

Navarro concludes by surveying the history of health care in Western Europe, where national health care plans date in most cases to the days of fedora hats and trolley cars. Why have Europeans been able to institute systems that politicians and journalists in the U.S. dismiss as utopian? Be-

Now Available: Anarchism And The Black Revolution

The Workers Self-Education Foundation of the Philadelphia GMB has printed a collection of 4 of FW Lorenzo Kom'boa Ervin's pamphlets under the title "Anarchism and the Black Revolution and Other Essays" (155 pages, \$7.00 US). Includes the title essay and "The American Government, the Best Argument for Anarchism," "A Draft Proposal for an Anarchist Black Cross Network" and "Anarcho-Syndicalists of the World—Unite!"

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Workers Guide to Direct Action \$2.95. **Workers Guide to Organizing** \$2.95. Lehigh Valley Branch.

cause strong unions grouped in national labor federations, linked to political parties created to fight for the interests of the mass of working people, have insisted upon it. Dr. Navarro's prescription is clear. If you want better health care, *organize!*

—Gregory Farnum

Chomsky on Propaganda

Letters from Lexington: Reflections on Propaganda by Noam Chomsky. Common Courage Press (PO Box 702, Monroe ME 04951), 167 pp., \$10.95.

In this collection of 19 informal essays, written between 1990 and 1993 for the magazine *Lies of Our Times*, Noam Chomsky examines the difference between reality and news. Unlike the usual *how the media missed the real story* type of critique, however, with its emphasis on personal bias and the supposed psychology of news organizations, Chomsky's analysis of individual news stories is both highly meticulous (he provides his usual array of footnotes for readers who wish to do more digging) and informed by a coherent theoretical framework. That framework is summarized during the course of his comments on news stories that purport to explain the reasons for voter apathy during the 1990 midterm elections.

"Major issues," notes Chomsky, "are excluded from the arena of electoral choice, from political debate, and from the political culture generally, which keeps to a very narrow spectrum of tactical judgments among elite preferences. This is the 'big story' about the 1990 elections, and those that came before." And those that came after. Chomsky goes on to add that, "As should be a commonplace, there is essentially one political party, the business party, with two factions. Shifting coalitions of investors account for a large part of political history. Unions or other popular organizations that might offer a way for the general

Music/Song

- Good News. Sweet Honey in the Rock
 - All Used Up. Utah Phillips
 - Smash the State and Have a Nice Day. Citizens Band
 - Don't Mourn, Organize! Songs of Joe Hill by various artists
 - Rebel Voices. Songs of the IWW sung by IU 630 Wobs
 - I Have Seen Freedom. Si Kahn
 - We Have Fed You All for 1,000 Years. Utah Phillips.
 - As Seen on No TV. Chris Chandler
 - It Takes A Lot of People. Tribute to Woody Guthrie by Larry Long & children
 - A World to Win. Tom Juravich
 - Greenfire. Dakota Sid and Travers Clifford
 - Food Phone Gas Lodging. Charlie King
 - Justice. Toshi Reagon
 - Out of Darkness. Tom Juravich
 - Look to the Left. Anne Feeney
- All Cassettes: \$9 each

VIDEO - Older = Bolder: Anarchist Elders
28m, VHS, 32.50 post-paid

public to play some role in developing programs and influencing policy choices scarcely function."

Though he found his subjects in what are by now old newspapers, *Letters from Lexington* is not old news. Haiti, Cuba, the Middle East and other topics covered in these essays are still very much with us, as is the unreported underlying issue that's made explicit by the title of the book's last essay — "Class Struggle as Usual."

—Gregory Farnum

VIDEO: First Strike

FIRST STRIKE: Portrait of an Activist. 30 minutes. Johnson & Dibble Films (1133 - 19th St., Santa Monica CA 90403).

Katya Komisaruk, age 22, walked into a storage building at Vandenburg Air Force Base and destroyed a secret NAVSTAR military navigation computer. She used bolt cutters, hammer, crowbar and a battery-operated drill. After finishing the job, Katya walked out again leaving behind flowers

and cookies.

The next day, Katya held a press conference and told how she had just made the world a safer place for children.

The video, produced and directed by Douglas Dibble, explores the nuclear war issues surrounding the action and Katya's development as an activist in Berkeley.

Appearing in the video are physicist Michio Kaku, former Lockheed engineer Robert Aldridge, former US Attorney General Ramsey Clark, and Dr. Helen Caldicott, a former president of Physicians for Nuclear Responsibility.

Katya was railroaded in court where the judge refused to allow the jury to hear any evidence by the defense. She was sentenced to five years in a federal prison near Spokane WA. Part of the purpose of this video is to present the suppressed evidence and testimony to the public. It's also meant to inspire activists with Katya's courageous example of direct action.

(MV)

Books for Rebel Workers

Hard-Pressed in the Heartland. by Peter Rachleff

Rachleff participated in the hard-fought struggle of P-9 against the Hormel Company and the UFCW. The Hormel workers' struggle suggests the possibility for the rebirth of a militant, rank & file, community-based union. \$12

Power! by MacShane, Plaut & Ward.

A history of black workers and their unions in South Africa, following their struggle to improve everyday life and transform the system through the mid 1980s. \$8

One Big Union. by IWW.

