

# Industrial Worker

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EDUCATION

ORGANIZATION

EMANCIPATION

## GATT: A New Nafta?

Congress is on the verge of approving the new General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), the eighth in a series of world trade agreements that have reduced barriers to international trade over the past four decades.

The new "Final Agreement" seeks to further reduce trade barriers, so that its corporate benefactors can reap the profits of increased competition and lower wages. Like NAFTA, GATT's purpose is to clear the field so the transnational corporations can do pretty much whatever they want (not that they were tightly restricted to begin with.) Tariffs are to be reduced (to less than 4% on average from the current 6%) on a wide variety of manufactured goods, including drugs and high-tech equipment. Nontariff barriers like quotas and other import restrictions are to be phased out.

The global food trade is to be brought under the GATT for the first time. Signatories pledge to reduce farm subsidies and to open their markets to foreign producers. Environmentalists fear this will lead to more intensive farming, with heavier use of chemicals and other ecologically destructive techniques.

First World countries promise to phase out restrictions on the import of textiles over the next 10 years. If implemented, U.S. and Canadian garment workers seem certain to lose many more jobs.

The agreement restricts countries from regulating foreign firms differently than domestically owned companies and tightens international protections for brand names, computer programs, pharmaceuticals, and such. As a result, medicines will become much more expensive in developing countries, though the transnational

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## International Leonard Peltier Solidarity Week

The Leonard Peltier Support Network has called an international solidarity week October 17-23 to bring pressure on the U.S. government to release class war prisoner Leonard Peltier. The Network asks supporters to picket U.S. federal buildings and other facilities, and to write U.S. President Bill Clinton (The White House, 1600 Pennsylvania Ave., Washington DC 20500) to ask that he grant Peltier executive clemency.

A U.S.-Canadian joint demonstration will begin October 14 with Peltier supporters in both countries walking to the Pacific Northwest border between the two countries. The two groups will meet up at Peace Arch Park on the border on October 23 at 1:00 p.m. for a joint international rally demanding justice for Leonard Peltier. The 1994 IWW general assembly has endorsed the international solidarity week and urged IWW groups and branches to join in local solidarity activities.

Leonard Peltier is a scapegoat in an effort to cover up the U.S. government's long-standing policy of "ethnic cleansing" of the original caretakers of this land. Though the government seeks to portray itself as a peacemaker and guardian of human rights, for over 200 years it has sought to destroy



*IWW delegates, shortly after adjourning the 1994 Assembly by singing "The Internationale" and the IWW anthem "Solidarity Forever."*

## Solidarity, Organizing Focus of IWW Assembly

Nearly 40 Wobblies from across the United States convened in Santa Cruz, California over the Labor Day weekend to meet one another, share our organizing efforts and ideas, and discuss ways to build a stronger union. IWW members came from Atlanta, Chicago, Detroit, Los Angeles, Mendocino County, New York City, Nevada City, Philadelphia, Salt Lake City, San Francisco and, of course, Santa Cruz.

While this year's Assembly was not without conflict, those conflicts pitted us not against each other but rather against the Santa Cruz authorities (who are trying to outlaw the homeless) and a scab who crashed a Saturday night concert by Wobbly musicians. While the Wobblies in attendance did not always agree on the best way to build our organization, the discussions were in-

Native sovereignty and traditional ways of living.

On June 26, 1975, the FBI stormed the Jumping Bull camp on the Pine Ridge reservation under pretext of serving an arrest warrant on a teenager accused of stealing a pair of boots. A firefight began after FBI agents fired on the camp, and a Native man and two FBI agents were killed by gunfire.

In the aftermath, the FBI interrogated 364 people, ransacked local homes, and ultimately brought "aiding and abetting" murder charges against three American Indian Movement activists, Bob Robideau, Dino Butler and Leonard Peltier. Robideau and Butler were acquitted of all charges. Peltier was convicted of the charges in a separate trial in which the judge excluded evidence of the FBI's reign of terror and in which the FBI fabricated ballistic reports and intimidated witnesses.

Although Peltier's defense attorneys have obtained documents proving government misconduct and several witnesses have come forward to retract their coerced testimony, the courts have refused to consider the new evidence and has rejected Peltier's appeals for a new trial. Peltier will spend the rest of his life in prison for a crime even the government now admits he did not commit (though they still claim he "aided and abetted") unless the U.S. government grants him clemency (early release).

For information write the NW Leonard Peltier Support Network, P.O. Box 5464, Tacoma WA 98145-0464 (206/383-9108).

variably constructive.

At present IWW Assemblies have little decision-making power; rather they are an occasion for Wobblies to get together face-to-face, to exchange ideas, and to develop proposals which are then forwarded to branches or to the general membership (via referendum) for action. Thus there are few "decisions" or controversies to report. However, discussions largely revolved around two related issues: Organizing and Solidarity.

### Needed: Labor Solidarity

Our Salt Lake City General Membership Branch offered a presentation on the A.E. Staley lockout in Decatur, Illinois and urged all IWW groups and branches to do everything we can to aid these fellow workers in their struggle. The Staley workers were locked out June 24, 1993, after management tired of their in-plant work-to-rule strategy adopted after management proved unwilling to compromise its demands for new work rules and conditions that the workers could not afford to accept.

Staley management demanded 12-hour work shifts with no overtime pay, rotating schedules in which workers shift from day work to night work every month, loss of weekends, etc. While workers were forced to toil under these conditions, management abandoned any pretense of following safety regulations, resulting in several injuries and at least one death (to a worker who filed a grievance over unsafe conditions the same day he died, but was ordered to complete the work anyway).

We were shown two videos in which the workers explain the issues. The first, "Deadly Corn," has been widely shown around the country. The second, "Struggle in the Heartland: A.E. Staley Workers Fight Back," focuses on recent demonstrations in solidarity with the Staley workers, and on the police's vicious response. At a June 25 1994 demonstration marking the first anniversary of the lockout, 180 police in riot gear attacked two thousand workers who were picketing the plant. The video includes graphic footage of police literally covering picketers' faces with mace (sprayed, in some cases, from only inches away). When one worker is asked what the police were doing at the demonstration, his

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## Marriott/Queen's Strikers Storm Corporate HQ

Raising hell for management and building solidarity with strikers was the order of the day when striking food service workers at Queen's University, Kingston, visited their employers' HQ in Burlington, Ontario.

Members of CUPE Local 229 have been on strike against Marriott Corp. since April. They want a pension plan and job security. But Marriott - a multi-million dollar corporation - isn't negotiating.

Marriott vice-president Peter Myer got an ear-full when 40 striking workers and their supporters barged into Marriott HQ and loudly demanded an explanation as to why they didn't deserve a pension plan. A shaken Myer claimed "pensions are on the table." But they let him know they weren't taking his crap.

The fact is that Marriott and their partner, Queen's University (Queen's owns and pays for the operation, Marriott is the contracted management service), have not seriously bargained with the union. Instead, they have maintained a campaign of legalistic harassment against the strikers.

Upon leaving Burlington, the strikers and supporters learned that workers at the American Standard factory in Toronto were on strike after years of wage cuts. They immediately decided to make a detour and join the pickets at American Standard.

Once there, strikers, men and women from different industries and different unions greeted one another, exchanged accounts of their strikes, and sang Solidarity Forever. The suits inside panicked and called the police. Which goes to show that solidarity in action is what really frightens the bosses.

The last stop of the day was a picket and leaflet of the Marriott Hotel at Bay and Dundas in Toronto. The strikers unfurled their "Marriott Suck\$" banner - a refreshing sight on Canada's main street of business. They received many honks of support from passing motorists including recently striking Toronto cab drivers.

The day had started at 2:00 am but the energy of the strikers and their supporters was sustained through out a day of serious hell raising. Marriott Corporation will not soon forget that Local 229 means business and is prepared to continue fighting for their rights on the picket line.

Sean Purdy



*Former IWW organizer Tom Scribner's statue carries a picket sign during the IWW's recent demonstration against Santa Cruz's anti-poor laws. See story, page 4.*



# Hawai'i Office Workers Walk the Line

Eleven thousand Hawai'i state government office workers hit the picket lines April 18. The strike, which was to last two weeks, came on the heels of an overwhelming vote to reject the State of Hawai'i's miserable 2 percent per year increase for two years that had been offered a few days earlier. The workers demanded 8 percent per year and step increases. The "stuff it" verdict reportedly stunned their wimpish "leader," Russell Okata, who was suddenly faced with organizing, some would say diffusing, the first strike in his union's 60-year existence. He did not look at all enthusiastic.

There are four public-sector AFL-CIO unions in Hawai'i: the Hawai'i State Teachers' Association (HSTA), United Public Workers (UPW), the University of Hawai'i Professional Assembly (UHPA) and the Hawai'i Government Employees' Association (HGEA). All are tame business unions. All are run by over-paid bureaucratic hacks. All the hacks are in the pocket of the local democratic party machine.

HGEA's membership consists mostly of women, a high percentage of whom are Asian-Americans (everyone's a minority in Hawai'i-one of the nice things about living here) who have the sociological reputation of being non-confrontational. They are secretaries, receptionists, technical staff and others, organized into several different units. This was the first open political action, and certainly the first strike, for almost all of them.

They did well! A lot of these folks usually spend their days quietly running offices and doing the work while their bosses take the credit. They are highly organized, and so - from 6 a.m. to 5 p.m. into shifts - were their picket lines. Several O'ahu Wobs picketed with them regularly. Very rarely had any of us been in strikes where there were *too many picketers* at some locations! Except for a few minor altercations with brainless but hostile drivers, the atmosphere was relaxed and there was plenty of time to talk as you walked. The university was hardest hit. All department offices closed. Most state offices shut down as well.

When we walked the picket lines with the HGEA workers we were welcomed and often barraged with questions about what

the IWW is. We occasionally had to explain why our signs read "O'ahu IWW Supports HGEA Strikers" instead of endorsing the union itself, and we warned them about the danger of their leadership selling them out. We passed out some of our "Don't Mourn, Organize: Some Wobbly Proposals for Hawai'i" pamphlets and distributed a few Wobbly songbooks.

At the end of the first week another HGEA unit voted to strike and 5,000 more workers joined the picket lines. Sixteen thousand workers were not on strike. Many motorists drove by the picket lines honking their support and flashing "shaka" (local hand gesture meaning "right on" in this context) to the picketers. Family and friendship networks are very strong here. To do a bit of simple math, 16,000 strikers times seven or eight "blood" relatives and another 7 or 8 "calabash" relatives and tight friends gives you about 200,000 people, or about 20 percent of the state's population standing firmly behind the strikers. The strikers generally enjoyed being out in the sun during the day (the weather cooperated for the most part). They grew more militant as the days passed, and victory was in the air.

State government spokesweasels looked frazzled and dejected on the evening news. Slave-drivers and hospital administrators complained loudly about not being able to close real estate deals (license offices shut), keep many wards open (clerical workers out), or -horrors - play golf (public courses closed). Local media coverage grew more hostile as the strike progressed. It had never been sympathetic, of course. One local ABC-TV reporter actually had the nerve to ask a public golf course manager on camera, "Why don't you try to hire replacement workers and get the course open again? It's looking so nice." The reporter took some heat from one local Wob via telephone.

Behind-the-scenes negotiations started up in week two. Governor Waihe'e summoned (HGEA director) Okata and he reported. On Thursday evening he went on TV joyously to announce a settlement. HGEA workers were to trek downtown to vote on it the next morning. Sorry, but he would give no details until the time the vote started! The next morning there was a short,

information-free speech urging acceptance given as the rank-and-file were lining up to vote. The message was: don't ask what's in the agreement, just vote to approve it. We regret to report that a majority of HGEA members did just that. The next evening

## Around Our Union

Okata was again on television at a joint press conference, falling all over the governor and thanking him profusely for his help in settling the strike.

The strike was not a waste of time, however. As the details of the "great deal" emerged over the next few days, rank-and-file members all over the islands grew increasingly pissed off. Unequal settlements between units left some members (particularly Unit 3, which was the first to strike) wondering whether the union remembered them at all. Their wimpish leadership had settled for little more than the state's original offer. Two week's wages were lost, apparently for nothing. Some members of the union started to agitate. A few went on TV to denounce Russell Okata as a pathetic sell-out and demand his resignation. Petitioning is going on to that effect.

There is talk of decertifying the union as a means of getting rid of the bureaucracy, and affiliating with a more representative union or starting their own. An organization called "Making A Difference," MAD for short, has begun agitating for disclosure and accountability. The lessons learned from this strike will have long-lasting effects and far-reaching implications for how the rank-and-file perceive their union "leadership" in Hawai'i.

O'ahu IWW

## Anarchy in the UK Fest includes Wobs

An anarchist festival comprising hundreds of events (films and videos, workshops, rallies, book fair, direct action, debates, live music, comedy, poetry, etc.) will be held in London October 21 - 30. Among the highlights of the 10-day festival are an international rally on October 28th, a "levitation of parliament" on October 23rd and a demonstration against the proposed "Criminal Justice" Bill October 27th.

Among the groups organizing events in conjunction with the festival are the British Isles section of the IWW, Freedom Press, Earth First, London Greenpeace, the London Socialist Film Co-op, Libertarian Education, the London Anarchist Forum, and scores of others. Programs on a wide range of issues, ranging from the theoretical to practical discussions on how to use new computer technologies, are planned.

Freedom Bookshop will be open from 10:30 a.m. until 6 p.m. on Oct. 21st to welcome visitors (84b Whitechapel High St., tube station Aldgate East; 071-247-9249). Advance registration (including complete program) is £25. To register or for more information: Anarchy in the U.K. '94, P.O. Box 1096, Bristol BS99 1BW.

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Sustaining Fund**

## LETTER: Organize Black Workers

Fellow Workers,

I first joined the IWW in the 1970s, based upon the tradition of the Union as a fighting organization and because there were once over 10,000 Black workers who made up 10 percent of the union's membership. I believed that the IWW was therefore an anti-racist organization, which did not just allow membership regardless of race, but which recognized the special oppression of Blacks as workers and as an oppressed race.

I was wrong, of course, the IWW was not then so enlightened. I was told that the IWW could not employ some "Black jive" to recruit Black workers, so I ultimately quit in disgust. I also quit the Anarchist movement.

I only rejoined in 1994 after working for a few years with Wobs in Philadelphia, Paterson, NJ, and other cities in demonstrations against the Klan, police brutality and homeless civil rights. This was because I felt that a newer group of anarchists and syndicalists had come into the IWW with anti-racist consciousness. I believe that this *can* lead to an attempt to be more inclusive. Yet the IWW is still an overwhelmingly white organization; this must change.

So at the Santa Cruz IWW general assembly I submitted a proposal for a "People of Color/Black Workers Organiz-

ing Project" to recruit new workers and raise their concerns. I do not feel that this would ever have been raised if I had not done so. I also do not believe that it would trouble many if the group remains white, but this remains to be seen.

The proposal is not "my" proposal, and a vote for it is not a "favor" to me. It is a test instead of the good faith of this organization and its commitment to true social justice. A movement of just white workers has little moral authority to convince anyone that it is truly struggling for a new society.

The truth is that Black workers are super-exploited under this system. They are forced to live under substandard housing conditions, high levels of unemployment, police brutality, racial discrimination and numerous other social ills, based on the race and class of these workers. The IWW must address this reality or lose all credibility. It cannot pretend "we're all the same."

So the proposal is a challenge for the IWW to defend its own principles, as well as its history. I will never compromise on basic principles myself, nor should I be asked. Either the IWW stands for justice or it sells itself out and caters to racism just like the AFL-CIO does. This is the issue before us.

Lorenzo Komboa Ervin, X324398

## LEHIGH BINGO CASE HEADS TO COURT AGAIN

The continuing saga of the Boulevard Bingo Job Shop looks like it won't be over anytime soon. The NLRB has issued yet another set of unfair labor practice charges against the bingo hall, which are scheduled to go before an Administrative Law Judge on October 3. In addition, the bingo hall has filed a SLAPP lawsuit against the IWW's organizer. The Branch has responded with a countersuit of its own.

The Bingo story began in June 1992, when Boulevard Bingo, which was owned and operated by two non-profit groups, illegally fired ten workers who were trying to organize a union. The IWW filed charges on their behalf, asking for full reinstatement of the workers and payment of back wages totalling some \$85,000. On the day that the charges were to be heard, a settlement agreement was reached in which the IWW agreed to accept a portion of the back pay in exchange for a signed union contract.

Shortly after, one of the nonprofit groups, the Pennsylvania Association of Songwriters, Composer and Lyricists (PASCAL) had its bingo license pulled by the Lehigh county District Attorney's office for financial funny business. The remaining partner, Allied Air Force, continued to operate the bingo hall two days a week.

