

# Industrial Worker

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EDUCATION

ORGANIZATION

EMANCIPATION

## Strawberry pickers fight exploitation

I recently had the privilege of observing the conditions of strawberry pickers near Woodburn, Oregon, who are struggling to organize with PCUN (Pineros y Campesinos Unidos del Noroeste) – the Oregon farmworkers union. The experience was, to say the least, eye-opening. Witnessing the abhorrent conditions in which these individuals work and live inspired in me what I can only describe as disgust, though it also forced me to reflect on the nature of their struggle and the goals that it can yield.

The vast majority of the workers involved in this struggle are Mexicans, leaving behind hopeless conditions, and often their families as well, when they cross the border. Those who wind up in the Woodburn face extraordinary exploitation at the hand of growers willing to employ several methods to underpay the workers, most of whom are unfamiliar with minimum age laws.

At the end of a long day – sometimes 12 hours or more – workers return to the camp, where several people live under a canvas roof in a single room which costs about \$18 per week each. There are no bathrooms in many fields, while those in the camps are dirty and unsanitary.

Perhaps worst of all, however, is the constant fear that workers face daily. Workers who are seen talking with organizers or who complain about conditions are fired. Any small gains that are made are easily undone when growers plow under their fields or remove workers with the help of police or immigration services.

The culmination of my experience with these workers came late in the evening when I and several other observers and organizers were visiting a camp where the workers were housed by the grower. The police – who had come at the grower's request – demanded to see a written invitation, without which we could be legally forced to leave. For fear of being fired, no worker wanted to admit having invited us. When the police asked who it was, after a pause, several men, together, said "Todos," to which others chimed in, "Si, todos" (everyone). The police and the grower left, and I felt that a marvelous gain had been made, and their right to organize had been established.

On the following day their field full of fresh strawberries was plowed under and the camp closed, leaving workers homeless

*continued on page 9*

## Worker fired for union organizing...

# Pennsylvania Job Corps workers organizing for their rights

Student employees of the Keystone Job Corps Center in Drums, Pennsylvania, who are now under constant scrutiny and surveillance by management, are fighting for their most basic rights and decent working conditions in a heated IWW organizing campaign. One student employee has already been fired, and many more have been writ-

ten up, disciplined or harassed in a brazen attempt by management to bust the union organizing drive.

The Job Corps is a project of the U.S. Department of Labor funded at over \$1 billion a year. Most centers are privately managed. Job Corps recruits young people aged 16-24 who are interested in job training, getting a GED, or receiving a college degree. Largely from blue collar backgrounds or of lesser privilege than those that can afford costly higher educational institutions, these young people turn to Job Corps in an effort to secure a better future for themselves. But when they arrive at the Job Corps Center, recruits often find that they have been lied to about conditions,

are subjected to harsh restrictions on leaving the campus or exercising their civil rights, are "trained" for dead-end jobs in fields such as security and food service, and can even be neglected by the infirm staff to the point of endangering their lives.

## MTC: A Portrait of the Prison-Military-Industrial Complex

Management and Training Corporation (MTC) manages over twenty Job Corps Centers (including Keystone) and publishes *Job Corps In Action* from its headquarters in Ogden, Utah.

On the MTC web page, the company congratulates itself for "becoming a leader in the emerging privatization of corrections for adults and youth." In addition to Job Corps Centers, MTC manages correctional

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IWW buttons confiscated as "contraband" off FW Joe Marra's shirt. IWW literature was also seized.

## At British Airways...

# Sick-out strike makes comeback

Workers at Britain's largest international air carrier, British Airways, or Brutish Airways as the workers know refer to the company have hit back at management provocation and intimidation by launching a time honoured tactic of militant industrial unionism – the sick-out.

Workers belonging to the majority union, the Transport and General Workers Union have been fighting to prevent the implementation of a deal reached between the management of the airline and the management-backed minority union Cabin Crew 89, which would reduce wages.

At the beginning of the strike the Chairman (sic) of Cabin Crew 89 said that British Airways cabin crew had been overpaid in the past and that the agreement would ensure no cut in pay for three years.

Faced with the capitulation of one part of the workforce BA management went on the offensive, writing letters to individuals threatening them with dismissal, proposing to sue the union for any losses and generally being extremely aggressive. 1,200 of the cabin crew responded by going sick a day before the 72-hour strike was to begin in a move which effectively closed the airline a day ahead of the strike and compounded BA difficulties. Two days after the end of the strike BA has only been able to run half its scheduled flights and those it has run have certainly not been full with many passengers choosing to boycott the airline.

The attack on workers conditions has proved to be a complete disaster for BA, headed by Bob Ayling, a personal friend of Labour Prime Minister Tony Blair, and a key fund raiser for the party. There are strong suspicions that the Labour Leadership were forewarned about BA's tactics with its workforce, bearing in mind that this would be the first dispute under a Labour Government and that Labour chose to adopt a neutral stance in the dispute. This neutrality will not stand the test of time as any legal move against the union will have to go through the courts using anti-union laws the Labour Government supports.

Even the normally boss-supporting press has attacked BA's handling of the dispute, in particular the macho management style common in the 1980s. BA seems not to have learned any lessons from this first strike and the TGWU are likely to call another 72-hour strike in late July.

While applauding the resolve of the

cabin crew members of BA the IWW is not convinced of the sincerity of many of those involved on in the TGWU and the ITF. The TGWU has refused to provide any meaningful action through out the 22-month-old Liverpool dockers dispute, and went so far as trying to sabotage efforts of the dockers to raise support at the latest TGWU annual conference, happily the leadership lost. The ITF have sought to limit the spread of support for the dockers in a number of ways and have refused to sanction any supportive action not called for by the TGWU. The TGWU refuse to make a call for supportive

action as the employers will then sue the TGWU in court!

The dispute also shows the idiocy of "trade" union organisation. BA has a number of unions covering a variety of staff divided along trade lines. The TGWU goes one further, while it organises both cabin staff and baggage handlers the union is keeping both disputes separate and ordered baggage handlers in dispute to cross the picket lines of cabin staff! Such is the poverty of trade union organisation. The IWW solution to this is simple – One Big Union!