The basic introduction to the structure and methods of the Industrial Workers of the World. \$2

Rise and Repression of Radical Labor. by Daniel Fusfeld.

A concise history of the U.S. movement from the 1877 strike wave through the 1918 red scare trials, deportations and murders. \$5

Crystal Gazing the Amber Fluid. by Carlos Cortez.

Long-time IWW artist Cortez's poetic take on life in the late 20th century. \$4

Solidarity Unionism.

by Staughton Lynd. Critical reading for all who care about the future of the labor movement. Lynd offers no easy answers, rather a faith in working people and an argument that building solidarity today means nurturing resistance in the face of corporate power. \$7

Rebel Voices: An IWW Anthology. edited by Joyce Kornbluh.

A compilation of articles, cartoons, songs & poetry from the IWW press. \$22

Sabotage in the American Workplace. edited by Martin Sprouse.

Tales of resistance on the shop-floor to speed-ups, bum pay and the drudgery of wage slavery. \$12

Mask of Democracy: Labor Suppression in Mexico. by Dan LaBotz.

Recent rank & file insurgencies, maquiladoras and NAFTA all get attention in this timely book. The need for international labor solidarity is inescapable. \$14

Labor Law for the Rank & Filer. by Staughton Lynd.

Revised and updated for the 1990s. A classic self-help manual. The subtitle

says it all: "building solidarity while staying clear of the law." \$7

Progress Without People: In Defense of Luddism. by David F. Noble.

Technology is a political question, and too often workers and others are excluded from the decisions. A detailed analysis of technology's effects and working-class responses. \$15

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A history of U.S. workers' struggle from workers' point of view. Argues that class upsurges are based in everyday live and rank & file initiative. \$15

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by Henry McGuckin. The memoirs of a rambling Wobbly organizer of the 1910s. How they hoboed, organized and lived. Free speech fights and "fanning the flames of discontent." \$5

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by Ralph Chaplin. Chaplin's musical version of the IWW Preamble has the line "without our brain and muscle not a single wheel can turn. He expands that idea in this 1933 essay. \$2

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From Job To Job, Take Union Solidarity With You

The world is changing fast around us. Only a few short years ago, a person could hope to work for 20 years in a stable company or branch of government, with a gradual increase of salary and retirement benefits. Now a job is only for the present. Even if it's supposed to be a permanent job, the employer may shut down tomorrow.

Unions now must attach themselves to their members, rather than to the workplace. The IWW welcomes workers in any occupation, employed or not. When you leave a job, you take your IWW membership with you. When you start a new job, you bring the IWW with you to that new workplace.

These days, it's sometimes hard even to know who your employer is. You may be on a contract where there is one boss on the floor, another who is running the contract, and a third who pays your wages. Or the company you work for may be owned by some other company you never heard of. You can have workers side by side who are covered by different bargaining units and who get different benefits and rights.

It's not enough to have a union at the workplace. You can't base your union protection and power in one local unit set up to deal with a specific employer. This is much too limited and gives the employer too much control. If you are a working person, you want a labor organization that is flexible enough to follow you in today's changing job situation.

The IWW takes a principled approach to the relationship between a union member and his or her economic circumstances. The IWW principles are that every worker should have an equal voice in decisions that affect their economic circumstances. These principles apply when you are negotiating to renew an established contract, and they apply when you are faced with a crisis on the shop

floor. The same principles also apply to unemployed workers who need support income or training, and to those fighting discrimination. Those principles can be applied towards any boss, whether it's the shop floor boss, the contractor boss, or the cheque-writing boss, and regardless of whether the boss is the one who signs your labor contract.

The IWW does not require a boss's signature on a union contract before beginning to apply our principles of justice and dignity for all workers. When one of your bosses does something that is unfair, crooked, and an injury to the dignity of a fellow worker, you have a choice at that moment to bow down or stand up. And if you stand, you want some sisters and brothers standing behind you.

It may happen to you every day. You may have one of those bosses who constantly insults, harasses and cheats the workers. People don't stay long at jobs like that. You can just take the abuse until you are able to quit, and then some other person will be hired and abused in your place. Wouldn't it be better to stand up for better treatment now, for yourself? If you make insist on being treated fairly and with dignity every day, then you will never have to endure abuse from an employer.

One lesson stands out in the history of organized labor. Workers have to stick together to win. Acting all by yourself can get you fired, but solidarity can protect you. If you're going to work, you've got to have a union. The IWW is the union that stays with you from job to job, and off the job as well, with the same principles of justice and dignity.

Who knows where the jobs are going to be tomorrow? Will there be any jobs at all, or enough to go around? The IWW principles apply equally to the larger picture. Wherever we work tomorrow and whatever we do, all of us deserve an equal voice in choosing our common future.

Be a Wobbly — Join the IWW...

To join mail this form with a check or money order to IWW, 1095 Market St #204, San Francisco CA 94103, or contact your local delegate. Dues: Monthly income under \$800: \$3 per month; Income \$800-1700: \$9 monthly; Over \$1700: Dues \$12. Initiation Fee: Same as one month's dues. A low-income worker can join for as little as \$6.

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