We had hoped that the settlement would end the matter. Instead, from the day the contract was signed, Allied Air Force President Joseph Fillman apparently decided that he didn't have to follow those parts of the contract that he didn't like. Within the space of a few months, the union had filed over sixty grievances concerning contract violations. Fillman, for his part, refused to settle any of the grievances and refused to allow his supervisors to discuss them with the union. He also threatened to fire two delegates who were filing grievances and illegally suspended both of them to make sure they got the message.

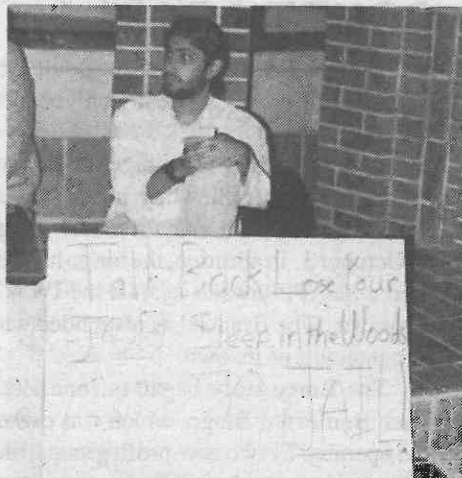
After that, Fillman unilaterally changed the working days at the bingo hall, effectively removing both Delegates. The Job Shop decided that it had had enough, and filed new charges with the Feds. They are scheduled to be heard in October.

In response to the charges, Allied Air Force filed a civil lawsuit against IWW organizer Lenny Flank Jr. in his latest attempt to weaken the union. Flank had sent a press release to the local newspaper announcing that the NLRB had concluded that Allied Air Force had committed new ULPs and had issued merit findings against the bingo hall. Unfortunately, the newspaper's reporter had only a dim understanding of NLRB procedures, and didn't contact us before writing the story. As a result, she wrote a story asserting that the bingo hall had been "found guilty" of illegal actions (the NLRB first decides whether to press charges, an Administrative Law Judge then hears the case and rules on "guilt"; the case has not yet gone to trial). Allied's lawsuit claims that the press release falsely stated that the bingo hall had been found guilty of a crime (which, of course, we never said). Allied is asking \$1.2 million in damages.

In response, the IWW filed a countersuit against Allied Air Force, charging that Allied's lawyer, Mark Haltzman, deliberately and knowingly made false statements to the press concerning Flank and the IWW. Haltzman had told the newspapers that all of the union's unfair labor practice charges were false and baseless, and had been filed merely as harassment. Shortly after Haltzman made his statement, the IWW won merit findings from the NLRB on nearly all of our charges. The countersuit alleges that, by making this statement,

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# Wobblies, Homeless Protest Anti-Poor Laws



A picket sign tells the story: "Talk Back, Lose Your Job... Go to Jail!"

The IWW General Assembly concluded with a direct action campaign against Santa Cruz ordinances designed to drive homeless and poor people out of time. Around 9:30 p.m. a few dozen Wobblies gathered the signs we had been making and made our way to the city watchtower — placing a picket sign in former Wobbly Tom Scribner's hands (he's a bronze statue now) as we passed by. The demonstration was set for 10:00, and we had a decent crowd as the bells tolled and the Food Not Bombs folks began handing out cookies.

But the watchtower site was a diversion to make sure the police didn't occupy our site. By 10:30 more than 75 people marched back to the Tom Scribner statue. The statue, in front of a local bookstore owned by a member of the city council who is a major supporter of anti-homeless measures, shows Scribner playing his musical saw (as he did for years on the sidewalks of Santa Cruz after retiring from the timber fields). Ironically, Scribner could be arrested under the conduct laws now in force.

Cities across the country are criminalizing behavior such as sleeping in public, loitering and panhandling, in an attempt to become more "attractive" to tourists, shoppers and businessmen by driving the poor and homeless off the streets and out of sight. San Francisco has passed a slew of laws criminalizing everything from sleeping to serving food to homeless people. Berkeley police take the position that sidewalks belong to the store owners they pass in front of, and allow shopkeepers to have homeless people arrested if they "trespass" on the public sidewalks.

And while Santa Cruz pretends to be a progressive city (the mayor is a war tax resister), it has one of the strictest anti-sleeping laws in the state of California. Santa Cruz law prohibits the very act of falling asleep at night anywhere but in a domicile or fenced-in yard. Sleeping or covering up with bedding outside, in a church

## Bingo Struggle Continues...

Haltzman was in essence accusing us of filing false charges, which is a Federal crime.

Haltzman also told the newspaper that the workers at the bingo hall had filed a petition to decertify the union. In fact, no such petition has been filed. If Haltzman knew anything about labor law, he would know that it is illegal to introduce a petition to decertify within one year of the union having been recognized.

The countersuit asks for over \$1 million in punitive damages. No date has been set yet for the hearing.

The biggest problem we are facing in this mess is, not surprisingly, financial. All of this legal maneuvering costs money, the one thing we don't have much of. PLEASE CONTRIBUTE TO OUR LEGAL DEFENSE/OFFENSE FUND! Send contributions to: Lehigh Valley IWW, P.O. Box 4133, Bethlehem, PA 18018

by X341341

or similar facility, or in a vehicle — even with the consent of the property owner — is illegal, and punishable with a \$162 fine, more than a room in the priciest hotel the tourist city offers. Other local ordinances prohibit sitting on sidewalks, panhandling, and all-night demonstrations even where no sleeping takes place.

Santa Cruz did recently open an open-air "homeless shelter" of sorts on a former toxic waste site on the edge of town, but it has no running water (a bath and shower facility was built, but the building was condemned as unsafe), is rat-infested, is too small to accommodate the hundreds of homeless people living in Santa Cruz, etc. Several homeless people were ticketed in the week leading up to the IWW demonstration, pointing to the urgency of the issue.

The issue has been hot for months in Santa Cruz, with scores of homeless people and their supporters getting busted for charges ranging from sleeping to sitting on the sidewalk to disturbing the peace (a shopowner claims an activist called him a Nazi). A few days before the IWW Assembly began, two local judges ruled the sitting on the sidewalk statute unconstitutional, and threw the arrests out of court. The Mayor quickly called for an appeal, and for a new anti-sitting law.

So there was widespread interest, and many homeless people and other locals were prepared to join Wobblies on the streets. Although a local paper claimed only 65 people joined the demonstration, I counted more than a hundred (and surely missed some). FW Deke Nihilson began the rally at the statue by climbing on Scribner's pedestal and giving a rousing speech about the difficulties faced by part-time and unemployed workers trying to find a place to live in Santa Cruz. The right to sleep, to eat, to live, and to speak are fundamental human rights, and the IWW will not stand by while poor people are criminalized and driven from town. Several others also took the opportunity to soapbox, speaking for the 4-hour day, describing their experiences with local police enforcing the conduct codes on homeless people and Food Not Bombs activists, etc.

A woman who had been busted twice in the past couple of weeks for sleeping in

public burned the citations to enthusiastic response from the crowd. As the television cameras whirred someone then pulled out a tattered American flag and commenced to burn it as well to the approval of some in the crowd. Others thought the flag not nearly as apt a symbol of the struggle we were waging that evening as were the citations.

As the night progressed musicians performed, people talked, leaflets were dispensed to passersby. Response was generally favorable and several people joined us for a time. There were exceptions — a few people staying in apartments overlooking the demonstration tried to engage us in a shouting match, one poured a bucket of water on our heads. A couple of people tried to pick fights but went away disappointed as cool Wobbly heads carried the day. But overall, the atmosphere was calm and the police kept their distance.

Among the distinguished guests in attendance was Mayor Scott Kennedy, who stood to the side of the demonstration for more than two hours assuring all who wandered over to talk to him that he was a firm supporter of the right to sleep on the streets

and more generally a friend of peace, justice and the capitalist way. Hizzoner's account did not square with the recollections of some locals who had seen the mayor vote to strengthen restrictions on homeless people just a few months before. A local businessman with a reputation for fingering homeless people to the cops visited his shop in the middle of the night, pretending to ignore us though it seems unlikely that he ordinarily putters around his shop at 2 in the morning.

By midnight people began settling in to sleep and our ranks dwindled to the 75 or so who spent the night (or at least most of it). A few boisterous locals came through around 3 am trying to enliven the proceedings with a song (some might have preferred their sleep), and one camper greeted the sun with a rooster imitation — drawing some rather irate looks from people still trying to sleep on the rough concrete sidewalks.

The demonstration was a success — in the face of our solidarity and direct action the bosses and their police had no choice but to make their laws a dead letter, at least for the night. Inspired by this success, several local homeless people decided to stick



Sixty Wobblies, homeless workers and supporters spend Labor Day Eve illegally camped in downtown Santa Cruz. The mayor showed up, but police were nowhere to be found.

around for the next day and to continue the vigil for another night. Some Wobblies stayed on to support them, but most had to leave for home, or to get a few hours sleep before returning to wage slavery. Unfortunately, the 20 or so demonstrators who stayed that second night fell prey to a police crackdown — at 4:30 in the morning 13 demonstrators were cited for violating the camping ban and two more were arrested when they refused to sign the tickets.

There were several incidents during the day as shoppers and locals voiced their objections to having "their" sidewalks and "their" city cluttered with poor people (few of these people appeared to be from the employing class; while by rights the city ought to belong to those who built it and work in it, one might think they would have noticed by now that this was not the case).

Many yelled out the tired "get a job" refrain, apparently unaware that Santa Cruz boasts a 15 percent unemployment rate. Others accused us of being reds out to destroy the American way of life, whatever that might be. (A few of the local homeless who joined the demonstration shared this view as well — several argued the merits of the "free enterprise" system and the bosses' "right" to the means of production to me while carrying their life's possessions in a couple of grocery bags. If the slaves would get wise the bosses' days would be numbered.) But some were sympathetic, or at least willing to discuss the issues.

## Winnipeg IWW Targets Unemployment, Environment

The Winnipeg Wobs have been initiating action and supporting activities to give direction for unemployed youth this summer. The overall intent will be to set up a Direct Action Network and Phone-tree.

Since June people are associating a local landmark "Garbage Hill" and Sundays with an IWW event "Drums on the Hill." With two full pages of support from the press we now regularly attract 200 people to the Sunday Sunset Drum and Fire Show. Food Not Bombs is an active participant. A core group is producing a newsletter and organizing other activities.

One such action is fighting Louisiana-Pacific. Like FWs in California, Manitoba workers and forests are threatened by L-P, Lots of Pollution. IWW, as part of the Future Forest Alliance coalition to defend the forests, organized a major protest, with Drummers of the Hill, big puppets and 150 protesters. Taking the streets with an exuberant and colourful display of solidarity we paraded to a Town Hall Meeting at the University of Winnipeg and produced a win!! L-P will now be installing air pollution controls in their proposed Wafer Board Plant. Now we begin the fight to stop the proposed clear cutting of our Provincial Parks; and support an immediate resolve to

Native Land Claims in the area.

Our next activity was a major campsite at the Winnipeg Folk Festival. Food Not Bombs provided two meals daily and set up a homeless tent. We had a very active lit table and became the recognized spokesperson for the entire campground in dealing with Festival Security and initiating all-night drumming.

Our latest activity, the CoreFest saw us unite forces with the Winnipeg Rock scene and local environmental group Earth Corps to produce a Free Rock Fest designed to support and encourage our own local popular music. We celebrated for the second year our freedom with a free festival and said fuck corporate rock... on a stage decorated with Join the O.B.U., Abolish Wage Slavery, and other IWW banners. Led by the IWW marching drum, the Drums of the Hill crystallized the energy of the finale of the Weekend's Celebration. Food for volunteers and performers was provided by Food Not Bombs.

The IWW will continue to host the Sunday drum circle on Garbage Hill which includes providing literature and sharing information with our people. The GMB and Food Not Bombs of Winnipeg believe in and live "direct action now."

# 1994 IWW General Assembly Report...

response was simple: "Only their jobs. Whatever corporate greed tells them to do, that's what they are doing."

While the Staley plant is extremely dangerous to the workers who run it, it is also highly profitable. The British multinational Tate & Lyle made more than \$100 million a year from its A.E. Staley subsidiary before it decided that workers must work harder, in more dangerous conditions, so that it could make more money.

This is not just a struggle against Tate & Lyle and A.E. Staley. The employing class are standing together in solidarity in their effort to break the union. "Competitor" Archer Daniel Midlands owns a big piece of Tate & Lyle and operates a plant across the street from the Staley plant. A pipeline from the ADM plant to the A.E. Staley plant enables Staley to maintain production without its workers. Meanwhile, ADM is implementing work rules similar to those the Staley workers rebelled against on its own workers. ADM and A.E. Staley are major contributors to politicians, and the Decatur police have done their best to serve their corporate masters. So the bosses are showing their solidarity, the question is whether labor will do the same.

The fellow workers from Salt Lake City stressed the importance of getting the word out and organizing solidarity actions across the country (and, indeed, across the

**What the Staley workers want is simple enough. They want their jobs back. They want to be able to go in 8 hours a day for decent pay and finish the day alive...**

world, wherever Tate & Lyle has operations). The workers have started an adopt a worker program to help them survive the lockout (they are particularly hard-pressed because in many families both parents worked for Staley; the Caterpillar strike is also straining the local labor movement's resources). Many workers are now boycotting Domino's sugar and major Staley customers such as Miller Beer (Staley's largest customer), Smucker's and Brock Candy to try to bring pressure on the company. The Salt Lake branch is distributing the two videos we saw (on a single tape) for \$12, all proceeds go to the Staley workers.

The Assembly also voted to endorse International Leonard Peltier Solidarity Week (see article this issue) and urged branches to do what they can to support this campaign to free the long-time class war prisoner. A proposal to contribute \$1,000 to the Zapatistas in support of their efforts against NAFTA and the further impoverization of our Mexican fellow workers will go to membership referendum for a decision. There was some discussion over the logistics of the proposal, and a few delegates suggested that an exchange of information was a more vital necessity than money, but several also spoke in favor of the proposal as an example of the international solidarity necessary to defeat the employing class's efforts to force workers to compete with other workers across national borders.

Two other proposals introduced by the Southeast Michigan General Membership Branch are being sent to referendum by petition. One condemns all economic and military actions against the Cuban people, holds that current U.S. policy does nothing to support democracy or justice in Cuba, urges our fellow workers to participate in actions against the U.S. embargo (including shipments of material aid), and concludes: "We are all one people... as state apparatuses serve only to divide us, there should be no internment of our refugee sisters and brothers from Cuba."



IWW Assembly photos by Robert Rush and Bill Meyers

A second resolution places the IWW on record in support of the Haitian Transport Workers Union in its struggle against the military dictatorship and solicits contributions (to be collected through the Southeast Michigan branch) to assist that union in its struggles in these economically disastrous times for Haitian workers. It concludes by opposing the U.S. government's internment of our Haitian fellow workers in concentration camps.

### Organizing for the Future

Most of the proposals brought to the Assembly dealt more directly with organizing. FW Lorenzo Komboa Erving introduced a proposal for a Black Workers Organizing Project which will go to referendum. He noted that the IWW's membership is not reflective of the working class. There aren't enough women, not enough Hispanics, not enough Black people. There are real prospects for organizing in the south. Most of the region is "right-to-work," which means that people work in jobs where people often have to strike to get paid at all. The bosses don't pay, or they pay miserable wages which you can't live on. FW Erving called on us to counter this oppression by organizing the unorganized throughout the south.

The Los Angeles branch presented a proposal to organize low-budget film workers, and requested funding for advertisements and other publicity expenses, literature, etc. The drive is already underway with flyers being spread throughout the districts where film workers congregate and phone calls to workers identified from crew lists. They're getting some good response from low-budget film workers in the Hollywood area, several of whom have already taken out membership cards. They also tried putting out information on American Online but the people who have time to respond seem to be producers and directors, who are understandably not too supportive of the idea that their crews should organize to seek better pay and conditions. Not only are wages low, hours long, and work irregular, many of these workers work for fly-by-night producers who somehow don't get around to paying their wages. The FWs hope to expand the drive to low-budget film workers around the world, since film production is no longer a localized industry. This proposal, too, will go to referendum.

In a more abstract discussion of organizing policy, FW Bob Rivera (of the Southeast Michigan branch) suggested that we need to rethink how we allocate organizing funds. He noted that the IWW was built by local initiative, with the general organization stepping in only when the state or employers attacked. Much of the fighting within the organization in recent years has been over money, encouraged by the ad hoc approach we have taken to funding requests. FW Rivera called for a comprehensive funding policy based on matching funds, where the general administration would only sup-

port organizing campaigns where there was a commitment from the local group as well.