*continued on page 9*



## Wobblies March on Detroit

IWW members and United Farm Workers supporters were among nearly 30,000 workers marching in solidarity with Detroit newspaper strikers June 21. Wobblies also joined picketlines at two newspaper printing plants. The striking unions surrendered months ago, offering to return to work on the bosses' terms, but only a handful of workers have been reinstated. On June 20 the National Labor Relations Board ordered Gannett and Knight-Ridder to return the workers to their jobs; the companies have vowed years of appeals. See article page 7, poem page 8.



## In This Issue...

Wobs Fight Borders Books' Union-Busting

Unions Defeated at GE

Review: Voices of Guatemalan Workers

Work in the Combat Zone

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## Queers, Class & Labor

I really enjoyed the review by Chris Vance of *Homo Economics* in the June issue. As a queer, newly joined Wobbly, I was pleased to see the issue of queers, class and labor brought up in the *IW*. The myth of queers as only white, mainstream and upper- to middle-class needs to be debunked. Books like *Homo Economics* and *Queerly Classed*, a great book about queers and class, help to educate everyone about the important impact queer radicals can have in working to change this rotten system.

Also the poem by Martin Espada, in the July issue, was really moving. I'd like to encourage Wobbly poets, and other radical poets for that matter, to submit their work to the *IW*. Poems, stories and art need to be a part of this work we do. These would be great additions to the *IW*.

Lastly, it'd be great if writers included in their articles for the *IW* contact numbers and/or addresses when there may be reason for us to voice our support or disgust on an issue. I'm particularly thinking of the "PBS censors labor program" article (July). We should call and give them hell! Their excuse for not airing "Out at Work" is absurd. But then what's new. Call up PBS and give them a piece of your mind: air "Out at Work"! Their number is 703-739-5000.

Deborah Richards, X345732

## Co-ops No Answer

I don't know where FWs Neill and Adams ever got the idea that the IWW's philosophy envisions "abolishing the wage system, one business at a time" via the workers becoming capitalists (albeit collective ones).

## Readers' Soapbox

Ever since the dawn of wage slavery, individual workers have dreamed of saving up their pennies and one day starting their own business, thus escaping wage slavery. Escaping wage slavery is not the same as abolishing it. Sure, the individual worker has ceased to be a wage worker. They have, in fact, become petite bourgeois, different only in scale from their bigger brethren. Indeed our current economic system has its roots precisely in the realm of small commodity production.

If you look at the experience of the Mondragon Cooperatives in Spain, we can see the steady development, under the pressure of the capitalist market, of class divisions within the cooperatives in the hierarchy of compensation (i.e. wages) between the managers and the workers, and between

skilled and unskilled. We also see the recent development of the Cooperatives opening up plants in the Third World where the workers are not co-op members, but wage slaves being exploited by the co-ops (see the last two issues of the *Libertarian Labor Review*). Similar developments have been occurring in the Israeli Kibbutz movement. Even within the small U.S. co-op sector, many co-ops hire temporary wage labor at busy times.

These developments are inevitable, in my opinion, because the capitalist economy operates by certain laws of development that require capitalists to maximize profits. Collectivizing a business does not get rid of those economic constructs. Sure, a collective would eliminate parasitic management to keep production costs down, whereas a corporation or individually owned business often eliminates useful workers. The object, however, is still the same – to improve the profit margin, not to meet social needs.

The IWW was set up to fight the capitalists. Neill and Adams want to avoid this conflict. They're looking to make an end run around capital and the state. When we declare in our Preamble "By organizing industrially we are forming a new society within the shell of the old" we have in mind a fighting industrial organization that could

take over and run the means of production which have been created by generations of working people. Of course this is hard. That is why it is called a struggle.

We must continue to inscribe on our banner the revolutionary watchword "Abolish the Wage System," not "Avoid the Class Struggle."

Mike Hargis

## Language & Sexism

In the Readers' Soapbox last issue, Gerald Umansky raised the point of the term "Fellow Worker." I agree with Jon that the correct usage of the word means as he said and does not exclude women. But on the other hand, common language does include meanings that are not found in dictionaries. And within common language fellow can mean a man. For that reason I, when writing or talking, say Sisters and Fellow Workers. I do this because I wish to make it clear that I'm talking to both women and men.

One of the struggles of the oppressed is over language. I strongly believe that we must change this and seize control of our language and make sure that our meaning is well understood. That means that we should care more about the meaning of words in common language than the meaning in the ruling class' "correct" language.

Arthur J. Miller

# I.W.W. DIRECTORY

Job Branch= 5 or more members in workplace  
GMB=General Membership Branch  
IU=Industrial Union Del=Delegate  
GOC=Organizing Committee.

IU 330: Building Construction Workers  
IU 450: Print & Publishing House Workers  
IU 460: Food Processing Workers  
IU 510: Marine Transport Workers  
IU 610: Health Service Workers  
IU 620: Education Workers  
IU 630: Entertainment Workers  
IU 660: General Distribution Workers  
IU 670: Public Service Workers

## Industrial Worker

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IU670 Ann Arbor Tenants Union Job Shop– 4001 Michigan Union, Ann Arbor 48109. 313/763-6876.

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Madison GMB– c/Lakeside Del: Jerry Chernow

### WYOMING

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## Wobs turn away business from Borders Books in Atlanta

With 600 handbills, four placards and six Wobblies we covered two of the three entrances to the Borders Books in Atlanta, Georgia, for the post-church rush Sunday, June 15th. We maintained the informational picket for more than two hours without any police harassment. We encouraged shoppers' solidarity with Miriam Fried who was fired a year ago from the Philadelphia store.

The Peachtree street crew didn't meet with much success as people were focused on moving quickly in and out of the traffic on the ten lane state highway. But traffic coming off of Roxbury Road moved at more of a human pace. We met open windows with shared literature and invitations to join the boycott.

The South has a reputation for being anti-union. But we found folks open to what we were there to say. Perhaps a third to a half of the cars moving through that entrance were receptive. The response among those who took our handbills ranged from a couple of folks who applauded Borders for union-busting to a majority of people who were interested or concerned to the dozen or so workers who drove in, picked up their flyers, circled the parking lot as they read and drove back out again without parking or making a purchase. We were able to refer folks who asked to a great community-based feminist bookstore that could use their business.