A lively discussion ensued, with most delegates agreeing in principle but some raising reservations about specific aspects of the proposal. One fellow worker, who worked on Temporary Workers organizing, said that their request for (and receipt of) organization funds had been a mistake, and encouraged them to go ahead before they had lined up the necessary support. Too often we try to substitute money for grassroots energy and initiative. Another FW agreed that people were more important than money. "If you just start with money, the groundwork has probably not been laid. If you're forced to first find support in your community, the project is more likely to be real." But other delegates expressed concern for the impact of such a policy on efforts to organize in poor communities or internationally. FW Rivera will prepare a revised version of the proposal and circulate it for further discussion.

Organizing was also discussed outside the formal sessions, over meals and particularly at Sunday morning workshops (where the only sessions to see any significant attendance addresses the duplicating workers and film workers organizing drives).

### Organizational Business

But the bureaucratic necessities of keeping the organization running were not entirely neglected. IWW General Secretary-Treasurer Robert Rush reported on the union's financial condition, noting that we're making progress, but that we still have a long way to go. The deficit on operations is down by about \$16,000 from last fiscal year, and shrinking. But the deficits are still

far larger than we can afford. FW Rush identified the major financial problem as the poor start to the Industrial Worker growth plan. Instead of growing, circulation and income are down significantly.

He urged members to pull together to boost the newspaper. "Traditionally most of the income has come from members getting out and selling the paper, placing it in bookstores, selling it anywhere they can," Rush said. "That's the area we need to concentrate on - everyone getting together to make this thing happen." The Industrial Worker report promised improvements in the financial situation, while arguing that the paper's content had improved and that the IW's effectiveness in supporting our organizing and educational efforts is the most important criteria by which success should be measured.

Delegates also nominated Ann Arbor and Philadelphia as sites for the 1995 General Assembly (a proposal to alternate regional and international assemblies was briefly discussed, but is inconsistent with the Constitution's present language). Assuming neither withdraws from consideration, a referendum will determine the final location. An audit committee was elected to review the union's books and report to the membership. And IWW members were nominated for General Secretary-Treasurer and General Executive Board.

### Floor Fight

The closest thing to a floor fight occurred Saturday evening, during a concert that featured Utah Phillips, Del Rey (acoustic blues), Just Kidding (a Santa Cruz "folk angst" trio) and the industrial band, Strawman. During Strawman's final set, FW Deke Nihilson observed a scab on the dance floor - a lowlife who had crossed the IWW's picketlines at the End Up bar last year, helping break the strike and put FW Nihilson out of his job. Acting with admirable restraint, considering the circumstances, he told the scab that he was not welcome and asked him to leave. Instead of crawling back under his rock, however, the scab refused to leave. When some FWs sought to escort him from the hall he jumped on the stage and hid behind the band. Strangely, the band responded not by joining the demand that the scab leave but instead with a plea for unity and harmony. As Wobblies aren't too interested in uniting with scabs, this did little to calm the situation and Hall management quickly intervened to shut down the concert, pointing to the ongoing altercation (which never did come to blows) and to complaints over the noise level.

—X331117

## — Area Reports —

One of the highlights of each Assembly are the reports on IWW activities around the world:

**San Francisco**—Local Wobs have been working on online IWW propaganda, developing IWW presence in cyberspace. They have a large membership in the East Bay, and some promising prospects there. A NLRB hearing was set for mid September on Unfair Labor Practices by the End-Up bar against the IWW.

**Mendocino**—The branch is in some disarray, but hopes to reorganize.

**Philadelphia**—The branch has an office with computer, phone, fax and library. They have an active Workers Self-Education Project underway including printing and distributing literature, and the library. They have begun to expand from pamphlets to books: Lorenzo Erving's *Anarchism & Black Revolution* is their first book. The branch is also working on magazine with a 6,000 copy press run in west Philadelphia. And they sponsor a weekly open cafe, with free coffee to those taking off from work. They are also spearheading the Duplication



The Salt Lake City delegation included two Junior Wobs. photo by Robert Rush

Workers Network. The Network is part of the IWW, but the Kinko's co-workers Network is a workplace-based information drive, not (at this point, anyway) an IWW organizing drive. The KcN forwards requests for organizing to the Duplicating Workers Network. They expect attempts

continued on page 12

## GATT Attack...

drug corporations will still have a free hand to plunder plants from Third World forests and transform them into patentable drugs.

To enforce the agreement, a new World Trade Organization will be established. The WTO would be charged with enforcing the agreement and hearing complaints against countries charged with maintaining trade barriers. Environmentalists fear that the WTO will sweep aside national and local environmental laws on the pretext that they interfere with free trade. (For example, a complaint was filed under GATT against a U.S. law prohibiting the sale of canned tuna except from fishing fleets that took precautions to protect dolphins.) Corporate lobbyists are already pointing to GATT to support their efforts to block proposed state and local laws to promote workplace safety or ban particular pesticides.

GATT has attracted little attention in the U.S., though it has led to farmers' riots elsewhere. The Clinton administration claims GATT would boost global production by about 1 percent over ten years — which works out to about a penny per person per day. (This is based on economic models that assume that free trade is good and causes no lasting unemployment, social dislocation or environmental destruction. These estimates pay no attention to who reaps the supposed gains, it seems clear that those pennies won't go to you or me; they'll collect in the bosses' offices.)

based on report in *Left Business Observer* 250 W. 85 St., New York NY 10024

## International Temperate Forests Conference

This conference is designed to bring together forest activists, indigenous peoples, scientists, and people of different races, colors and nationalities to discuss the global threat to forests and to the people who dwell in them. Among the highlights of the conference will be the impact of international trade agreements on forests, the creation of a temperate forest action plan, and campaign reports from around the world.

The conference theme is Focus on the Multinationals, and the keynote address will be by Cecilia Rodriguez, U.S. representative for the EZLN (Zapatistas). The conference is sponsored by the Native Forest Network, and will be Nov. 9-13 at the University of Montana in Missoula.

The IWW sent a delegate to the first international temperate forests conference, and the organizers hope to continue reaching out to workers interested in saving the forests. For information contact Conference Convenor Jake Kreilick, PO Box 8251, Missoula MT 59807 (406/728-0867, email: nfnconferenc@igc.apc.org)

## U.S.-Guatemala Labor Women's Network

A U.S. women's network is forming to support the women of AMITEX, the Asociacion de Mujeres de la Industria Textilera. AMITEX joins women workers in the textile industry to identify common problems and look together for solutions, without the fear of imminent firing or retaliation from management associated with a union drive. Through workshops and consciousness-raising, AMITEX empowers women to make their own demands and to overcome the problems they face every day. Problems of child care, illiteracy, health care for women and children, and skills training are being tackled.

Unions and organization can form "grassroots partnerships" with AMITEX through the organization, Guatemala Partners. For information contact Barbara Gottlieb of Guatemala Partners at 945 G Street NW, Washington DC 20001, 202/783-1123. To join the women's support network, contact Jennifer Hill at 300 Bakertown Road #12H, Nashville, TN.

# Scenes from the Class War

## Bosses for Unemployment

Although millions of American workers are without jobs — some have been jobless for years — the bosses are complaining that good wage slaves are hard to find. "Economists think the unemployment level is approaching 'full' employment," the *Wall Street Journal* reports, "and that further reduction in unemployment could lead to higher inflation."

The paper points to several companies that have had trouble finding workers, and warns that the worker shortage (real unemployment is over 10 percent, even the government admits to 6 percent) could force employers to pay higher wages. "So far, however, companies that are reporting a hard time finding skilled labor say they are not bidding up wages to fill positions."

## No Right to Gripe

The U.S. Supreme Court recently ruled (*Waters vs. Churchill*) that public employers may fire workers whose job complaints might affect the morale of their fellow workers. So long as managers make a "reasonable" effort to investigate what was said, they can then fire unhappy workers to make sure their complaints "do not detract from the agency's effective operation."

Government agencies are still prohibited by the First Amendment from firing workers in retaliation for expressing their views about public issues off the job; but the 7 judge majority ruled that freedom of speech does not cover on-the-job complaints about working conditions. The case stemmed from a public hospital's firing of a disgruntled nurse who complained about work loads and working conditions to her fellow workers, at least one of whom ratted to the boss.

## Slave Labor on the Rails

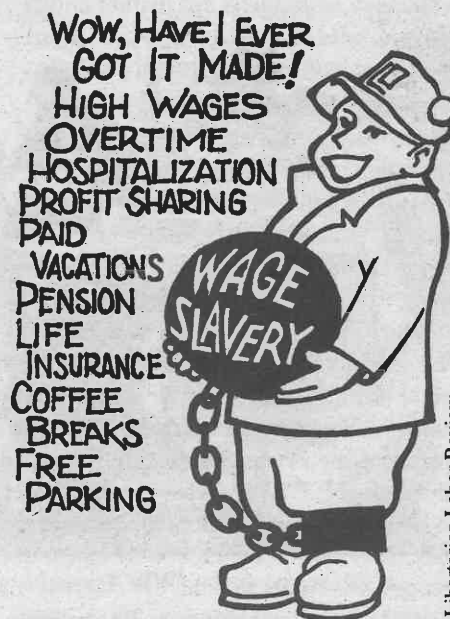
Nor do workers have the right to strike to protect their right to stay alive. It took Conrail only 13 hours May 20 to win an injunction against a strike by members of the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees. Rail maintenance workers struck after three accidents within six months had killed two workers and badly injured two others. The workers were hit by trains while repairing track.

The union wants Conrail to use flag workers to protect repair crews in much the same way as workers guard highway repair crews. Conrail sees such efforts to protect workers' lives as featherbedding, and denounced the strike as a "sneak attack." Rail unions are preparing to return to the bargaining table for a new contract; they are presently working under contracts imposed on striking workers by Congressional legislation introduced by those friends of labor, the Democratic Party.

Workers on the Long Island Rail Road fared better, winning a 2-day strike after management was unsuccessful in efforts to get Congress to outlaw the strike. The three-year contract raises wages by only 8.7 percent, but management demands for work-rule concessions were defeated. The Metropolitan Transportation Authority, which runs the railroad, says it settled only because workers were holding a gun to their head: "We paid a ransom to the union to free the public, which has been held hostage by the strike."

## Solidarity Illegal

And a U.S. district judge in San Francisco has ruled that it's illegal to act in solidarity with workers. The Oakland City Council lost a lawsuit stemming from its endorsement of a union boycott of the *Oakland Tribune*, in which the city cancelled its subscriptions to the paper and urged residents to do the same. The court ruled that this was a violation of the National Labor



Relations Act, and may fine the city as much as \$5 million.

The newspaper's publisher has been in contract 'negotiations' with its unions for the past six years, leading local unions to declare a boycott. The judge hearing the case ruled that the city's support of the boycott was illegal because it "in no way helps the city. It only helps the unions..." However, he ruled that individual city officials can criticize the paper's anti-labor conduct as long as the City Council repeals its resolution, buys subscriptions to and advertisements in the paper, does not buy ad space or subscribe to competing papers, or encourage local citizens to support the boycott. Isn't it great to live in a free country?

## Jobs & Health

Many employers are refusing to hire workers with persistent health problems or are limiting their coverage under company-paid health coverage. Bosses are forcing workers to take blood, drug and urine tests and physical exams before they start work, and demanding detailed information on family history (such as heart disease, cancer, genetic disorders, etc.). Other employers ask about off-the-job behavior, such as whether workers ride motorcycles, participate in sports, or have a happy marriage.

The bosses use this information the same way insurers do: to exclude pre-existing conditions from coverage, to deny coverage, or to charge higher premiums. And some refuse to hire workers who have had health problems in the past.

ConAgra, for example, requires workers at its Longmont, Colorado poultry plant to report what prescription and over-the-counter medications they are taking, to sign releases giving the company complete access to their medical records, and to submit to drug testing. A benefits clerk who agreed to the drug testing but refused to provide the other information because it invaded her privacy was fired. A federal appeals court threw out her case, ruling that any worker can be fired if they refuse to turn over their medical records.

Bosses also use their power to hire and fire to avoid health risks. Turner Broadcasting and Lockheed Corp. are among several companies which refuse to hire smokers. Thirty percent of occupational physicians told researchers their companies wouldn't hire someone with high blood pressure. And more than 40 percent of companies surveyed by the U.S. Office of Technology Assessment said they considered job applicants' health-insurance risks when deciding whether to hire them.

## New Age Bosses

One day, about two years ago, as I sat sweating in the so-called "clean room" of a small biotechnical firm in South Austin, I did some calculations: I was assembling

little kits used for biomedical research. Each kit was sold for \$100. In one hour I could assemble roughly 200 of these. For an hour of work I was paid five dollars before taxes (no benefits). For the biotech firm, this means they made about \$20,000 in one hour. After taking out my measly wage, rent on the building and the cost of production (a few cents per kit), the firm was still reaping quite a profit.

The firm was almost entirely owned by the guy who ran it. He was in his early forties and had been a hippy of sorts. Here was a man who adamantly boycotted grapes in support of migrant produce pickers while exploiting the shit out of his own workers, a man whose deep feelings for the environment caused him to buy only "environmentally sound" products while living in a subdivision that was dumping a variety of pollutants into a natural spring...

A few years before my stint at the biotech firm, I worked for a document reproduction company which was considered very liberal and progressive. For example, the firm was known for being "gay and lesbian friendly" in its hiring practices. Higher level employees owned stock in the company and had a limited level of input regarding policy.

However, my position at the reprographic firm was nowhere near as glamorous. Basically, I would dissect reams of legal bullshit, copy them, and reassemble them as quickly as possible. I was paid \$4.50 per hour to do this. Even small rush copy orders could net thousands of dollars for the firm. Shortly before I quit, television commercials aimed at yuppies began airing on local TV stations extolling the virtues of this "worker-owned business."

Of course, I stole from both firms with impunity, but no amount of petty thievery would settle the glaring imbalance between my wages and the profits of the companies. When the boss is jetting off to the Bahamas while you're sitting down to beans and rice for the fourth time in a week, pilfering seems about as effective as trying to put out a three-alarm fire by pissing on it.

—Trevor (from *Sniper's Nest*)

## Strike: Lose Your Vote

After six years of being locked-out of their jobs, 300 East Coast tug boat workers won a partial victory which will return many of them to their jobs. The *AFL-CIO News* wrote up the event, quoting ILA Local 333's president praising the workers for their years of sacrifices. What they didn't report was that the union has barred them from voting in local elections since the lock-out began.

## Justice for Janitors?

*Union Democracy Review* reports that 100 unionists picketed Service Employees International Union local 32B/J recently after the union barred women working at the World Trade Center from voting for job stewards (men were allowed to vote).

## Revolving Door

The U.S. (in)Justice Department settled racketeering charges with former New York Carpenters Local 608 president Paschal McGuinness last year when he agreed to step down as president and never again hold local office. The government had charged McGuinness of links to the Genovese crime family which, gumpets claimed, controlled the union. McGuinness denied the charges, but plea bargained in order to avoid a trial. When McGuinness stepped down he also stepped up—he was appointed First General Vice President of the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and put on the international payroll.

# Company Unions for the 1990s

President Clinton's Commission on the Future of Worker-Management Relations, headed by former Labor Secretary John Dunlop, has released a 163-page report summarizing the Commission's "findings" from months of public hearings. While the report contains no formal recommendations (those will come at the end of the year), the report makes it pretty clear where they are headed.

Indeed, when the Dunlop Commission was established, it was specifically directed to view worker-management relations from management's perspective. Not in so many words, perhaps, but the questions it was asked to address take a clear class position.

Commerce Secretary Ron Brown and Labor Secretary Robert Reich asked the Commission to investigate three questions: "What (if any) new methods or institutions should be encouraged, or required, to enhance workplace productivity through labor-management cooperation and employee participation? What (if any) changes should be made in the present legal framework and practices of collective bargaining to enhance cooperative behavior, improve productivity, and reduce conflict and delay? and What (if anything) should be done to increase the extent to which workplace problems are directly resolved by the parties themselves, rather than through recourse to state and federal courts and government regulatory bodies?" (emphasis added)

These are not neutral questions — rather they all point in the same direction: improving productivity (and hence the bosses' profits) by getting workers to be more cooperative in the process of our exploitation. (And dragging the more backward bosses, who have forgotten that us workers do the work and thus cannot simply be ignored, into the twentieth century.) None of the questions address workers' needs — for shorter working hours, safer working conditions, a meaningful right to organize unions, or a living wage (let alone the abolition of the wage system in favor of a system whereby us workers, who do the world's work, receive the full product of our labor). Rather they are aimed at making our labor more competitive by dragging workers into labor-management cooperation schemes and convincing us that we share common interests with our exploiters, the employing class.