We enjoyed the time, caught some rays (or a sunburn) and discussed mounting a regular presence at the bookstore. As we were packing up to leave, a manager from inside the store came out and asked for a copy of our literature. We gave her one of *everything and she went back in without saying another word.*

— X345702

## IWW Regional Meeting in England

There will be a meeting of the IWW Regional Organising Committee on 6 and 7 September at the Secular Hall, 75 Humberstone Gate, Leicester UK.

The meeting will be used to establish a Regional Organising Committee on a formal basis, agree on terms for securing a charter from the General Executive Board, and discuss how the IWW can grow in Europe.

All IWW members are invited.

Items for the Agenda should be sent to: Fred Lee, coordinator, 75 Humberstone Gate, Leicester LE1 1WB by 16 August

## Around Our Union

### Hitting Borders in Wichita, Kansas

"I didn't know there was a Wichita IWW anymore, not since the Sixties," said a middle-aged man wearing a "Union Yes!" t-shirt. "Now you know," I replied. "I guess we'll have to go to Barnes & Noble instead," he said to his companion, who heartily agreed.

June 15th saw the public return of the Wichita IWW. I wore a red sandwich board. The front panel read, in giant black letters, "Boycott Union-Busting Borders." The back panel featured my free-hand rendition of the OBU's logo. Beneath it were the words "One Big Union." I passed out leaflets with a photo of Miriam Fried and information about the dispute.

I arrived at Wichita's Borders just after 2 p.m. Within half an hour about 50 people took my leaflet, and four decided not to enter the store. At 2:35 two neatly dressed men who did not introduce themselves gave me some helpful tactical advice. They politely told me that I was on private property and would have to move beyond the lease line. "Where's that?" "The sidewalk." "But if I stand on the sidewalk," I pointed out, "everybody on Rock Road will see my sign." "Well then, it's great publicity for your cause," said the taller man, whom I assume is the manager.

And so it was. The five-lane street was full of cars and the cars were full of people.

Forty-five minutes later I returned to the storefront and gave out more leaflets. Within minutes the two men were back, a little less polite than before. I had to leave to keep an appointment, but my car wouldn't start. The manager seemed less than eager to help out, so I was forced to hang around (picketing, of course) for a few more hours until I was rescued.

I'm sure thousands of people saw my sign and now know there's a union boycott against Borders. And I'll be back, after all, I still have lots of leaflets to give away.

— Curtis Bryant, Wichita



Protestors briefly occupied the Boston Borders June 15th, banging drums and chanting as they marched up the escalator to the book floor.

### Capital District IWW in Borders, IU 450 Work

Capital District IWW observed the one year anniversary of Miriam Fried's illegal firing with a lively picket at Borders' Albany area location June 16th. A dozen supporters kept car horns honking, leaflets circulated and alerted customers to the boycott of the corporate bookseller. Local Wobblies received support from Albany's Catholic Worker community at Emmaus House, and the solidarity of several other unionists, including the APWU.

A press release urged supporters to wear the union's red and black colors, symbols of "the blood of all peoples, with black and darkness" of still too common struggles against repressive control like Borders' union busting tactics.

Borders management tried to prevent picketers from standing in their entrance, but stalwarts like FW Jack Beadle refused to move. "I told him this was where I was staying," Beadle said, insisting that the entrance adjacent to the roadway was, in fact, a continuance of the public sidewalk. The Borders manager stomped back into the store frustrated in his attempt to squelch a little union militancy. And Borders officials just don't seem to enjoy the idea of a police cruiser stationed in front of the store. Image is everything, after all, at Borders.

Capital District IWW also contributed funds to help defray FW Nick Patti's travel expenses to the march on Detroit, June 20-21. Patti, also a member of the National Writers Union, has also been involved in strike support of the now locked out workers of the *Detroit News* and *Free Press* since the early stages of the struggle against corporate media conglomerate Gannett.

Wobs in Albany also welcomed Utah Phillips to the area for his appearance at the annual Old Songs Festival. Phillips and IWW members produced a labor songs workshop for an enthusiastic audience, assisted by union musicians and storytellers.

The IU 450 campaign to charter the I.W.W.'s industrial union for writers and other publishing industry workers is close to securing the necessary 25 members for charter sanction. If you or anyone you know is interested in a new opportunity to organize against increased corporate dominance and exploitation of workers in print media, please contact Capital District IWW.

### In November We Remember

Greeting ads for our November memorial issue are due no later than October 3. Standard rates apply: \$5/inch for non-commercial notices by Wobs, \$10 otherwise.

### Unions give "OK" to shop at union-busting store?

Imagine the surprise of Philadelphia GMB members who opened the *City Paper*, a free weekly, to find an article titled "Bye-Bye, Borders Boycott" on page 8 of the July 11th issue. Once again the UFCW is working its backwards magic for workers' rights, this time by selling out the only effective means of bringing attention to union busting at Borders: the national boycott of the chain launched by the IWW.

The article describes the UFCW's current strategy for organizing. Give Borders more spending money to fund its anti-union campaign by telling UFCW members and the public that the boycott is off. Then UFCW unionists who buy from the store can "encourage" Borders employees (who will never see a real share in the profit from the sale) to form a union. Sound improbable? *The City Paper* quotes Wendell Young, III, CEO of UFCW Local 1776 saying, "We don't and haven't had a boycott... If our members go in the store to purchase anything, they're encouraged to encourage the workers to organize."

In her July 12th letter to the editor of *City Paper*, Miriam Fried, the IWW organizer whose wrongful firing by Borders sparked the boycott, points out the Young is being forgetful. "Back when this controversy was generating lots of good press for supportive labor leaders," she writes, "his union not only publicly supported the boycott on the radio, in a flyer, and in the UFCW newsletter, it tried to claim credit for the IWW's picket lines."

Rather than suggest Miriam or any IWW member in Philadelphia actively betray the boycott, the UFCW enlisted the support of Thomas Paine Cronin, president of AFSCME District Council 47, to get the ball rolling. Cronin wrote a letter to the *City Paper* which the July 11th article quotes, where he claimed, "we have seen great progress in our longer-term objective of a unionized Borders."