The Commission's report begins by discussing the U.S. economy and labor market, reporting a growing earnings gap where most workers face falling real earnings (and a handful see their income rise), longer working hours, job insecurity and increased government regulation. "A healthy society cannot long continue along the path the U.S. is moving." The report then turns to labor-management cooperation and worker participation schemes, which now cover about a fourth of the workforce. Rather than investigate whose interests these plans serve, the Commission assumes they are necessary and tries to explain why they are not more widespread.

Indeed, rather than dwell on the many reports the Commission received about bosses violating workers' most basic rights, it prefers to emphasize upbeat stories of "employee involvement" schemes at non-union companies. "Where employee participation is sustained over time... it generally improves economic participation. If more widely diffused... employee participation and labor-management cooperation may contribute to the nation's competitiveness and living standards."

The evident assumption is that a more "competitive" "national" economy means better living standards for all. The reality, of course, is quite different. "Competitiveness" means lower pay for fewer workers

working longer hours in less safe conditions producing more products at lower prices so that employers can make higher profits.

The Commission identifies several obstacles to greater employee participation, including insufficient trust, economic pressures on employers, and government policies and laws. This leads the Commission to suggest revisiting the National Labor Relations Act's ban on company-dominated "unions." Employers have been demanding the repeal of NLRA Section 8(a)(2) ever since the National Labor Relations Board ruled some participation schemes to be illegal company unions. Shockingly, it appears that the AFL-CIO is prepared to surrender this ban on company unions in exchange for labor law reforms which would make union recognition easier to win.

The report concludes on a pious note, arguing that "de-escalation of workplace conflict" would benefit workers, managers and unions. (Not surprisingly, only one of the Commission members has any union background — Douglas Fraser, a class collaborationist whose leadership of the UAW played an important role in enhancing corporate profits in the auto sector and pushing many auto workers off the assembly lines and onto the streets. The others are corporate executives, former government officials, and academics.) It argues that unions can be "valued partners" in boosting competitiveness. It is taken for granted that we

want to compete with our fellow workers around the world to see who can make the most money for the bosses.

The end result seems clear.

U.S. labor law will be "reformed" once again, weakening (if not eliminating altogether) the prohibition on company unions. The AFL-CIO might (but probably won't) receive some minor procedural changes that would make it harder for employers to defeat union organizing drives by firing workers, harassing union activists and seeking endless bureaucratic delays. And the government and employing class will join hands and tell us that if our wages are falling, our hours too long, our jobs alienating, it is because we aren't skilled enough (pay no attention to the legions of skilled workers on unemployment lines), don't work hard enough (pay no attention to those longer working hours, soaring productivity levels, deaths from overwork), aren't competitive enough (pay no attention to the bosses at corporate headquarters, the fellow worker across the border is your enemy).

If we wait for the government to hand us industrial freedom we'll be waiting for the rest of our lives — and find ourselves moving from the assembly line to the soup line. If we want a real say in how our industries are run, we'll have to organize with our fellow workers to wrest it away from the bosses. Direct action at the point of production — that's the way to get the goods.

## The Price of Productivity

*This column by labor journalist Harry Kelber demonstrates that some mainstream labor activists recognize the fact that workers don't need more "competitive" workplaces, we need shorter working hours.*

An interesting bit of commentary about productivity by the Commission on the Future of Worker-Management Relations can be found on pages 38-39 of its recent, highly-publicized report. Here is what it says:

"Many participation efforts focus on quality or productivity improvement. For example, a team from Federal Express composed of both management and non-management employees described how it changed the way packages are sorted in its Memphis distribution center and thereby improved the company's on-time delivery performance, reduced staffing required for this operation from 150 to 80 employees and achieved annual savings of approximately \$702,000."

That's the kind of results corporations dream about when they push for greater productivity. There is no doubt about the advantages employers gain from an increase in productivity: they can achieve their production goals with fewer workers. That translates into greater profits.

But what incentives do workers have to join a "partnership" with employers to increase productivity? Will they be guaranteed job security? The recent and continuing job-slashing by corporations in their downsizing operations offers no such assurances or grounds for optimism.

When automation was introduced into the auto, steel, mining, railroad and other industries, tens of thousand of workers lost their jobs. It made good business sense for employers to use the new technologies to cut their work force rather than increase it.

### What Benefits Do Workers Get?

American workers still are among the most productive in the world, but where has it gotten them? U.S. factory workers rank 10th in total hourly compensation among industrialized nations. In the past two decades, their real wages have shrunk by more than 12 percent. Meanwhile, the salaries of corporate executives have reached astro-

nomical heights.

Despite a significant increase in worker productivity over the years, employers have done little to improve the health and safety conditions in their workplaces. Their lobbyists have successfully blocked efforts by the AFL-CIO to make the nation's workplaces safer from disease-causing chemicals and industrial accidents through upgrading the 24-year-old Occupational Safety and Health Act.

It would be reasonable to expect that one of the benefits of increased productivity would be a reduction in working hours, which would result in the hiring of many tens of thousands of people who are currently unemployed. Yet the 40-hour week, enacted by Congress more than a half-century ago, still remains intact. There is no movement for a shorter workweek, not even within the ranks of the AFL-CIO. In fact, American workers are working harder than ever, averaging 42.3 hours per week.

An increase in productivity is a worthwhile goal if its benefits are shared equitably with those who have achieved it. If employers want the voluntary cooperation of their workers, what benefits are they prepared to offer them?

### UAW "Cooperation"

The United Auto Workers union recently cosponsored a Pennsylvania stock-car race with General Motors, the UAW-GM Teamwork 500, to emphasize their solidarity. "These motor-sport activities offer unique opportunities to demonstrate how our workers are leading the way by showing their pride, commitment and results on the plant floor — just as winning teams do on the racetrack," a press release from GM Vice President Gerald Knechtel and UAW's top GM negotiator Stephen Yokich enthuses.

GM has slashed 50,000 UAW-represented jobs in the past three years. The same day the "Teamwork 500" was announced, UAW Local 663, in Anderson, Ind., held a strike vote stemming from GM contracting-out of work formerly done by UAW mem-

## Runaway Plants Shaft Third World Workers Too

U.S. manufacturers who relocate to Third World countries aren't running away just to cheap wages, frequently they're getting the equivalent of slave labor. And they're being rewarded for it every time we Americans buy one of those imported "bargains."

For example, Women in a U.S.-owned baseball factory in Haiti are paid \$6.42 for a 6-day, 63-hour work week. A delegation of U.S. unionists visiting a plant found that the workers stood in place from 6 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily, with only one break, a half-hour for lunch. The intense heat in the plant was a nightmare, there was no running water and there were no working toilets. Young women were fired if they refused to have sex with supervisors. Union talk also brought firing.

In what may be a typical example of factory life in China, doll factory workers near the Hong Kong border are paid monthly wages ranging from \$34 to \$52 (U.S.). Safety conditions are so bad that a fire in one factory late last year killed 84 and injured 42 of the plant's 310 workers. Some of the dead were 16 years old.

There was only one stairway in the three-story building and only four doors, three of them locked. All windows were barred with heavy wire mesh. Families of the dead were offered \$345 (U.S.) in compensation.

In Reynosa, Mexico, 400 auto parts jobs that once were held by members of the Glass, Molders & Pottery Workers and the United Auto Workers unions at S&H Fabricating and Engineering Inc. plants in the U.S. now are held by workers who get 90 cents an hour.

Benefits? Sure. They get free lunch — if they eat it at their work stations. And how about the cozy work atmosphere: the single entrances to the three Reynosa plants are monitored by armed guards and their factories are surrounded by razor-wire fences.

In Bangladesh, tens of thousands of children are working in garment factories for literally pennies a day. Human rights activists report that many of the kids are as young as 8 and 20 percent are under 12. Work shifts of 12 to 14 hours a day are common.

Garment shop owners in Bangladesh commonly lock workers inside factories. More than 10 percent of female garment workers there reportedly suffer physical abuse in the workplace...

Take a close look at the next imported "bargain" you see. It well may have some Third World worker's blood on it.

Bob Kastigar

*The solution, of course, is not to "Buy American," whatever that means in this era when corporations assemble products in dozens of factories around the world, moving production from place to place in search of the cheapest, most docile wage slaves. Rather, we need to help our fellow workers organize against these conditions, so that all of us can enjoy decent working conditions and the product of our labor.*



bers. "It's kind of like a stormy marriage," Local 663 president Jim King said. "You're going to have your fights. But at the same time, you need each other to exist."

UAW members took a more realistic approach to this cooperative scheme, however; they ignored it. Although the UAW represents 16,000 workers in the racetrack area, members bought only about a thousand of the 3,500 tickets reserved by the UAW. Autoworkers might want to consider leaving the UAW for unions that believe in class struggle, not "teamwork."

# Remembering the Hormel Strike

**Hard-Pressed in the Heartland: The Hormel Strike and the Future of the Labor Movement**, by Peter Rachleff. South End Press (116 St. Botolph, Boston MA 02115), 1993, 135 pages, \$12 paper.

**Women, Community and the Hormel Strike of 1985-86**, by Neala Schleuning. Greenwood Press (1-800-225-5800), 1994, 238 pages, \$55.

When future historians write up today's labor movement, they will inevitably return to the Hormel strike in Austin, Minnesota a struggle that starkly demonstrated the faults of business unionism, but which also showed what might be achieved by real, fighting unions. The AFL-CIO's and the United Food & Commercial Workers' treachery proved once again the futility of trying to defend workers' immediate interests (let alone build a better society) through these long-bankrupt institutions. Similarly exposed — though neither of the books under review agree — was the futility of appealing to the conscience of Capital through corporate campaigns and similar substitutes for working-class direct action. There are lessons, too, for the believers in Labor Partyism Minnesota's government is firmly in the hands of labor-supported politicians (indeed the mayor was a striking Hormel worker, who nonetheless followed the corporate agenda) who did not hesitate to send in the National Guard to prevent picketing and herd scabs into the Hormel plant.

Several books and a movie have appeared on the strike; Schleuning's *Women, Community and the Hormel Strike* is the most recent. Her preface argues that "nobody knew about the role that women had played [in the strike]... Nobody had heard of the Austin United Support Group." (xiii) While this is certainly not true of those who followed the strike in papers such as the *Industrial Worker* (and we were by no means alone in reporting on it), it may well have been true of those who followed the strike through the boss press. Her book is based on interviews with 42 women from the Sup-

port Group. But they do not speak in their own voices; rather, their quotes are woven into a narrative that is very much Schleuning's, and at times moves far from their story to dwell on sociological theory.

For her, and perhaps for her interviewees, the definitive issues involved community, not class. The Hormel strikers were successfully isolated from their local community. Some were expelled from churches; local officials (including the director of the mental health program) denounced them in the press; merchants filled their windows with Hormel propaganda. Schleuning explains this in terms of Hormel's importance to the local economy (Rachleff's discussion of community support for earlier struggles, when Hormel was, if anything, more economically dominant, indicates she's wrong on this point) and to envy by locals who had it even worse than did Hormel workers. Schleuning also documents the perhaps-inevitable tensions that arose over the distribution of inadequate strike relief funds and the difficulties in sustaining an organization without formal structures to ensure accountability and resolve disputes.

Rachleff's thinner book has a much broader reach — he starts with the origins of Local P-9 in the 1930s and ends with the labor movement's prospects. Rachleff begins by contrasting the dismal state of today's labor movement with the situation workers faced in the 1930s when they built unions by organizing their workplaces and communities, building solidarity with other workers and with the unemployed, and ignoring court orders and anti-labor laws. Rachleff attributes the decline to the labor-management-government cooperation of the second World War (I would argue that business unionism drove the CIO from its origins, and thus that the decline was inevitable).

The Austin Hormel plant was originally organized by the IWW-inspired Independent Union of All Workers, which sought

to organize all workers in the area into one union. While the IUAU had several successes, it was weakened by regional isolation and by the decision to separate the IWW's One Big Union strategy from our broader revolutionary program. Despite the union's successes (won through direct ac-

## Book Review

tion and workers solidarity at the point of production), most members encountered it simply as another union and Communist and Trotskyist infiltrators were able to capture leadership positions and dissolve the IUAU into the AFL and CIO (then competing federations, but both wedded to business unionism).

Rachleff then offers a stirring account of the Hormel strike and its suppression (by a tripartite alliance of company, "union" and government), if one that is largely uncritical of the decision to rely so heavily on the corporate campaign and to accept the UFCW's prohibition against spreading the strike — decisions that ultimately proved fatal to the strikers' cause. Rachleff is quite critical of the several Marxist parties that offered their services as vanguard leaders, and of the many labor bureaucrats (inside the UFCW and without) who similarly did their best to defeat the Hormel strikers.

But Rachleff's vision is ultimately reformist. In his final chapter he disappears the anarchists from the Haymarket struggle (portraying them as Knights of Labor) and he repeats the tired stories about the CIO of the 1930s representing a new manifestation of the spirit of the IWW (it was a bureaucratic, reformist business union from the get-go, as Wobblies noted at the time). Not surprisingly, then, he sees the future of the labor movement as lying with revitalized business unions — albeit democratic business unions actually willing to defend their members' interests in exchange for collecting their dues. He repeats the tired call for a

labor party, apparently overlooking the predictably disastrous role played by labor-backed politicians that he himself documents for the 1930s and 1980s. And he continues to support the corporate campaigns that have swallowed so much of our fellow workers' energies and resources.

More positively, Rachleff points to labor coalitions and strike support networks — rank-and-file organizations built in several cities by workers who recognize the need for solidarity — and to efforts to bridge national borders. He also points to on-the-job direct action campaigns of the sort the IWW has always advocated. Rachleff ends by calling on social activists to combine all these tactics, to recognize the widespread discontent percolating beneath the surface, and to lay the foundations for the labor movement's next leap... "a new broad-based social movement, one that can link the interests of the dispossessed and disenfranchised in our country and across the world."

Both books are worth reading, though both are flawed. Schleuning demonstrates the impact of the Hormel strike on these women. Although their lives and families were disrupted (in some cases irreparably), many discovered new strengths, learned to assert themselves, organized civil disobedience actions, and developed a more critical understanding of our political and economic system. Several of her sources are self-reflective, raising questions about union strategy (particularly the corporate campaign) that should have been asked at the time and which remain important. But I personally would have preferred a closer emphasis on these women's stories — letting them tell their own stories in their own voices.

Rachleff, too, shows how workers grew to meet the challenges they confronted — reclaiming their sense of dignity, their right to shape their own destinies, as the UFCW and the Hormel company joined forces to grind them down. He rejects the despair that is fashionable among most analysts of the labor movement. But neither author offers a realistic approach for getting labor out of its current rut.

— Jon Bekken

# Caring Capitalism?

The Winter 1994 issue of *Money Matters*, published by the "socially responsible" Working Assets investment group, features an interview with Working Assets Capital Management President Sophia Collier on the global economy. After pointing out the increasingly global nature of finance and production, Collier says that corporations increasingly determine social and economic policy: "economic corporate actions... can replace war as a means for positive social change." (emphasis added) This is taken from a sentence discussing the impact of the South African divestment movement; Collier goes on to suggest that "corporations must be held accountable for their actions," and points to socially responsible investors as those best situated to take on this task.

Of course, given the nature of our economic and social system, most investors will be driven more by a concern for maximizing profitability, and thus the effects to reform capitalism by involving the owning class must necessarily fail — but that is a subject we leave for another time.

Collier also spoke of providing "business leaders with the courage to act for the general betterment of the community where their operations exist." Such nonsense! When Collier spoke of investing, of corporate action, as the equivalent of war she hit the nail on the head.

Among the socially "responsible" firms in the Working Assets portfolio, by the way, are American Express (which refuses to build facilities in towns where workers

are sympathetic to unions), Time Warner (which beams commercials into elementary schools), Coca Cola (whose bottlers threaten Latin American unionists with death squads), drug & medical profiteers, etc.

Another "socially responsible" firm, Esprit, was the subject of an article in the May 16 *Nation*. Esprit clothing stores feature posters exhorting shoppers to "Make a Difference," and the company boasts that its clothing is "socially and environmentally responsible."

But while Esprit gives money to AIDS awareness campaigns and offers workers at its headquarters good pay and perks (and receives favorable ratings from several socially responsible ratings groups), the workers who make its clothing get the shaft. Last year the Department of Labor raided a San Francisco garment shop that works on contract for Esprit and owed its workers \$127,000 in back wages built up by paying only \$3.75 an hour with no overtime (50 cents an hour less than the unlivable minimum wage). Several other Esprit contractors have been hit for paying sub-minimum wages and demanding kickbacks from workers. Esprit's spokesman says garment workers should earn "a fair wage," one that "allows them a reasonable lifestyle." But he also says Esprit can't pay more than its competitors and stay in business. Twenty years ago Esprit closed a shop it owned when workers organized a union, now it relies on subcontractors to keep unions and decent working conditions at bay.

The Council on Economic Priorities

has given Levi Strauss an award for its "unprecedented commitment to non-exploitative work practices," but a Levi's contractor in Juarez, Mexico closed down last year owing workers \$400,000 in back wages. Workers at that factory (many of them children) had worked in airless sheds, standing in puddles of water. A 1992 investigation in the U.S. "protectorate" of Saipan found that Chinese workers slaved for Levi and other firms, putting in 84-hour weeks at subminimum wages. (Levi claims to have tightened up its guidelines for choosing contractors since then.)

And Massachusetts Financial Services has set up a mutual fund, Union Standard Trust, to lure union pension fund money. MFS says the fund will invest only in "union-friendly" companies "that are supportive of labor." Among those "union-friendly" companies are Sprint and Caterpillar Tractor! Many of the other 55 friendly companies have been aggressively laying-off workers and subcontracting out union jobs.

[information from *Libertarian Labor Review*, *Nation* and *Labor Notes*]

## As the Bosses See It...

If you ever begin to doubt that the bosses are engaged in a full-scale class war against us, you might want to take a look at the *Wall Street Journal* (a paper where the bosses can talk honestly to each other). Consider the following articles from the *Journal's* July 6th issue, for example:

The *Journal* enthusiastically reports ("Prevention May Be Costlier Than a Cure") on a study claiming it is cheaper to treat cancer patients than to try to prevent cancer

by cleaning up the environment or reducing pollution, and also cheaper to treat workers maimed or poisoned on the job than to make our workplaces safe. Another article ("Inco Moves to Take Miners Out of Mining") celebrates the replacement of mine workers with machines (possibly a good idea, if done under workers control—but under existing conditions it means death for mining communities and dire poverty, at best, for thousands of miners).

The Commodities pages report that corn, soybean and wheat prices tumbled because of good weather; since crops look to be fairly good, farmers will make less money. The news section reports that higher taxes on the wealthy are slowing economic growth (it says that 20-25 percent of all consumer spending is by the wealthiest 5 percent of households). Texaco is laying-off 2,500 workers and selling U.S. oil fields in order to increase profitability. And the giant transnational Archer-Daniels-Midland corporation scored a big break from the Environmental Protection Agency days after its head co-chaired a fundraiser that brought \$2.5 million to the Democratic Party (including \$100,000 of his own money).

Articles in this bosses' paper lament declining unemployment, fearing that our fellow workers will take advantage of improving conditions (if such a term can be used to describe a situation in which one out of ten U.S. workers is without a job or on forced short-time) to improve wages and working conditions. And the advertisements make it clear — if it weren't already clear enough — that the employing class lives in a very different world from us wage slaves.



# LEFT SIDE

Tom Geoghehan, a Chicago labor attorney, writes "I know damn well why we have to be competitive abroad. Because no one here has any money to buy anything. That's why our widget-makers in Idaho are scrambling to sell in Zaire. We took our most precious national treasure, which was our market, our beautiful high-wage, internal market and like a madman with a Michelangelo, we took a razor to it and slashed it. For twenty years we have tried to do without unions. And we can't... Without a public policy for raising the standard of living, we'll be stuck like this forever."

Wise words, Thomas, but did you by any chance stop to think that our manipulators would like to bring the standard of living of us Freedomlanders down to that of the people in Zaire. Make no mistake, the boss-class of this Planet are doing their best to bring about a universal low-wage, low standard of living before the working-class wakes up to raise their own standards. NAFTA is but a first step in that direction.

An acquaintance of mine the other day was talking about his colleagues carping about the "welfare Queens." You no doubt have heard the myth about the lady who is chauffeured in a Cadillac to the welfare office to collect her welfare check. I have not observed any welfare recipients riding around in Cadillacs nor do I know of anybody who has. It is a well-known fact of life that those who do ride around in Cadillacs tend to be as unobtrusive as possible.

Naturally the carpers see the erosion of the buying power of their paychecks and instead of having second thoughts about the World's highest standard of living, think that those who are on welfare are taking a big bite out of their take-home pay. Said acquaintance said to his fellow workers, "you all keep talking about welfare queens, but you never mention the S & L Kings. If all that was being deducted from your pay was for the Welfare recipients, you wouldn't even notice it. You all seem to forget about the President's son being involved in the Savings and Loan scandal. Of course, it was hushed up so quickly that it's no surprise that you don't remember. Well, Sonny-Boy didn't even get his fingers whacked and guess who is going to be stuck making good those billions that vanished into thin air?"

As this article is being written, all over this World of ours people are dying violent deaths every day or else they are dying a bit more peacefully by starving. Things like that do not seem to be newsworthy anymore. What seems to be occupying prime time on the tube is whether a popular sports hero did in his ex-wife and her boyfriend with all other news taking second place. The over emphasis on this case raises some suspicions on the part of your not-so-humble scribe.

Is something else going on that our attention has to be diverted by the souring of someone else's erstwhile love life. All the proper ingredients are here to titillate the scandal-hungry boob toob watcher. The jealous Black sports star and the beautiful blonde beauty, a classical rehash of the Othello and Desdemona epic. Freedomland has long had its vicarious jollies out of the long-standing taboo of inracial sex. Did he or didn't he??

Already emotions are flaring as the alienation between various segments of Freedomland's population further escalates.

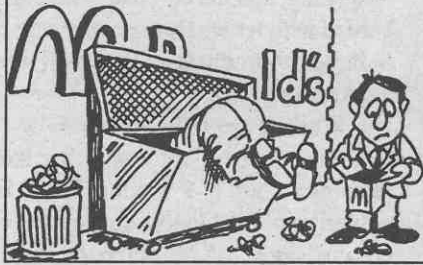
## OUR COUNTRY IS RUN BY A BUNCH OF OXYMORONS DEPT.

Government and business have recently declared the recession over. We are now enjoying a "jobless recovery." This simply means that we get the joblessness and corporations get the recovery. So, in the spirit of this contradiction, we offer some fun things to do during the...

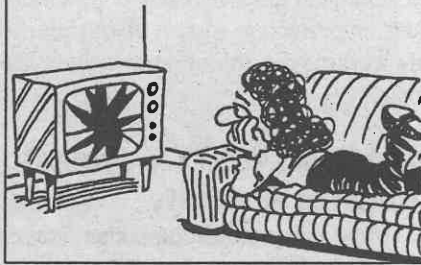
# JOBLESS RECOVERY

ARTIST AND WRITER: MIKE KONOPACKI, HUCK/KONOPACKI LABOR CARTOONS

Enjoy a  
FOODLESS HAPPY MEAL...



Watch a  
PICTURELESSTV...



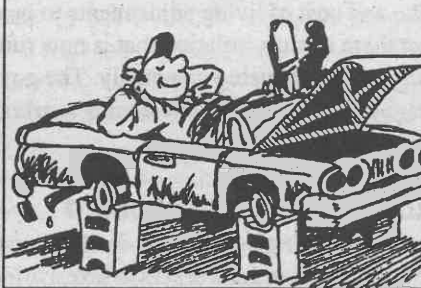
Invite your friends to a  
HOMELESS HOUSEWARMING...



Listen to a  
SOUNDLESS STEREO...



...in your  
MOTORLESS AUTOMOBILE.



Express your gratitude to the  
BRAINLESS GENIUS  
who came up with the term  
JOBLESS RECOVERY!



Eyes are glued to the one-eyed monster in living room over who did what to who as Leonard Peltier continues to serve his double life sentence for an offense he did not commit. The whole thing has a stench of obscenity about it.

—C. C. Redcloud

## Wage Slave World News Suspends Publication

Mike Knopacki, editor of the *Wage Slave World News*, announced recently that it is impossible for him to continue producing the *Wage Slave*, at least for a while. Having recently become "self-employed," FW Konopacki finds himself forced to put in so many hours on the job that he no longer has any time left to produce the *Slave*.

"It was a lot of fun and I'm thankful to the IWW for tolerating it for as long as they have. No other labor union in the country has such a grand tradition of humor. (Incidentally, the *Wage Slave* IS within the grand IWW tradition. Its predecessor was *The Can Opener*, a trashy, hand written jail house tabloid created by Wobs rotting in the Cook County jail. See *Rebel Voices*.)

"As for my detractors, all I can say is lighten up for christ's sake."

Rebel workers across the land will miss the only tabloid that told the news as it is.

## Caterpillar Workers Attend Corp. Meet

Nearly 2,000 Caterpillar workers and supporters marched through Chicago's Loop to the company's stockholders meeting August 6, bringing workers' grievances to managers' - and shareholders' - attention. The march culminated in an anti-Caterpillar rally, and came on the heels of a \$97,000 federal fine against the farm equipment company for safety violations in its plants.

The safety violations occurred in two of seven Caterpillar plants, in East Peoria, Ill., and York, Pa., being struck by the 14,000 United Auto Workers members who work for Caterpillar. The strike, called in mid-June, is in response to Caterpillar's frequent unfair labor practices. Several Caterpillar workers who held company stock tried to enter the meeting, but were barred from asking questions except about a stock split shareholders approved.

The federal fine came after two workers were severely injured in accidents at

Caterpillar plants in York and East Peoria. The UAW has asked Illinois state officials to investigate reports Caterpillar has people in its plants working 7-day weeks. Caterpillar is trying to keep its plants going with a combination of temporary workers, managers, retirees and several hundred scabs who have crossed the picket lines. UAW members in East Peoria report that the company tried to fire the forge up in its foundry there and almost burned the building down.

In the face of the strike, Caterpillar continues to move production overseas. Caterpillar is making plans to invest in two joint ventures in Russia with financing from the US funded International Finance Corporation and the Overseas Private Investment Corporation. Cat's partners would be Zil (to produce fuel systems and diesel engines) and Novodiesel (to produce truck engines in the 150 to 500 horsepower range). Russian news reports suggest that Caterpillar plans to invest \$100 million (to be provided by U.S. tax payers, of course) in this joint venture.

And 2,800 workers at Caterpillar's Brazilian subsidiary are threatening to strike unless the company agrees to higher wages. Jose Luiz Ribeiro, president of the Metalworkers Union in Piracicaba, where Caterpillar is located, said wage negotiations are underway, "but judging from what the company has offered us, I would say a strike is inevitable."

The union is demanding a 49 percent pay hike to compensate for past inflation, plus another 20 percent. Brazilian Caterpillar employees earn an average of 600 reais a month, the equivalent of \$550.

## Poor Shorter Than Rich

In what was once one of the richest countries of Latin America, Venezuela, the gap between rich and poor is reflected in variables such as health, quality of life and educational opportunity. But perhaps the most striking difference is one of seven centimetres.

The Foundation Centre of Studies for Growth and Development of the Venezuelan Population (FUNDACREDESA) reports that poor children are seven centimetres shorter than their wealthier counterparts. Between 60 and 70 percent of the population live in extreme poverty. Not only are children from lower socioeconomic levels shorter, their learning ability is also stunted.

The foundation urges a change in economic policies to reduce the gap between rich and poor, and ensure that all Venezuelans receive the basic necessities of life.

## IWW 1995 Labor Calendar Features Women Workers

The 1995 IWW Labor History Calendar is a very up-to-date source of information about the labor movement. The first inside photo shows women in South Africa on strike against the multinational corporation, Kentucky Fried Chicken.

This year's calendar is subtitled: *Women Workers: The Struggle Continues*. It features thirteen excellent photographs of women workers marching, striking and organizing as far back as 1912 and as recently as 1993.

Hundreds of historic events are listed on the calendar. Almost every day of the year is filled with at least one significant event in the labor movement. Check your calendar to find out what happened before your time, and to remind yourself of recent victories and violations.

For example, did you know:

- 20,000 female garment workers struck in 1909?

- 96 GM plants were shut down by a strike in 1945?

- Union activist Karen Silkwood was killed while trying to pass on information about nuclear safety violations, in 1975?

- Who said, "I'm not a lady, I'm a hell-raiser!"?

Many fellow workers are here remembered: names like Lucy Parsons, Rosa Luxembour, Emma Goldman, Meridel LeSueur, Kate Richards O'Hare, Florence Reese, Fannie Sellins and many other women and men who made their contribution for workers rights.

In these times when the working person's rights are under attack, this calendar reminds us of the richness and depth of the roots of the movement. Every day is a reminder of those who did their part, and knowing how they struggled inspires us to do our part. When the going gets rough, a glance at the IWW Labor History Calendar is enough to fill you with pride and renew your spirit.

The Calendar is attractively and professionally designed. It has all the holidays, both cultural and official including U.S. and Canadian. The IWW Labor History Calendar is a must for every household and office!

Order your Calendar from IWW-HLF, Box 204, Oak Park IL 60303. Prices are \$7.50 each; five or more, \$4.50.

—CM

## GERMANY: Postal workers strike against privatization

A German postal workers strike has forced the government to reopen discussions on its plan to privatize the German postal service. Telecom's boss claims the strike is a political strike (which is outlawed in Germany, as usual in capitalism). But since the privatization relates direct to union affairs, the union maintains that it is a "social" strike. The union is demanding safeguard to protect workers' rights after privatization takes effect.

## PALESTINE: Unions Organize Autonomous Zone

"For 13 years the Israeli military authorities have banned us from any activity, but that did not prevent the workers organizing in unions," says Rassem Bayari, head of the Gaza Federation of Trade Unions.

Sixty percent of Gaza's population is unemployed and the economy is in sorry shape after years of occupation. The Gaza federation has only four negotiated collective agreements with employers. However, the federation is working to build independent unions capable of representing workers in the emerging Palestinian entity, and is coordinating its efforts with its sister organization on the West Bank.

The West Bank-based General Federation of Palestinian Trade Unions (GFPTU) has a membership of nearly 100,000, representing workers in hundreds of small and mid-sized workplaces throughout the occupied region. The building workers' union has organized 20 percent of construction workers and has negotiated a contract with employers for increased pay and 23 days paid annual leave.

Several other West Bank unions rely on social welfare programs to attract members. The electricity workers union has built subsidized housing in Nablus, the federation's Jericho affiliate has negotiated cheaper rates for health care services for its members.

Salaries on the West Bank remain quite low, however, rarely exceeding \$400 a month. The region still operates under 1965-era Jordanian labor legislation which provides no protection against dismissals, unsafe working conditions or retirement pensions.

## RUMANIA: Workers Protest Capitalist Austerity

More than 10,000 Rumanian workers marched in Bucharest June 14 to begin a week of protests against plunging living standards. Unions demand a 50 percent pay hike and cost of living adjustments to protect them against inflation that is now running about 300 percent annually. The government responded by threatening workers with riot troops.

## Boycott Hewlett-Packard

Computer giant Hewlett-Packard now requires all contract workers to take a urine drug test before they start work. Although the company has some 97,000 employees, it jobs out much of its work--such as writing technical documentation and computer manuals--to "independent contractors" who can be hired by the job and need not be paid benefits.

Freelance technical writer William Knutson was one of those "independent contractors," earning 80 percent of his income from H-P contracts. But when the

company demanded that he piss in a bottle to get his next contract he refused. "People should be treated based on their performance," Knutson says. "I consider it a civil liberties issue... I have a right to the privacy of my body."

Knutson posted word of the policy on the Well, a computer conferencing system. Several other workers have joined Knutson in refusing to donate their urine to the bosses for testing, and the company is being bombarded with letters from people who refuse to buy H-P products as long as it treats its workers this way.

While these fellow workers withhold their labor, others are supporting them by refusing to buy H-P products. H-P is particularly vulnerable to a consumer boycott because most of its computers are sold through retail outlets, rather than directly to corporate and other institutional buyers.

## ECUADOR: General Strike

Ecuadoran indigenous people and unions are planning new protest strategies after a massive 11-day uprising against a new agrarian law was broken up by government troops mobilized under a government-decreed state of emergency. Protesters had blocked roads in central and southern Ecuador and part of the Amazon.

Hundreds of protesters armed with hoes and machetes blocked roads, cut off electricity and potable water to some communities, interrupted the supply of agricultural products to urban areas and threatened to occupy the cities of Ecuador.

Although the military crackdown ended these actions, new protests are planned. Luis Macas, president of the Confederation of Ecuadoran Indigenous Nationalities

(CONAIE), said, "It is preferable to die with dignity than to starve to death."

Peasant communities joined a massive national strike June 28 organized by the Unified Workers' Front (UWF) against the new agrarian law and other economic policies. The protesters demand that a constitutional court declare the agrarian reform illegal. "If the authorities do not meet our demands, we will declare an indefinite general strike," a UWF leader warned.