In her letter of July 12th Miriam refutes this claim, pointing out that "Borders has yet to sign a single union contract—not even at their Chicago store, where negotiations have been dragging on for nine months. In fact, Borders is still spending millions of dollars to retain a notorious union-busting law firm while attempting to manipulate and intimidate their own employees with anti-union smear campaigns." She also

*continued on page 10*

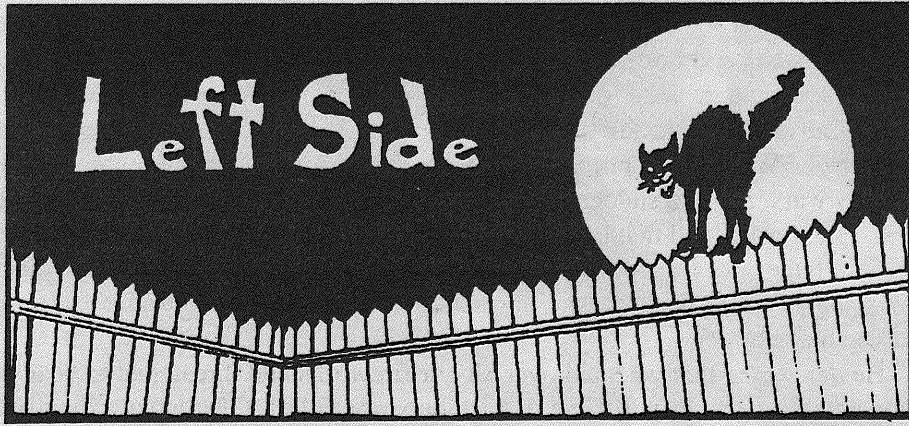
## PREAMBLE TO THE IWW CONSTITUTION

**The working class and the employing class have nothing in common.** There can be no peace so long as hunger and want are found among millions of the working people and the few, who make up the employing class, have all the good things of life. **Between these two classes** a struggle must go on until the workers of the world organize as a class, take possession of the means of production, abolish the wage system, and live in harmony with the Earth.

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

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

**Instead of the conservative motto,** "A fair day's wage for a fair day's work," we must inscribe on our banner the revolutionary watchword, "Abolition of the wage system." **It is the historic mission of the working class to do away with capitalism.** The army of production must be organized, not only for everyday struggle with the capitalists, but also to carry on production when capitalism shall have been overthrown. By organizing industrially we are forming the structure of the new society within the shell of the old.



I used to be under the assumption that only poor, underpaid working-stiffs of my own class were thin-skinned – you know, the kind who are short-tempered and are prone to get into barroom brawls – but it looks like there are the touchy ones among our betters as well.

This past April, the Art Commission of New York City approved a small plaque on an entrance marker to the children's zoo in Central Park acknowledging with gratitude the three million dollar gift of "philanthropists" Edith and Henry Everett for their donation towards renovation of the facility.

The Everetts, upon seeing the plaque, complained that it was too small and thus took back their generous donation and the Hell with the little children. Had your humble scribe been on that Art Commission, I would have insisted upon making a larger plaque, one large enough to accommodate the following words: "and most of all we thank the myriads of employees whose short-changed wages made the Everett's generosity possible."

It was Big Bill Haywood who stated that for every dollar that the rich man had and did not work for, some worker worked for a dollar they never got. Some years back the IWW here in Chicago put on an exhibition of the art work of one of our crusty old war-horses, who had been doing his cartooning since he was a kid in the last century. Among his original art work there were many photo-engraved plates made of his cartoons, facilitating the printing of an exhibition catalog. On the credit page of this catalog was proudly printed the following message:

This exhibition has been organized, curated and FUNDED by wage-workers rather than indirectly funded from workers' unpaid wages via governmental or private foundation "grants"!

All great institutions that receive funding or endowments are in reality built on the sweat of workers contributing wages that they never get to see. Ironically, these institutions of culture for the most part are only open when most workers are on the job. When the working-stiff is through with his daily grind these institutions of cultural advancement are securely locked up for the night, so where else can the stiff go but to the corner tavern or some overpriced sporting event?

Of course, now there are many working-stiffs who have more spare time on their hands than they bargained for, but all these unlifting institutions have established some hefty admission prices. A five to seven dollar admission can better be spent buying pork chops for one's family, so don't blame the working-stiff for putting culture on the back burner.

By no means is your scribe knocking the arts. On the contrary, he would like nothing better than to see his own class becoming mire involved in creativity. Such is what has sustained his class through centuries of chattel slavery, serfdom and recent wage slavery. Such is the very creativity that has inspired composers of classical music as well as innovators in the visual and spoken arts. The creative arts, be they visual or non-visual, are a great stimulant to the imagination. Not only that, but the arts also instill a desire for quality in life. If there is quality in one's personal tastes, there will be resultant striving for quality in one's life.

Ah, but there is the rub! Quality in one's personal life naturally would include a better standard of living, a shorter work day, more spare time, and a say in what one is producing. It does not take much imagination to figure out why our masters keep all the quality entertainment safely locked up in their own bailiwicks while we working-stiffs are left with the boob tube and the pampered sports heroes.

If voting changed anything they would make it illegal.

— C.C. Redcloud

## Papers For All Campaign

The San Francisco GMB has endorsed the "Papers For All" campaign, calling for a general amnesty for all immigrants, and is circulating the following petition.

"Whereas, the lack of documents for immigrant workers is a hinderance to enjoyment of a decent life, producing a situation where employers violate work laws at will and force their workers to labor for low wages, long hours and under deplorable conditions;

"These abuses result in the utilization of undocumented workers as a weapon by unscrupulous employers in order to lower wages for all workers, forcing them to compete among themselves and thus fostering racial divisions;

"Under these conditions that means that millions of immigrants are objects of persecution, discrimination, and hatred, a situa-

tion that means millions of men, women, and children are prisoners in virtual apartheid system in the World, a violation of the most basic human and civil rights;

"Under current conditions immigrant youths have no access to institutions of higher education, and thus are faced with a lack of education or work alternatives;

"Thousands of immigrants are under threat of deportation because they were not able to obtain permanent residence, and their work permits have expired;

"We demand that there be a *general amnesty for all immigrants* so that they may have access to decent employment and higher education."

**SUPPORT THE  
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Give to the Sustaining Fund

## Organize the Job Corps

As I was putting last month's issue together amidst more than the usual distractions, FW Alexis Buss was in town for a conference. We were chatting one evening when she got a call from some young workers at the Keystone Job Corps Center, in northeastern Pennsylvania. They had gotten fed up with conditions, decided to organize a union, found the IWW on the internet, and now wanted to join up and get their drive under way.

They talked for quite a while, and arranged to meet as soon as she got back from marching in Detroit. I've been down to Keystone a couple times myself in the last couple of weeks, and the conditions are truly deplorable.

The bosses know it, and they are definitely afraid. These young workers are searched for union literature every time they enter the center (where they live and work), are not allowed to meet with union organizers, and are closely monitored by security. They live under the constant threat of being thrown not only out of their jobs, but out of their homes as well. It's like the company towns of old, except that few of those had the audacity to physically search workers to keep the union out. I'd compare it to prison, but I know from experience that it's a lot easier to get literature into prison...

It must be admitted that this intimidation and harassment makes it more difficult to organize. Some Job Corps workers are understandably afraid to discuss the union. Rumors fly around the camp about management plans to attack union supporters, rumors the boss probably welcomes. We have dozens of membership applications/author-

ization cards in hand, but with the bosses seizing every card they see it cramps our style a bit.

But people being prepared for a life on the bottom of the barrel don't necessarily have a whole lot to lose. Some people are scared, yes, but many are determined to forge ahead. And we'll be wobbling along with them, just as long as they continue the fight for dignity, for better conditions, for a say in their lives.



MTC is evidently used to dealing only with people whom it can order around. But Wobblies were never very good at taking orders, and seeing these petty tyrants in action doesn't inspire me to change course...

## Action Motown '97

This struggle won't be easy, but we're going to make the fight. It's a lot easier, of course, to look out over a crowd of 15 to 20,000 people (a lot of marchers sensibly fled before the speakers got going) and claim you see 100,000, as the AFL picards did in Detroit a few weeks back. That kind of "counting" is a lot easier than doing the work of actually mobilizing workers to show up, or organizing picket lines to shut down the scab papers, or taking on the bosses...

Fightin' John Sweeney told the crowd he was getting set to take on the newspaper bosses – any time now. A fighting AFL-CIO, now that would be a sight to see...

## Grave robbers threaten Wobblies with arrest

Centralia Union Mural Committee Bill Henry has threatened to have IWW delegate Jess Grant arrested and is circulating libelous letters accusing FW Grant of embezzlement. Henry has also sent a threatening letter including racist slurs to IWW delegate Arthur Miller (calling him an "old squaw"), and threatened to have FW Miller arrested on trespass charges if he attends future meetings. Henry and Mike Alewitz, who the bureaucrats chose to paint the mural commemorating the IWW's martyrs, are falsely claiming the Committee voted to exclude the IWW from the project, even though Henry's motion to this effect was defeated at the sub-committee meeting he presented it to.

IWW participants in the project have been subjected to months of abuse for their efforts to insist that the committee accurately portray the history of the Centralia Massacre. Committee members insisted that fliers for a mural benefit not refer to the actual events but rather portray a picnic. What happened in Centralia in 1919 was no picnic. Non-IWW members hostile to the IWW have been designated to speak on the IWW. While these labor fakers wish to commemorate our past, they have no tolerance for actual, breathing Wobblies.

FWs Grant and Miller have resigned from the Centralia Union Mural Committee, as they are not willing to serve as mere decoration while these grave robbers attempt to hijack our union's heritage. There is now no official IWW connection to this project.

Letters demanding that the threats of arrest be withdrawn can be sent to the Centralia Union Mural Project, c/o TESC Labor Education Center, Olympia WA 98505. (It should be noted that the Labor Center has co-sponsored programs with the IWW in the past; Director and Mural Committee Co-Chair Helen Lee insists that she is

sympathetic to the IWW and claims to have no knowledge of the threats against the IWW's representatives.)

*Excerpts from FW Grant's July 7 open letter follow:*

"After much soul-searching, I have decided to resign from the Centralia Union Mural Committee. Please remove my name from the committee's letterhead. I can no longer waste my time on a project which shows such disrespect for the very union it purports to honor...."

"The IWW is more than happy to share its militant legacy with the rest of the labor movement so long as our message, past and present, comes through. But if we suspect our heritage is being hijacked in the service of political parties, liberal reform, or, worse, capitalist profiteering (whiffs of all three pervade this project), you can expect a fair amount of outrage from at least *this* Wobbly."

"Subtle at first, more blatant as the months went by, the exclusion took many forms. To be fair, it wasn't just the IWW that was excluded – *all* community members were relegated to the secondary role of fundraising by the project's key players. Cooked up by a small group of Labor Party advocates in the Fall of '96, the project was only opened to public input after all the key decisions were already made. You attempted to silence the IWW by demanding that the poster for the Chehalis benefit be stripped of any potentially 'offensive' images or rhetoric, diluting our message of revolutionary syndicalism beyond all recognition. You ridiculed our slogan "abolish the wage system" at a public event we sponsored, even though the phrase is a direct quote from the IWW Preamble. It remains a mystery to me why a group of people who are so threatened by what the IWW stands for (the abolition of capitalism through direct action in the workplace) have chosen to honor our history."

## Fighting Picards

Meanwhile UFCW Secretary-Treasurer Joe Talarico and his brother are fighting charges that they stole \$111,000 from UFCW Local 1. In 1994, President William Wynn was forced to repay the UFCW over a million dollars he had pocketed. That same year, a UFCW employee was charged with embezzling more than \$1.7 million. In 1993 UFCW Veep Gary Duckett was found floating in the Potomac River with a bullet in his head after fleeing FBI agents trying to bust him for bank robbery. And in 1992 UFCW Vice President Leo Cinaglia pled guilty to taking bribes from an employer.

The UFCW pays 23 officers more than \$3.5 million a year, even as 400,000 members work for little more than minimum wage. A dues-collecting machine it's in fighting trim, but is it a union?

## Privatizing the Unions

The July *Labor Notes* has an interesting article on the horde of private consultants taking charge of union affairs. It seems that Teamsters President Ron Carey turned his campaign over to one such firm, which then arranged an embezzlement and kickback scheme to fatten their coffers.

High-priced consultants edit "labor" magazines, organize "labor" conventions, run public relations campaigns, and persuade the picards to send ever more of the workers' hard-earned dues money their way.