## Japanese Solidarity for Mexican Sony Workers

A Japanese activist staged a three-day hunger strike June 1-3 in Mexico City to protest the repression of workers at a subsidiary of the Sony electronics firm in Nuevo Laredo, Tamaulipas. Sony Magnetics management called police into the plant April 16 to break up a workers' demonstration against a new work schedule and unfair union elections the proceeding day. Several women were injured and six unionists were fired or demoted.

"This international action is small but with it I want to get other groups to organize more demonstrations against Sony, because if we do nothing, authorities will persecute many women workers in Nuevo Laredo," said hunger striker Naoto Miyazawa. He said three groups in Japan for which he is an international representative are organizing demonstrations worldwide on July 1 to protest against Sony Magnetics, as well as against U.S., Mexican and Japanese government free trade policies.

"There are many similarities between Mexican and Japanese workers and peasants," said Miyazawa. "Workers' conditions are terrible." Miyazawa is a seasonal

# International Repression Against Unionists

## 92 Unionists Murdered

The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions has released its 1993 report on labor activities, and cites 91 different countries for violating basic workers' rights. Some 2,300 workers were arrested around the world for union activities, at least 6,500 were fired for joining unions, nearly 1,000 were physically attacked, and 92 union activists were murdered.

Latin America saw the most extreme labor repression last year. Forty-six unionists were killed in Colombia, seven in Guatemala, three in Brazil and two in El Salvador. Other Latin American countries cited for violating labor rights included Costa Rica, Ecuador, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru and Venezuela.

Repression was also severe in Asia, where governments argued that unions would, in their words, "disturb the industrial harmony of their cultures." "Industrial Harmony really means low wages," the ICFTU notes. The report singles out Indonesia, China, Burma, South Korea and Malaysia for particularly virulent anti-union activities.

And in newly "democratic" Eastern Europe unions are demanding recognition of basic workers rights from governments and employers that are accustomed to absolute control.

## INDIA: Otis Elevator

Otis Elevators locked-out several workers from its Bombay field operations office in mid-May after they refused to agree to a sweetheart contract signed by a company union that "represents" a minority of the workers.

Although the lockout has prevented many elevators from receiving needed service, management refuses to relent. Instead Otis Elevators is working with local police to unleash a reign of terror on the workforce. On May 29, one of the workers, Milton Patel was arrested on charges of sabotage.

While in jail he was tied with his hands and feet splayed and beaten up by the police. He was released on bail the next day.

On May 31 police attacked workers demonstrating against the police station which had tortured and beaten up Patel. About 20 workers were seriously injured, with skull fractures, fractured arms, etc. Some of the injured workers were taken to the hospital, where the police picked them up and 92 workers were arrested.

On June 1st, police arrested the Vice-President of the Otis Elevators' Employees' Union (OEEU), Harish Pujari, on false charges of threatening a plant manager.

The union is calling upon the Maharashtra State Government to investigate the incidents of torture and police violence against the workers, especially the administering of electric shocks to a worker at Kanjur Marg police station, the torture of Milton Patel and the recent mass beatings of workers at the Cuffe Parade police station.

Secondly, the Government should immediately stop the management from imposing the minority union and the minority union-signed agreement on workers. Management has made acceptance of this minority union-signed agreement by all workers a precondition for lifting the lock-out. No self-respecting worker can accept such a condition. It is clear that the management wants workers without self-respect and with a yellow union.

They ask people to protest against the anti-labor policies of the Otis management in India. Letters can be sent to: Otis Elevator Company, Rahem Mansion No. 1, 42, Shaheed Bhagat Singh Marg, Bombay 400 039, India; Managing Director, United Technologies Corp., Otis Elevator Company, 10 Farm Spring, Farmington, Conn. 06032 (USA). Solidarity messages can be sent to: Otis Elevators' Employees' Union Janashakti, Globe Mill Passage, WORLI, Bombay 400 013.

## GUATEMALA Violence More Effective than the Courts

Three Guatemalan workers are dead and 11 have been hospitalized with injuries including bullet wounds after a forcible eviction carried out by police and private security forces on August 24. Workers had occupied the Hacienda San Juan El Horizontante, Empresa Exacta S.A. in mid-July in order to call attention to the plight of 62 workers who had been illegally fired in early March after demanding that the owner respect Guatemalan labor law, including paying the legal minimum wage of \$2.00/day. Among the dead is one of the leaders of occupation. Although witnesses report seeing him captured uninjured, his pulverized body was found on Aug. 25, reputedly having been dropped from a helicopter. A private helicopter belonging to the Campoños of the neighboring plantation San Gregorio had been used by security forces during the eviction and is thought to be the aircraft from which the victim had been thrown.

Guatemalan President Ramiro de Leon Carpio said he laments the violence but defended the right to private property and said that police acted legitimately. He said that the workers had guns and bombs, and referred to the injury of three police agents. However, none of the police have injuries from firearms or bombs. Catholic officials report that the police are the only party who fired, and that the workers defended themselves with sticks and stones.

After the attack, hundreds of locals rushed to the finca and disarmed the police and the 23-member private security force who accompanied them. The citizens confiscated from the leader of the private security force, an ex-colonel in the armed forces, a document listing the names of the heads and staff of the labor union UNSITRAGUA as well as the license plate numbers of their vehicles.

Efforts by workers to organize unions in the maquiladoras continue to meet with firings and attacks by management. On June 22, two workers were fired from a maquiladora named "Del Prado" because of their organizing efforts. "Del Prado" is a U.S.-owned maquiladora which makes clothing under the brand names Esprit, Appel and Leslie Fay. The Del Prado workers filed for union recognition and for an injunction against any further firings by the company for organizing activities. But 12 more workers were fired the next week for joining the organizing effort. The International Ladies Garment Workers Union has been on strike against Leslie Fay, one of the largest women's apparel manufacturers in the U.S., since June 1. Guatemalan Leslie Fay workers make \$3.48 per day as their base salary, or \$4.30 if they reach the nearly impossible quota of 525 pieces per day. These wages are 40% less than last year's.

Workers have been trying to organize a union at a maquila called RCA Industrias since last fall. Management responded by removing machinery, threatening to close the plant, hitting workers and at times abandoning the worksite. Workers complaints include salaries of \$2-a-day, poor sanitation, and abuse. On July 19 workers took over the plant, which led to immediate negotiations. On July 22, the company agreed to negotiate a pay increase, clean up the place, bring back machinery, stop threatening to close and "respect" the union. Despite the agreement management has shut down the plant. This about-face prompted the workers to occupy the plant to prevent removal of the machinery and to demand its reopening. In the United States, Edison Brothers Stores, a prominent retailer, has been an importer of RCA-made clothing. Workers are urged to contact Andrew E. Newman, Chief Executive Officer, Edison Brothers Stores, P.O. Box 14020, St. Louis, MO 63178 (Tel: 314-331-66001-651)

laborer from Sapporo, Japan, who works in potato harvesting and sugar refineries there. "The demand of Mexican workers at Sony's Nuevo Laredo plant, who don't want to work Saturdays and Sundays, inspires Japanese workers who have lost colleagues due to Karoshi, death from overwork." To protest Sony's policies write Carl Yankowski President, Sony Electronics, One Sony Drive Park Ridge, NJ 07656-8003

### JAPAN: Homelessness Hits Tokyo Streets

While Japanese newspapers claim the country is experiencing an economic recovery, a growing army of people living in the city's railway stations are oblivious to such upbeat news. After years of denying their existence, the metropolitan government are finally noticing the homeless problem. "We are doing all we can to get these people on the road again," a welfare official explains. "But the numbers are growing so fast."

Some 3,000 homeless people live in downtown Tokyo; mostly older men who used to eke out a living as day laborers before the economy entered a tailspin. Even if there were jobs, many are now too feeble to work. Homeless people have been noticeable for at least six years, but in the last two years their numbers have been augmented by many younger unemployed workers hit hard by the economic recession.

Since Japanese law requires people seeking welfare to have an address, the homeless are ineligible for relief. Last winter, Tokyo police herded many of the homeless into a new government shelter, but conditions were so bad that most left within a couple of months.

### HONDURAS: Women Workers Fight Back

Thousands of women working in the squalid assembly lines of northern Honduras have launched a struggle to defend their right to form unions.

The government provided tax breaks and other concessions in the early 1990s in hopes of generating new jobs. However, many of those new workers are now complaining about conditions. Young women report being forced to take contraceptive pills to prevent pregnancies, and stimulants so they can work as long as 48 hours at a stretch.

One woman caught distributing leaflets calling a workers' meeting was brutally beaten by factory managers and fired. According to a U.S. State Department report, Guatemalan authorities maintain a blacklist of workers who try to form unions.

In February more than 4,000 women from the Continental textile factory organized a strike and blocked traffic between the towns of Choloma and San Pedro Sula, the country's second largest city, to call attention to their plight. The women, many armed with sticks and machetes, carried banners demanding the right to form a union and protesting conditions in the factory.

When Continental allowed workers to form a union, their success inspired similar protests in many of the 180 maquiladoras in Honduras.

A Honduran factory owners association is calling on the Guatemalan government to take firm action to prevent foreign investors from fleeing the country. The government concedes that workers have a right to form unions, but insists that foreign-owned maquiladoras must be treated with kid gloves. According to official figures, these plants employ 40,000 workers and are the country's main source of foreign exchange.

**SUPPORT THE IW**  
**Distribute a Bundle**



### Japanese Workers Protest Racism

Pictured is the anarchist contingent in a Dec. 26 day of action against racism and fascism held in Tokyo. The Japanese government is engaged in an anti-foreigner campaign as part of its efforts to reduce unemployment by throwing workers out of the country. Many "illegally staying foreigners" have been deported from Japan under the country's restrictive immigration laws.

A media campaign of criminalization reinforces this policy against "illegal." Recently, many Chinese have fled to Japan in worn-out boats, looking for work. Most of them are arrested and accused of being criminals for violating the immigration laws. After a few months in jail they are sent back to China. The media report this sensationally, spreading images of "criminals" over-running the country.

Police throughout Japan are hunting "illegals." "Foreigners" who are regarded as "unwelcome" are arrested and deported. Ironically, organized crime gangs earn money smuggling immigrants into Japan; part of the proceeds are then funnelled to right-wing organizations which are spearheading the racist campaign against immigrants (thus assuring that this trade in human beings remains illegal and profitable).

Anarchists also joined protests against Arbor Day on May 21st and 22nd in the remote village of Kobe, but featuring an appearance by Emperor Akihito. The ceremony had been moved to Kobe to escape protestors. Although Arbor Day theoretically celebrates nature, scores of trees are cut down each year in order to construct a luxurious ceremony place for the Emperor's visit.

(ARP)

## Chinese Workers Fight for Justice

China has ordered all foreign-controlled companies to enroll their workers in government-run unions by the end of the year. The government hopes local units of the official All-China Federation of Trade Unions would control worker unrest and reduce industrial accidents.

Although Chinese law already requires "union" representation for workers, 86 percent of foreign companies operating in China have ignored the requirement. The new decree requires companies to set up "unions" in their workplaces. The government says these "unions" will protect workers from abusive employers and scale back the growing number of deaths from unsafe working conditions. And, to quote the *Wall Street Journal*, "China apparently feels that such incidents could provide fertile ground for labor activists. Some dissidents have tried to establish independent unions to capitalize on poor working conditions in sweatshop factories and job reductions at money-losing state enterprises. Authorities quickly suppress the organization efforts, throwing the leaders in jail."

The ACFTU has never sanctioned a strike. The government hopes that ACFTU locals can defuse labor unrest and ensure labor stability. It promised companies that its "unions" would not harm their interests. The head of Shanghai Volkswagen agrees, saying that while the "union" does demand higher pay and workload changes it has sparked improved productivity and, thus, higher profits.

### Need Independent Unions

Han Dongfang, a railway electrician, was jailed in 1989 for helping to organize the Beijing Autonomous Workers Federation. He is presently in exile, seeking permission to return to the country to resume his efforts. The following excerpts are from a column that ran in, of all places, the June

7 *Wall Street Journal*.

"China's opposition activists must change their approach... Only by putting more effort into organizing grass-roots interest groups and articulating their grievances can they lay the groundwork for a civil society capable of coping with China's explosive tensions.

"The Chinese government's current approach to handling the social discontent is to control and repress at all costs. Since March, a renewed public security offensive has included the detention of dissidents and labor activists.... The enforced calm in the capital belies an increasingly dangerous situation. While the police have been able to keep a relatively tight lid on social agitation in the capital, mass protests and discontent in the countryside are proving much harder to control. At the bottom of the social ladder, peasants are finding their lives increasingly hard to bear. In the industrial sector, tens of millions of workers are unemployed or threatened by unemployment, and are having to confront the crisis... without housing, medical security and job security.

"The discontent has burst into numerous peasant riots in the countryside over the past two years, as well as into a growing number of strikes and mass street protests among workers in various big cities. The harsh repression by the authorities, coupled with the absence of independent, organized representation on behalf of peasants and workers, will almost inevitably turn the rising level of agitation into violence. This reality has to be confronted by both the government and its opposition...

"The opposition has been relatively disorganized... They tend to target their publicity toward the international media rather than toward the grass roots of China's population. The opposition in China seems more concerned about the functioning of the small circles within their groups than

### ARGENTINA: Strike Against Poverty

A massive three-day march and demonstration organized by unions to protest the Argentine government's economic policy ended in Buenos Aires July 6 with a call for a general strike on Aug. 2. The march began in the northern and southern extremes of Argentina, and concluded at the Plaza de Mayo in Buenos Aires, in front of the capitol buildings.

Crowds of workers, pensioners, students, teachers, farmers, small businessmen, indigenous people, artists and human rights activists from throughout the country swarmed the plaza shouting "we have arrived." The march was organized by two union federations that split off from the General Labor Confederation (GLC), which is aligned with the ruling party.

Some 50,000 demonstrators shouted slogans denouncing hunger, unemployment, regional economic crisis and government marginalization of the provinces, while Carlos Santillan, a leader from the northern Jujuy province, said "the struggle will continue until the economic plan falls and (Economics Minister) Cavallo has left office."

The government ringed the plaza with thousands of police officers, and rejected the demonstrators' demands, insisting that any change in economic policy would be "suicide."

**Labor Market Rigidities:** What minimum wages are called before they are lowered.

**Market-friendly:** Measures taken to make Third World markets "friendly" to First World traders and investors but not vice versa.

**Privatization:** Privatization of profits, nationalization of losses.

about grass-roots educational work.

"The majority of activists claim to speak out for the interests of the whole society. Very few have the courage or commitment to express in public the interests of the specific groups or sectors that they represent. It would be more effective if the labor activists spent more of their time organizing collective bargaining over labor conditions at their workplaces than holding press conferences....

"The hope of China lies mainly in the building up of a civil society, and not in the formation of opposition parties. I do not believe that any regime would fare much better than the current regime of the Communist Party if it were not established upon a mature civil society. With a functioning civil society, any government would hesitate to flagrantly violate human rights and social justice."

### Inspired by Anita Hill

Over the past year, the Chinese media have begun to report on sexual harassment of women workers. Tang Can, an associate professor with the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, found that more than 70 percent of women she interviewed reported having been harassed sexually. Tang says the problem is most acute in private firms. "It is disappointing that so many of the victims prefer to remain silent," she says. "They don't want to go to the courts or police. The braver women just leave for another job."

Tang developed an interest in the issue when she came across reports of the Clarence Thomas-Anita Hill case from the United States. "I was struck by the condemnations of sexual harassment expressed in the articles and by the women's demand for their sexual rights and dignity," she recalls. "That reminded me of similar unhappy experiences my friends and I had faced."

# Haitian Unionists Protest Invasion Threats

As the *Industrial Worker* goes to press an on-again off-again U.S.-led invasion of Haiti has been suspended. The following open letter was issued in late August:

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

We, who are leaders of trade union and human rights organizations in Haiti, address this open letter to you to present our points of view concerning the crisis in Haiti and also to make some proposals which, in our opinion, are needed to help build the broadest front against military intervention in Haiti, a front that would bring together all those interested in defending the interests of the Haitian people.

During the 34 months since the military coup of September 30, 1991, we have witnessed a veritable pillage and destruction of our country, applied and supported methodically and cynically by the U.S. government under the cover of promoting the "return of democracy." To do this, the U.S. government, aided by the "international community" and the Haitian military regime, has conducted an operation to impose famine and outright extermination of the Haitian nation. The major components of this monstrous political machination are repression and the embargo/blockade.