We don't have these leeches in the IWW. We can't afford them, and we wouldn't let them in the door if we could.

Instead, we rely on our members to organize, to get out the word, and to produce this paper. Can we count on your support?

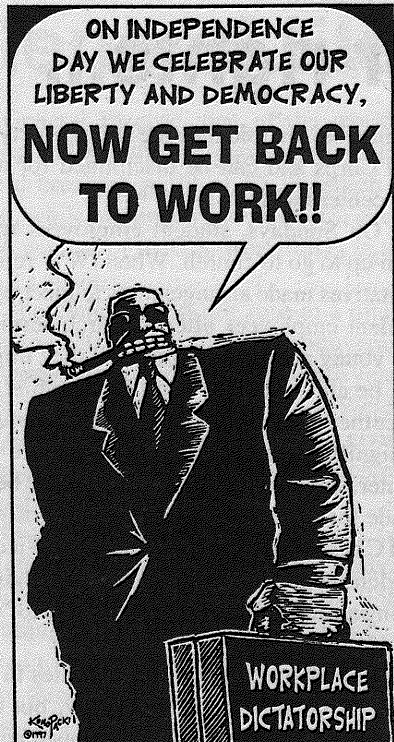
— Jon Bekken

**“The rumors were true. The Committee was undemocratic; the Chair was a tyrant; and the IWW was being prevented from participating in a project about its own history.”**

“The exclusion finally became overt at the last Committee meeting. About ten Wobblies showed up from as far away as Eugene and Seattle, all of them genuinely concerned about the reports they'd been hearing. They were there not to “pack the meeting,” but to find out for themselves if the stories were true. The Chair's refusal to accept a motion that would've prohibited the exclusion of *anyone* from the Committee; his abusive personal demeanor; his insistence that the Committee had no decision-making process and that none was needed; and his abrupt departure from the meeting itself; all colluded to convince my fellow union members that the rumors *were* true. The Committee was undemocratic; the Chair was a tyrant; and the IWW was being prevented from participating in a project about its own history.

“Now it appears that the meetings have been abandoned altogether. The pretense at legitimacy which the Committee structure once offered has apparently become too unwieldy for those determined to control the project's outcome. ... Perhaps the mural will be a glorious representation of the IWW's role in Washington labor history, just as planned — Alewitz is unarguably a talented artist. If so, the IWW will be at the unveiling...”

“Yet the poor process which has driven us from the Committee casts a shadow over the project. A Centralia Mural Project which fails to win the support and participation of the IWW is a project devoid of moral or historical legitimacy. You may proceed without us, relieved, even, that we've dropped out. You may convince the public that this mural accurately represents labor's



## Workfare workers organize

In San Francisco, workfare recipients have unionized to demand better treatment. Recipients put in 14 to 16 hours a week in return for \$345 a month in public benefits, working alongside unionized city workers paid \$14 to \$17 an hour for the same work. Municipal unions are supporting the new union, though the city has thus far refused to recognize it.

## St. Elsewhere

Because of changes in hospital staffing patterns, two of five nurses would not recommend their own hospitals to family members, according to a survey of 7,500 nurses by the *American Journal of Nursing*.

version of what happened in 1919. But none of that absolves you of asking the toughest question — what could have been done to include the IWW in this project? ...

“Jess Grant”

*Fellow Worker Miller's letter opens by noting that Labor Party members on the Mural Committee have rebuffed all efforts to mediate the dispute:*

“...I am tired of dealing with two-bit dictators, with racists and liars. I stood up for the idea that if they were going to use IWW history, then the IWW should be included among the speakers, and I made a motion to that. The co-dictator refused to let the members of the project vote on that and he threatens to have me arrested if I show up for any more meetings. I will not help legitimize this project any more...”

“We have faced the attitude of the union bosses many times. People like Bill Henry fear the message of the IWW because if working people hear it they would learn that they don't need parasites like him feeding upon them. As for the Marxist-Leninist political bosses... Alewitz's bullshit about the IWW giving rise to the Communist Party is so full of it that if placed in a garden it would make very good fertilizer. How can one say that an organization ... which sought to have the working class controlled by a small elite and also sought to actively destroy the IWW came out of the Wobbly tradition? ...

“Because we have pulled out of the mural project does not mean we back off from Alewitz's challenge to ‘debate the issues.’ Also it does not mean that further attacks upon the IWW and its members will go unanswered...”

“I wish to thank Jess Grant, the Wobblies from Seattle, Portland and Eugene, and all the other Wobblies across the country who have stood in solidarity. And I also wish to thank the members of the project who did show the IWW some respect. And to the dictators, the day will come when working people will ‘dump the bosses off our backs,’ and you have shown which side of the class struggle you are on — that of the parasites.”

“Arthur J. Miller”

## Wobs Assaulted by Police! Well...

It was a dark and stormy night. Actually it was pretty clear and calm, the 4th of July, time to celebrate the first American revolution. (Later for the second.) FWs Deke Nihilson, Jeff Ditz and I were just standing there minding our own business in front of FWs Mark Kaufmann and Carol Landry's house, talking about past Wobbly wars. All of a sudden we were blinded by the beacon from a police car. Well, OK it wasn't all that bright.

Four huge cops leaped from a patrol car and ran toward us, truncheons raised menacingly. Well, OK, it was one cop a little shorter than me who walked up to us, club on his belt.

He *demand*ed that we hand over all our fireworks and threatened to beat our butts and throw us in jail if we didn't cooperate. Well, OK, actually he asked politely (a sure sign of my aging) if the fireworks atop a car in the driveway were ours. The scene sounded and looked like I'd imagine on an active battleground as stuff was going off all over the neighborhood. The cop said “As you can see we've got our work cut out for us tonight.

Do you know who owns those fireworks?” Obviously we were being singled out for harassment because of our political affiliations. Well, I suppose the fact that the fireworks were being launched from the middle of a fairly well traveled street might have had something to do with it.

When we denied ownership, he asked if we knew who did own them. We stood up to this verbal abuse, arms locked, repeating only that they weren't ours as if it were a name-rank-serial number mantra. We were Wobblies! We weren't going to buckle under this harassment. Strains of “Solidarity Forever” could be heard wafting in the background.

The real culprits had split, one with a license to practice law going over a backyard fence cuz the legal system frowns on lawyers breaking the law. We had been through a long argument earlier with the other, the owner of the fireworks. He's a libertarian who won't accept the label. I was tempted to turn him in. But I do hate it when cops act like they expect you to narc. So I struck a tight-lipped and defiant pose.

Finally FW Ditz broke the impasse by asking the cop “What do you really need?” “I need to confiscate the fireworks.” We told him to be our guest. Served that libertarian right. “Actually I only need to take those which can be launched,” he said, admitting his intention to engage in a flagrant abuse of power until he was beaten back by our militance. “But it looks like that includes all of them.”

He retreated to his car, cowering in the face of our defiance, fireworks in arms, moving on to abuse other citizens less courageous than *The Wobblies*. Once again we had held the fort and won the day. But seriously...

The above is from Chapter 2076 of my “Memoirs of a rather Wobbly Revolutionary.” Chapter 2077 will deal with a slightly more serious affront to civil liberties and the right to organize, the drive now under way at the Job Corps Training Center in Drums, Pennsylvania. And the smiles turn to scowls of outrage. FW Matt Wilson has been expelled from the Job Corps for attempting to organize a union. FW Joe Marra is on 15 days restriction for the same offense.

Having taken on a major corporation (Borders) and a major union (UFCW) over the past year, it only makes sense that our next target should be a major department (Job Corps is under the Department of Labor) of a major government (USA). The harassment and abuses faced by the Fellow Workers at Drums are detailed elsewhere in this issue. Because he had nowhere else to go after his expulsion, Matt is presently being housed by FW Alexis Buss in Philly. Donations to offset her expenses on this and other costs of the drive can be directed to the Philly GMB address in the directory.

The civil liberties violations being carried out by agents of the Clinton administration toward the Job Corps student workers boggle the mind. Government propaganda would have us believe that the Job Corps exists to help working class folks from 16-24 find jobs. But the training is for dead-end positions such as security guards and secretaries. It looks like a program to allow Clinton to pretend he's doing something for the working class while passing along \$1.5 billion a year to the corporations which run the centers. Management Training Corp. of Ogden, Utah, which runs the Drums Center also runs several privatized prisons around the U.S. And judging from the behavior of their representatives at Drums, they only have the prison model for how to run an institution.

Media coverage and pressure on the Job Corps and the Department of Labor have only just begun. It's a labor intensive drive. If any Wobs are free to travel, Philly can probably use your help. Give them a call. Those with vehicles are especially needed, as the Drums center is two hours from Philly.

A couple of young dedicated Wobs have put their futures on the line for the IWW. Time to kick out the jams to support them. As I've heard somewhere once or twice, an injury to one is an injury to all!

See you on the picket line at a Job Corps center soon.

— Fred Chase, General Secretary-Treasurer

## Industrial Worker Sustaining Fund

Robert Reynolds, Lynn MA	\$10
Kathryn Ann Meetz, Torrington CT	10
John Peddi, Kilkenny SA, Australia	5
Warren Burnett, League City TX	1,000

## Utah Phillips Solidarity Fund

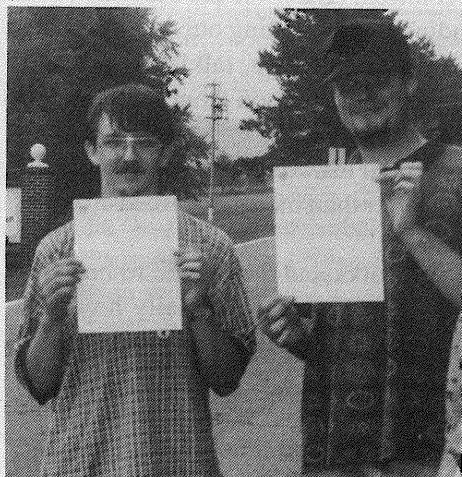
Steve Eabry, San Luis Obispo CA \$10

## Charlie Sato Fund

Steve Eabry, San Luis Obispo CA \$10

Many thanks, fellow workers, for your generous support.

# Job Corps workers fight for rights...



IWW members Joe Marra (left) and Matt Wilson holding their suspension papers across the street from the Keystone Job Corps Center after being evicted.

continued from page 1

facilities (jails) all over the United States. MTC was founded in December 1980. Before that, it was the Education and Training Division of Thiokol Corporation, a major defense contractor.

The former cannon builders are now cultivating cannon fodder by ensuring that these young people never rise up from desperate circumstances. MTC sets up special relationships with other companies, and herds its Job Corps student employees into jobs which will never lead to the kind of life that MTC management enjoys from the money they rake in on their government contracts.

The Spring 1997 issue of *Job Corps In Action* reports on one such relationship between the MTC-managed Springdale Center in Troutdale, Oregon, and the Red Lion Hotels and Inns chain. Student employees are assigned to work for the hotel for free. "By the end of the third level of linkage, the apprentice will have documented the dictated 500 hours of probation and be fully 'indentured' to the Red Lion. This association is intended to continue long after the student's termination from Job Corps."

Student employees of Job Corps are being "indentured" by their own caretakers, with the permission of the U.S. government,

and funneled directly into low-paying, highly competitive jobs in notoriously unstable industries.

## Welcome to the Keystone Job Corps Center

Keystone is the third largest Job Corps Center. With a capacity to manage 720 student employees, MTC also employs more than 300 staff members as residential advisors, janitors, teachers and security. Residential advisors of the Keystone Center recently voted 40-11 to affiliate with SEIU Local 668, and teachers are currently in a campaign.

Student employees of the Keystone Center are told when they are recruited that they will receive benefits worth \$26,000 a year per person in the program. But after charges for housing, food, education and job training, they are left with \$10 to \$18 in cash every week for spending money. If \$26,000 per year was simply handed to most young people, with a little help they could rent a rather large apartment, send themselves to school, eat well, buy a car and insurance and still have more left over than \$10 a week. Student employees are even expected to buy their own shampoo, soap, toothpaste, etc., from the canteen, the Job Corps' version of a company store, complete with inflated prices.