To that we must add the so-called negotiations/accords and the sowing of deliberate confusion. The goal thus sought by the United States, under the juridical cover of the Organization of American States (OAS) and the United Nations, is to attempt to "normalize" the explosive and unstable situation in Haiti; that is, to break the revolutionary upsurge of the worker and peasant masses, of the Haitian youth, so as to permit the army to reconstitute itself as the essential pillar of the new order. The reality of intervention is the exact opposite of what the "leaders" of this world have affirmed in

public. A close examination of the disastrous consequences of repression, of the embargo/blockade, of the negotiations/accord, and of the deliberate confusion sowed among the people and within the national economy will bear out this affirmation.

We cannot, in this text, go into all the problems that confront our country in the aftermath of the bloody events of September 30, 1991. The Haitian people know these well, and live them in their flesh and blood. We will, however, refer to the most important problems that, in our view, confront the Haitian people, basing ourselves on facts and testimonies that cannot be refuted.

## Repression

Since September 30, 1991, the Haitian people have lived one of the most painful moments of their existence. In 34 months, as everyone in the world knows, the Haitian people have been subjected to ferocious repression: arrests, torture, assassinations, rape, disappearances, and abusive layoffs and firings that are an affront to elementary rights. The balance sheet of this repression is so heavy that at this date it is difficult to give a full picture. Already, human rights organizations are working within Haiti and abroad to give a sense of this horror. In their most recent publications, they give a list—an approximation — of 5000 people who have been killed by firing squads, shot savagely, or who died following torture. More than 10,000 people have been detained, the majority abused or tortured. An estimated 100,000 women, men, and children had to leave this hell, to attempt on small crafts to reach the U.S. shores in Florida. Close to one-half million more inside the country have been forced to flee from one region to another following repression and later the threat of intervention. This doesn't take up

the tens of thousands who crossed the border into the Dominican Republic. Nor does this include the 16,436 Haitians who've been detained in the concentration camps in Guantanamo, in violation of the Haitian peoples' right to asylum, which is supposed to be respected according to international agreements, and which of course is violated by the U.S. authorities. And this, finally, does not take into account the hundreds and hundreds of Haitian "boat people" who have disappeared in the Caribbean. President Clinton, who promised before the elections of November 4, 1992, that he would welcome all Haitians fleeing their land, did not live up to this promise. Is he not continuing to apply rigorously the policy of Bush, pushing back thousands of our compatriots, victims of the military, attempting to flee the repression and the misery?

## Embargo/Blockade

The world's major powers have allowed the famine, aggravated by the embargo/blockade, to decimate the Haitian people so as to prepare direct intervention. This scenario was outlined as far back as December 3, 1992, in a report made public which foresees, "A foreign intervention of long duration, such as a protectorate of the United Nations or outside administration of the territory until such time that it [Haiti] is in a position to govern itself under the mandate of the United Nations." An international newspaper quotes someone in Haiti whose views are widely shared by the population: "With the embargo, the rich are becoming richer, and the poor poorer." This fact was recognized by the Secretary-General of the United Nations himself, in his report of July 15, 1994, to the Security Council, when he said: "... the unfortunate people in Haiti are forced, moreover, to bear the burden of the sanctions." Famine has set

are also doing solidarity work with Haitian transport workers union.

**Hawaii**— They are pushing branch status now, after starting organizing in earnest a couple of years ago. The branch includes education workers, environmentalists, and local activists. They published a brochure on the IWW & Hawaii which has been well received. They run a literature table every week at the University, and are preparing to do a weekly IWW labor cable TV program. The group has formed a Labor-Environmental Alliance which successfully campaigned against Unocal's dumping of toxic wastes. They have also joined several picket lines in solidarity with striking workers, and are in the preliminary stages of a couple of job organizing campaigns.

**Chicago**— The Chicago Branch has devoted the bulk of its energies over the past year to running the *Industrial Worker* and the IWW Literature Department. Branch members have also joined several picketlines and other solidarity action. The Branch is concerned over proposals to move IWW headquarters again, believing their needs to be a stable address for headquarters.

**Santa Cruz**— One of our newer branches, Santa Cruz Wobs have been working against local "conduct ordinances" that target poor, protesters and the homeless. Thirty-four people were arrested during May actions against a sitting ordinance used to harass Food Not Bombs. The sitting law was overturned as unconstitutional. Ordinances also targeting ongoing vigils in the downtown mall and sleeping in public (see related article on the Labor Day eve demonstration defying these laws). One organizing strategy that has worked well for Santa Cruz has been working in coalition with other local groups on areas of joint concern. They are also working on the Kinko's drive, and are working on organizing a job branch at a local Kinko's.

in, famine which is promoted with outright cynicism by the "international community" seeking to present before national and international public opinion the view that the embargo is the sole instrument to put pressure on the military so that they will leave power and so that "democracy can be restored."

Meanwhile, the Haitian people see threats mount daily. There is not one sector of production that is not threatened. The main public enterprises (flour mills, cement, sugar processing, etc.) and the private enterprises — most of which are foreign subsidiaries — have simply stopped operating. This has provoked more than 100,000 layoffs. Public services have been dismantled, and what does exist is being administered by non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The entire industrial and agricultural infrastructure have been abandoned. This is the case as well with public services, as the Haitian bulletin *Perspectives-Haiti* (December 1-15, 1993) acknowledges: "The collapse of the country's financial system, the virtual elimination of the system of production, the deplorable state of its public enterprises, the tearing apart of the social fabric are all problems from which Haiti will have a difficult time lifting itself up, with or without the return of President Aristide." ...

The economic life of the country is paralyzed. The embargo affects medicines, most of which have to be imported, and of which three-quarters are not reaching the Haitian people. Harvests are disastrous given the lack of fertilizers. Peasants are left with harvests they cannot sell and are forced into bankruptcy. Many abandon the countryside to become part of the growing ranks of the unemployed in the cities, or else to become part of the many who decide to embark on a dangerous voyage across the seas. The lack of petroleum paralyzes transportation and deprives the country of electricity. A gallon of gasoline, which could be bought at the price of 13.65 gourdes (US\$1.80) before the embargo decreed by the OAS and later enforced by the United Nations, today costs 200 gourdes (US\$10.00). The value of the national currency, the gourde, has plummeted, going from 45 gourdes to the U.S. dollar to 350 gourdes to the dollar over the past 34 months. Let us note as well that the "foreign debt," which today amounts to more than 13 billion gourdes, was valued at 4 billion before the coup and the imposition of economic sanctions.

It is the people and not the putschists who are facing famine. In Haiti, not having fuel means not having electricity, or transportation or healthcare, which are all extremely precarious. Tens of thousands of women and children are dying of hunger and of benign, curable diseases. The country is completely isolated from the rest of the world. The border with the Dominican Republic is now tightly controlled and closed, under order of the Clinton administration. U.S. warships are in the Haitian territorial waters, creating a veritable floating "Berlin Wall" to prevent the departure of Haitians. All consulates are closed as a result of the blockade. All U.S. visas granted to Haitians in Haiti have been annulled. All flights into Haiti have stopped. The decision by the U.S. administration to block all financial transfers from Haitians living in the United States of more than \$50 per month only aggravates the situation. For countless Haitian homes, these money transfers were their only hope of survival. As for the military in power, created in American academies, they continue to enrich themselves thanks to the black market created by the embargo/blockade. And they have found a new source of financing they did not have in the past.

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## Local IWW Reports...

for union recognition in the next several months. Kinko's has 30,000 workers spread over four countries, so it will take time to organize.

**Atlanta**— FW Erving reported on the proposal for a Black Workers Organizing Project.

**Los Angeles**— The branch is plagued by the size of the city, which makes it difficult for members to get together. They are using voice mail and the postal system to try to coordinate efforts, but there are problems with participation. The branch is in the midst of a film workers organizing drive for which it has high hopes. They have plans for a poetry festival and a concert to raise funds. They are also doing some work in support of the gang truce. They extended an open invitation to people to come out to Los Angeles to work with them. They need people interested in organizing, and can provide housing.

**Salt Lake City**— This is a new branch as of May. They are doing a lot of work in support of the Staley workers. They have also organized several events, including a talk by Eugene Nelson and a May Day event featuring IWW singers at which they signed up four new members. They are working on May Day 95 in conjunction with 90th anniversary of IWW. They are working on setting up a bookstore, doing some Food Not Bombs support, and talking with local public service workers about joining the IWW.

**Temp Workers**— They need people to work with them to help build a cooperative hiring hall for temporary workers. Once the hall is off the ground they will try to build the IWW among the temps.

**Monterey**— This is a new group, and is focussing on getting the word out. Most of their members are in construction.

**SE Michigan**— The banks sold out from



FW Janowitz enjoys a lunch prepared by the fellow workers of Food Not Bombs.

under us our biggest job shop, the U Cellar, and the hippies of management sold out the Warehouse. We still have the Ann Arbor Tenants Union shop and a largely African-American performance group. The branch does labor support work, recently working with some wildcat workers who won a strike at local store. They are pledging money to GA to match efforts to cut deficit. They

## Haiti Appeal...

The embargo/blockade is affecting the Haitian masses, particularly the working class, whose ranks have been almost totally decimated, while only supporting the military apparatus and protecting the high command in power. It is a mystery to no one that the military apparatus not only possesses all the weapons, but is even better equipped following the military coup and the imposition of sanctions. It has been reinforced, and has enriched itself with contraband of all sorts, including through drug trafficking. It is a fact that before the embargo/blockade all attempts by the military to take power and remain in power failed after a brief period of time. The "international community" has imposed sanctions against the Haitian people so that General Cedras and company are not subjected to the same fate that met their predecessors, Generals Namphy and Avril. Both of them were forced to step down under pressure from mass mobilizations, given that the people would no longer tolerate them terrorizing the population. We must note in passing that since the fall of Duvalier, with the exception of the military command under General Cedras, no other high command has remained at the head of the army for more than two years.

So what is at the root of this determination to force an entire people to its knees? Why this systematic and cynical preparation for a "humanitarian catastrophe," to employ the term widely used these days? These are the exigencies of the "New World Order" (in fact, new world disorder), as we have witnessed in Iraq, the ex-Yugoslavia, Somalia, Rwanda, and elsewhere.

The embargo/blockade, which is starving the Haitian people, cannot in any way aid its struggle for democracy. The embargo/blockade is exhausting the Haitian population while only reinforcing the military dictatorship. The embargo/blockade, by destroying the economic foundations of the country, prepares the way for intervention and then military occupation under the pretext of providing humanitarian aid. This is why we reject the cynical argument according to which the famine engendered by the embargo/blockade could help prepare the uprising of the Haitian people against the dictatorship. How is it possible to declare oneself in solidarity with the struggle for democracy of the Haitian people and at the same time support measures which are starving them?

### "Negotiations/Accords"

As has been the case of all the rules and regulations drafted by the United Nations, the Governor's Island Accords (July 3, 1993) are part and parcel of the framework of the rotten policies carried out by the U.S. government. Their aim is to gain time so as to demobilize the Haitian masses in their struggle against repression, a struggle which has expressed itself in many forms... What this is about is supposedly "reestablishing" democracy while protecting the military from acts of "revenge" by the population.

What is involved is putting into place a mechanism of savage repression against the Haitian people. It is clear that, as soon as the first military contingents arrive in the country, the incidents provoked will only serve as a pretext to escalate repression. This "accord" was but a pretext to prepare the conditions for a foreign intervention, with all its ensuing provocations; and this despite all the crocodile tears shed concerning the fate of the Haitian people by the U.N. Secretary General, who stated: "The [UN] has not been able to carry out the mandate with which it had been entrusted as a result of various events that have taken place in Haiti by the Haitian armed forces, which have totally disregarded the dispositions of the Governor's Island Accord." (Report of July 15, 1994, of Mr. Boutros-Ghali to the

U.N. Security Council) It's as if the "international community," with the U.S. government at its head, were not entirely responsible for the suffering of the Haitian people. And this, in fact, is what occurred on October 11, 1993, when a decision was taken by the "neo-Duvalieristes" to send U.N. troops. It was simply an operation aimed at preventing the return of President



Aristide on October 30, 1993, in violation of the very agreement which the United States had concocted. The 34 months of repression, embargo/blockade, and "negotiations/accords" were simply the delays necessary to implement a plan of destruction and extermination of the Haitian people...

### The Threat of Intervention

Today, we are presented with military intervention effectively under the aegis of the United States but under the banner of the United Nations as a way of closing the long and difficult chapter of military coups, of deaths, of massacres inflicted upon the Haitian population. It is as if the responsibility of the United States did not exist in these massacres, which have ravaged our country for more than three-quarters of a century. The fact is that the Haitian state, after the U.S. occupation of 1915-34, was not born from a national development leading to the constitution of a state, as was the case on January 1, 1804, when history registered the creation of the Black Republic in Haiti, the first in the world. But the government that followed the U.S. occupation made the Army the key political force and arbiter in Haiti.

Beginning in 1915, the intervention of U.S. troops had as its goal to stifle the resistance of the Haitian people, particularly the workers and peasants. As a former officer of the Haitian Army, Paul Laraque, himself noted: "The police corps in Haiti was created by U.S. military occupation to maintain public order, that is, the existing social order. Having trained its weapons against the peasant guerrilla movement of Charlemagne Pralte, the principal mission of U.S. Marines from the beginning was to maintain the neocolonial state apparatus put in place by the occupation, within the framework of the relations of domination and of economic dependency that existed and that remains today at the service of U.S. imperialism." (*Pouvoir Noir en Haiti*, 1988)

This clearly expresses that which is essential in this military intervention projected for Haiti in the name of the return of democracy: What matters are the interests of the U.S. government in the region. It is therefore necessary to smash the Haitian revolution which brought down the Duvalier dictatorship in 1986. It is necessary to smash the Haitian people and to hold this up as an example for other Black peoples in the world, particularly our brothers and sisters in the United States and in the Caribbean. This threat of intervention against the Haitian nation as such is evermore disturbing. It is an intervention aimed at terrorizing the peoples of the regions, and in particular to smash the national aspirations of the Haitian people. At the same time, it constitutes a serious danger for other workers, peasants, and oppressed people of our continent,

particularly those in the Dominican Republic and Cuba.

### Proposal

In the face of this delicate situation confronting our country, we cannot remain with our arms folded while our beloved Haiti falls into chaos. Each day, it becomes more urgent to assist the Haitian people in finding a political perspective that corre-

sponds with the interests and aspirations of the masses of people in our country. That is why we, the undersigned, address ourselves to you, and to all trade unionists and all defenders of democratic rights... in the United States, and in the rest of the world, so that we can undertake, in the broadest possible unity and respectful of the diversity of our political views, the following actions:

- The organization in every country of delegations to the U.S. embassies and to the offices of the United Nations and the OAS.
- And the preparation of broad-based mass demonstrations at these sites to demand: 1. No U.S. military intervention in Haiti under the cover of the United Nations. 2. Full respect for the right of asylum of the Haitian people. 3. The immediate departure of the putschists (both military and civilian). 4. The immediate lifting of the embargo and other sanctions. 5. Respect of the right of the Haitian people to decide for themselves their future, and to choose in full sovereignty their representatives, as was the case on December 16, 1990. 6. An immediate end to repression in Haiti.

This open letter seeks to aid the Haitian people to put an end to the repression, the famine, and the isolation to which they have been subjected for the purpose of exterminating them. We reaffirm our confidence in the capacity of working people, youth, and others to find a means to put an end to the catastrophe inflicted on our nation and to put into place a state based on respect of democratic and human rights.

Cajuste Lexiuste, General Secretary  
General Confederation of  
Haitian Workers (CGT), Haiti  
Ronald Saint-Jean, Coordinator  
International Committee  
Against Repression (CICR), Haiti

## Labor Rocks Africa

The African continent is being racked by strikes as workers demand that the benefits of "democratization" extend to those who laid their bodies on the line to make it possible.

In South Africa, President Nelson Mandela - brought to power in multi-racial elections forced by years of general strikes and other direct action by South African workers - opened the fifth conference of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) in September. Mandela told unionists to ease up on the strike wave sweeping across South Africa. He urged workers to "tighten your belts" and accept low wages in order to attract foreign investment. Mandela said workers who insist on fighting for decent conditions for themselves are "irresponsible" and threaten the national interest.

But growing numbers of workers are fed up with the Mandela regime, and are

demanding that COSATU take a firmer stance against its anti-labor agenda. COSATU, South Africa's largest union center, faced its first leadership contest in many years as many affiliates demanded the ouster of COSATU Secretary General Sam Shilowa, widely believed to be a stooge for the ANC government and the Communist Party. Many believe Shilowa is holding on to the post only as a stepping stone into the government.

The ANC-led government is in the process of implementing IMF-style austerity measures which threaten to throw hundreds of thousands of workers out of their jobs and decimate local wage standards. Trade and Industry Minister Trevor Manuel has announced plans to eliminate all tariffs on textile products over the next decade and has slashed tariffs on import cars in the midst of a strike against local car manufacturers. The National Union of Metal Workers (NUMSA) denounced the plan, saying it was an attempt to force the union to abandon its five-week-old strike by 25,000 auto workers. NUMSA called off the strike two days later.

COSATU secretary Shilowa criticized the tariff moves as "provocative" and "illustrat[ing] contempt for the tripartite process" whereby business, labor and government are supposed to hammer out a common economic approach. COSATU has agreed to give the government advance warning of all strikes.

Shilowa points out that 40 percent of South Africa's working class is unemployed, and argues that the government policy can only make things worse. However, he supports the government's decision to join the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trades which requires the elimination of programs designed to protect local jobs and working conditions.

### Repression

In the Eastern Transvaal, police fired rubber bullets and live ammunition at 3,000 striking forest workers, injuring 20 of them in late August. Farmers reportedly also fired on the workers. Eight hundred workers employed by paper and pulp giant Mondi are on strike. And 31 striking miners were injured in two incidents at Anglo American mines when mine security fired rubber bullets and hurled stun grenades at workers.

This continues a pattern of attacks that began immediately after the African National Government took power. In mid May the ANC's Patrick Lekota, now premier of the Free State province, ordered striking government workers to return to work or be fired. A few days later the ANC premier of the Northwest province, Popo Molefe, denounced black workers' demands that they be paid the same wages as white workers doing the same jobs. Molefe later retreated from this stance under intense criticism, conceding that the demand was "legitimate." But he refused to grant it and continued to denounce the strike, instead urging workers to pursue their demands "in a democratic manner."

Strikes are increasing across the country. A strike by 6,000 goldmine workers at the Elandsrand mine near Johannesburg ended in early September, after the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) accepted management's terms in the face of threats to close "unprofitable" mines. Mineworkers had been seeking a 25 percent wage hike and improved safety conditions. More than four hundred gold miners were killed in industrial "accidents" in 1993, and another 8,000 reported injured.

In KwaZulu/Natal province, wildcat strikes by health workers continued at press time despite calls for a return to work by the National Health and Allied Workers' Union (NEHAWU). Workers struck over low wages, racism, corruption and incompetence of hospital management.

continued on page 14

## African Workers in Rebellion...

Thousands of truck drivers brought traffic on three national highways to a virtual standstill in mid August when they blockades toll plazas as part of a protest for better working conditions. Truckers are demanding standard wage scales, overtime pay and better working conditions, including proper stop-over facilities for long-haul drivers. The blockade is being led by the Cosatu-affiliated Transport and General Workers' Union (TGWU). And ten unions representing 180,000 public servants walked out of pay-rise talks when the government refused to offer significant concessions.

A new study shows South Africa's corporate bosses earn an average of R48,000 (Can\$18,000) a month, with some earning up to R118,000 (Can\$45,000). The Labour Research Service study found company directors pay themselves an average annual increase of 18%, double the inflation rate, even when company profits drop. The gulf between workers' and executives' salaries in SA is among the highest in the world, with ordinary financial managers paid 10 times as much a typical worker.

## NIGERIA: Oil Workers Fail in Bid to Topple Dictatorship

The National Union of Petroleum and Natural Gas Workers has abandoned a nine-week-old strike against Nigeria's military dictatorship after other unions failed to come to their aid. The government arrested the union's general secretary on July 6, the third day of the strike, and announced Aug. 17 that it was dissolving the union's executive board. Armed policeman locked unionists out of the Gas Workers offices and also closed the offices of the Nigeria Labour Congress until the latter agreed to withdraw its support for a general strike.

Several union activists face charges of economic sabotage, which carries a life prison sentence. The NUPENG is challenging the government's removal of its officers, contending that the military has no right to dictate its leadership. Bola Owodunni, president of the Petroleum and Natural Gas Senior Staff Association, which had threatened to (but did not) join the strike, agrees: "General Abacha did not appoint us, we have never taken any subvention from the government to run our unions, so he can neither give us instructions or appoint officers for us. Nobody has the power to dissolve our executive except our members."

The strike had crippled public transportation and shut down businesses throughout the country. The strike drew the strongest support from the country's south, but support waned in the final weeks as many workers concluded that the military was prepared to simply starve them out.

## KENYA: Doctors Strike

A 12-week-old doctor's strike continued to paralyze Kenya's health sector as this issue went to press, but the government remained adamant in refusing to negotiate. Instead the government is negotiating with Egypt to import Egyptian doctors to break the strike.

Some 800 doctors working in government hospitals struck June 16, demanding that the government recognize the Kenya Medical Practitioners and Dentists Union and open negotiations. Kenyan president Daniel Arap Moi refused, saying the doctors were "impossible, unrealistic and politically motivated." The doctors are seeking an increase from \$220 a month to \$820 a month.

3,800 university lecturers have been on strike since November demanding that the government recognize their union. Civil Servants have not struck despite government refusal to recognize their union.

August 28 the government fired all striking doctors for refusing its orders to return to work. The union filed suit against what it termed an unlawful dismissal. The government responded by sending armed policeman to evict them from their homes.

The government is said to be negotiating for Egyptian doctors to break the strike. But nurses have threatened to refuse to work with scab doctors.

## LESOTHO: Strikers Fired

The Taiwanese-owned C & Y garment factory fired all 1,300 of its Lesotho workers in mid July for going on strike. (Lesotho is a tiny country surrounded by South Africa.) The workers had struck to protest the lay-off of 150 of their fellow workers. When it fired the workers, almost all of whom are women, the company refused to pay legally mandated termination benefits, claiming that the strike was illegal.

Nearly 20,000 people work in Lesotho's garment factories, owned by Taiwanese and other foreign investors. Most of the workers, including those at C & Y, earn an average of 350 Malotis (approx. \$95 U.S.) per month. Companies throughout the garment industry are laying off workers. C & Y manager Seven Wu said he fired the strikers because "There was no production and that meant great loss to me... I cannot afford to keep people who don't want to work for apparently no reason." (The concept of solidarity with one's fellow workers is apparently incomprehensible to him.) Wu also claimed the workers wanted to wrest control of the company from the owners, though workers deny this.

Lesotho has a 35 percent unemployment rate, so the fired workers have little hope of finding another job. C & Y says workers can reapply for their jobs, but must include a photograph to assist management in weeding out strike activists.

## Indonesian Union Under Attack

Muchtar Pakpahan, chairperson of Indonesia's independent trade union federation Sejahtera Buruh Serikat Indonesia (Indonesian Welfare Trade Union, SBSI), was arrested Aug. 18. At least 20 Indonesian labor activists are currently behind bars. Pakpahan was arrested in Jakarta and taken to Medan, North Sumatra. Police say he will be tried for 'masterminding' and 'inciting' workers' actions in Medan last April when tens of thousands of workers took to the streets in the North Sumatra provincial capital to demand wage increases and freedom of association.

Twelve workers and a lawyer who worked with their union were arrested in late July as part of a violent clampdown by the army against striking workers in North Sumatra. The conflict started at a factory owned by the Sumatra Tobacco Trading Company [STTC NV] but spread later to three other factories in the industrial compound owned by the same company. The workers have no union, though some are members of the SBSI.

The dispute began June 1 when workers protested non-payment of wages. Paychecks were short when they were paid the next day. Wages range from Rp 90,000 to Rp 150,000 a month (\$30 to \$50), so workers can not afford to have management cheating them of even a relatively small part of their wages. When management refused to make up the shortfall, workers began a sit-down outside the offices. Security guards attacked them without warning with sticks and knives, injuring eight of the workers.

A few hours later virtually all the workers at the four companies, about 6,000 people, walked out. Troops arrived and arrested a worker, Abdul Siagian. Workers then marched to the police command call-

ing for Siagian's release. When workers returned to work June 8 a worker was taken away by a plainclothes military. Some 3,000 workers then occupied the factory for 30 hours while troops blockaded the factory making it impossible for the workers to leave. Early on June 9, anti-terrorist troops backed by other security units attacked the workers, causing many injuries. Two hundred workers were arrested; 13 are still in prison, as are four officers of the Medan SBSI and two human rights activists.

Indonesia's rapidly expanding industrial sector producing shoes, textiles and a variety of consumer goods for export has been struck by waves of strikes in the past eighteen months. Most demand payment of the official minimum wage. Although far below basic physical needs, most companies pay less and exploit their workers in many other ways. Wages in Indonesia are the lowest in Asia. Only one trade union federation, the government-sponsored SPSI, is allowed to exist. It always sides with the bosses. There are three key issues for workers: starvation wages and poor working conditions, freedom of association, and military interference, often brutal, in labour disputes. The SBSI, an independent union set up two years ago, now has a membership of around 250,000 despite harassment of members by the security forces.

The authorities have been looking for grounds to arrest and try Pakpahan since February when the SBSI issued a call for a one-hour nationwide strike calling for better pay and freedom of association. Days before the strike was to take place, Pakpahan and other SBSI leaders were arrested; they were held until after the strike date. In April of this year, the Interior Ministry declared that the SBSI was a 'banned organisation' but took no follow-up action. With the round-up and imprisonment of union leaders, the authorities may hope that the SBSI will wither away.

The SBSI asks workers to write or fax Indonesian officials protesting the violence against workers and calling for the immediate release of all the arrested labor activists and their supporters. Please write or fax to the following: General Feisal Tanjung, Commander of the Armed Forces (ABRI), Markas Besar ABRI, Cilangkap, East Jakarta, Indonesia Fax: +62-21 36 1471 or 37 8144; President Suharto, Istana Negara, Jl Veteran, Central Jakarta, Indonesia, Fax: c/o Foreign Ministry +62-21 36 7782. Copies should be sent to: SBSI, Jl Kayu Ramin 32, Utan Kayu Utara, Jakarta Timur 13120, Fax: +62-21 489 8465

## Columbian Death Squad Targets Oil Workers Union

A report by Carlos Alberto Vergara Amaya, member of a death squad based in the Colombian city of Barrancabermeja reveals Navy involvement in recent death squad activities. Barrancabermeja oil workers have a long tradition of organization and resistance against both the multinational oil companies and the State. Since the guerilla war continues in full force in this region, state terrorism has killed many union leaders and organizers, but death squad members are now talking against their bosses.

People in Barrancabermeja and those who respect human rights ask if the investigation on serious crimes committed by a Colombian Navy Intelligence death squad has ended now that their accusers received political asylum in Europe. Will there be justice? Those who respect life hope to end the death squads' activities forever.

Carlos Alberto Vergara, a Navy informer, was captured by Ecopetrol oil workers when he attempted to kill a worker from Palmas, Libardo Amaya, and was turned over to local police. On Feb. 3, while in the

Barrancabermeja District Prison, he sent a report to prosecutor Gustavo de Greiff (subsequently removed) making new revelations before he was sent to another prison.

Vergara was hired by Navy officer Carlos David Lopez and by Miguel Durán, supposedly a retired Navy officer. When arrested Vergara was in his fourth month as a Navy informer. He was chosen because he lived in the north east sector of the oil industrial city, where confrontations between left-wing People's Militia and the army are common. Vergara's signed report corroborates the accusations made by the Colombian marines now in asylum in Europe and, being from a participant in the crimes, reveals new facts. Among the accused Colombian Naval officers is Colonel Rodrigo Quiñónez, commander of national Navy Intelligence. He has not yet been arrested or removed from office.

Vergara says: "I know that there have been many crimes against innocent people by Columbian Naval Intelligence personnel, with the direct assistance of the Army and the National Police, under Colonel Rodrigo Quiñónez, commanding officer of the Columbian Navy Intelligence, and Majors Hurtado and Lee from the Army."

Vergara says that he knew about massacres committed by death squad members including the El Tropezon massacre, where he accused one Julio a.k.a. the Indian; Felipe González a.k.a. El Guajiro; Jimmy Arenas; Otoniel Ríos Palacios a.k.a. the Black; and Javier Díaz Salas a.k.a. the Mole, formerly a soldier. Julio César Berrío, murdered member of the Regional Committee for Human Rights, was named as a target by a paid assassin known as Dollars the Black, and then killed.

The La Chanon massacre, Vergara says, was also committed by the Navy Intelligence death squad. Paid assassins Otoniel Ríos Palacio, a.k.a. the Black, and Cheeks committed the crime, using the same motorcycle they used when killing Julio César Berrío. Killed at La Chanon were Parmenio Ruiz, president of the San Silvestre Enterprise Drivers Union; René Tavera Sosa, leader of the ANUC campesino union; and Ligia Patricia Cortés. The army's Mobile Brigade was nearby but let the killers go.

In the Versailles barrio massacre, Vergara says that the paid assassins Cheeks, Otoniel (the Black) and a boy driving a bus were involved. They killed Pedro David Villarreal Santamaría, Eliécer Payán Monares and Jines Herrera Vásquez, and wounded David Vásquez Bello.

Vergara says, "Otoniel Ríos Palacios told me that they were chasing the Communist leader David Ravelo Crespo and that they made several trips to kill him. In order to kill Ravelo, two paid assassins from the DAS (political police) came from Bucaramanga. They wanted to kill him because he was a member of the political group UP (a left-wing coalition). Since they couldn't do it, a guy known as El Chapo framed up that he was patronizing subversive groups. El Chapo is working in Nueva Granada Battalion under Major Lee's protection as a witness."

Vergara has also denounced soldiers Felipe Gómez, William Palmeras, Jesús Alberto Ospina, Miguel Monsalve, Andrés Contreras, Johnny Pérez and Robert Gordillo as involved in the dirty war crimes in Barrancabermeja.

Vergara says the local prosecutor is controlled by the military, and is trying to suppress his evidence and silence witnesses who would corroborate his account.

*From Voz la verdad del pueblo. Translated by S.A.V. news for the IW.*

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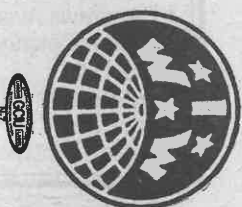
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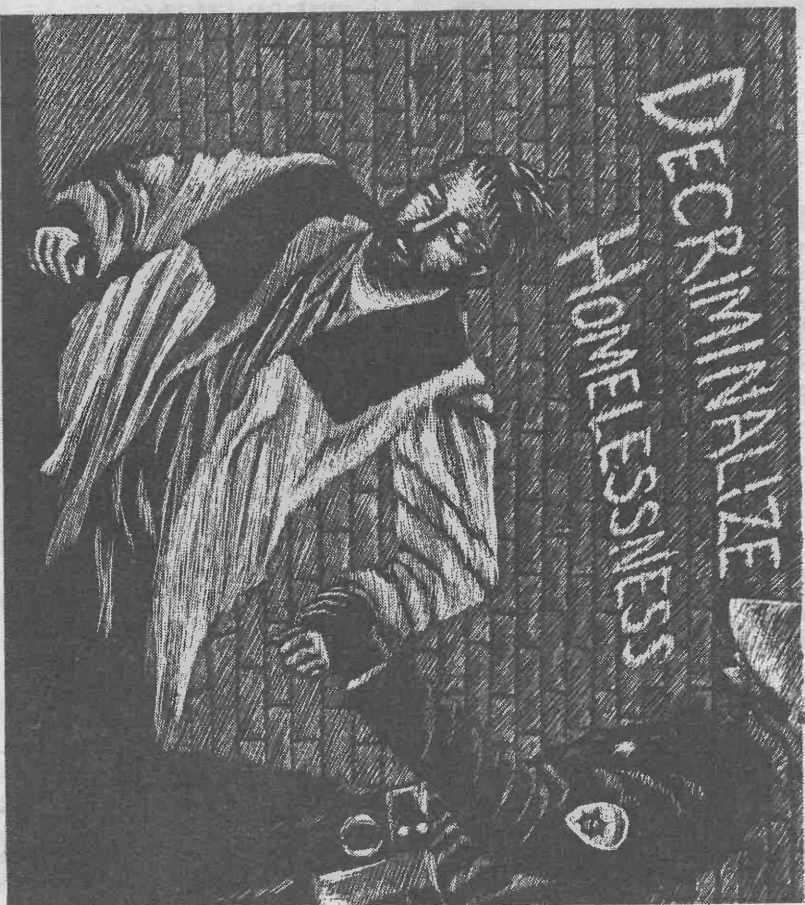
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We find that the centering of the management of industries into fewer and fewer hands makes the trade unions unable to cope with the ever-growing power of the employing class. The trade unions foster a state of affairs which allows one set of workers 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.  
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