MTC heavily restricts the comings and goings of student employees, cutting them off from direct communication with the outside world. Student employees are not allowed to leave the center on their own until they have attained "level 3," which means a certain number of center work hours and recreation hours have been completed. Day passes are only given for Fridays, Saturdays or Sundays, and may be denied if there are no management people on center available to authorize the pass. Unless the student employee has reached "level 5" they must be picked up at the Center by a family member or friend, and even at "level 5" the student employee must leave in an automobile (they can pay for a taxi if they like) but are forbidden to leave the Center on foot. While off center, student

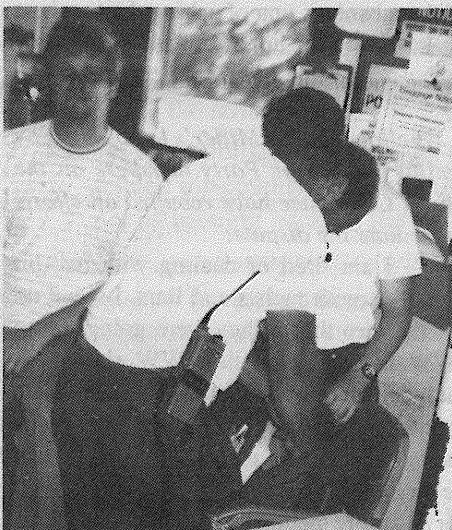
employees are told they are still property of Job Corps and can be disciplined for any off-center incidents.

On Sundays, student employees may sign up to go to church. When IWW representatives made arrangements to meet with student employees after a church service, the young people were told that they might not be allowed to go back to church at all once they got back to Keystone. Even though a significant number of Muslims are on center, accommodations have never been made for them to regularly attend mosque. MTC has confiscated materials from Wiccan students who wish to practice their religion, citing an alleged ban on items related to "the occult."

Recruiters promise opportunities to go to Pennsylvania State University, but the Penn State program was discontinued without a clear indication as to why. People in the college program now attend Luzerne Community College.

The young people at the Keystone Center are told in their handbook that they are considered employees of the federal government for the purposes of certain benefits, including health care. But the MTC-managed infirmary is extremely poorly run to the point of endangering the lives of its patients.

When a young woman named Mulu became ill with a 104 degree fever, she was given only Motrin and water for days before she was finally sent to the hospital after a residential advisor intervened. Mulu's friends and dorm mates wrote over twenty separate statements to let the union and the public know how MTC runs its infirmary.



A Keystone security guard searches Joe Marra's bag for union authorization cards and literature while Matt Wilson waits. Hundreds of pieces of union literature have been seized.

Everyone who saw Mulu sick, with the exception of the infirmary, realized the seriousness of the situation. "Mulu was so hot, and she couldn't see who was talking to her," one statement notes. "She was not eating or drinking and when she did she threw it up. She was dehydrating and had high fevers ... she had strong headaches ... causing her to go blind and causing her to have temporary amnesia, she could barely walk. She had to be literally carried to the bathroom." Most statements also contained the following sentiments, expressed by two of Mulu's friends, "Please help, we can all be sick just like Mulu and we have no one to turn to but water and pain pill" and "get some new infirmary people - they try to kill people."

Mulu was given a "medical termination" which means she is thrown off of the Keystone Center and cannot complete her education or job training with the Job Corps program.

## Organization & Direct Action: The Keys to Freedom

I'VE GOT  
RIGHTS  
YOU  
HAVEN'T  
EVEN  
HEARD  
OF YET



INDUSTRIAL WORKERS OF THE WORLD  
PHILADELPHIA GENERAL MEMBERSHIP BRANCH  
215-724-1925 E-mail: phillyiww@iww.org

## Time to Build the Web Corps

Student employees of the Keystone Job Corps Center started an IWW organizing drive in early June, 1997. Matt Wilson and Joe Marra were inspired by the current drives of the other employees on the campus, and realized immediately that they and their fellow workers had a lot to gain from union organizing.

They found the IWW on the internet, got in touch with an organizer, and started laying the foundation for their campaign. Matt is vice president of the Keystone Center Student Government Association. Joe recently chaired a benefit for United Cerebral Palsy. Both are honor students at Keystone.

On June 26, IWW organizers traveled to Drums to meet Matt and Joe for the first time, sign them up, and give them emergency delegate credentials. Joe was a member for four and a half hours and Matt was a member for one-half hour before the Keystone Job Center put them both on 10 days' suspension pending an investigation. MTC management named union organizing activity as the reason for their suspension, describing it as "riotous activity" and "a threat to self or others."

MTC is used to having total, unchecked control over their young employees and will do anything, including breaking the law, to keep the Industrial Workers of the World from holding the Job Corps accountable for promises made. Joe and Matt were told to pack up their belongings, and when they were finished, IWW organizers drove the newly homeless activists to the union's meeting space in Philadelphia.

A federal government van was commissioned by MTC management to help run the union out of town. Security officers loaded the van with the two's possessions and followed the IWW truck to Joe's and Matt's temporary lodging.

At the end of the 10 days' suspension, Matt and Joe were taken back to the Keystone Center by the IWW, having been told that one would be unconditionally reinstated and that the other would face disciplinary proceedings.

Upon their return the two were searched and Keystone security confiscated hundreds of organizing leaflets, IWW authorization cards and union buttons and stickers, declaring them "potential contraband." Other student employees have since been ordered to remove union insignia from their clothing or bags and ordered to surrender their personal copies of union literature.

Matt Wilson was officially fired on July 8 by Center Director June Boswell after a five-and-a-half hour hearing where most of the testimony concerned his union activities and criticisms of the Center's massive violations of student employees' rights.

In another hearing the same day, union activist Joe Marra was put on 30 days probation and restriction (reduced on appeal to 15 days), ordered to create a positive image of

## You Can Help the Keystone Campaign

Appeals are being pursued to reverse Matt's termination, Joe's discipline, and the many write-ups that have been given to union supporters. Unfair Labor Practice charges are being filed. But we know this is not enough to stop MTC, with the cooperation of the U.S. Department of Labor, from trampling on the rights of these workers.

Department of Labor Offices are located in most U.S. Federal office buildings. Pickets to bring attention to Matt's firing, Joe's discipline, union busting at Keystone general, and the horrible conditions on the center can be organized. Contact IWW General Headquarters at 313-483-3548 for current information and copies of fliers. MTC's headquarters in Ogden, Utah, and regional offices are also good targets to publicly embarrass the company. If you are not able to attend a picket, you can phone or write to complain and let the Department of Labor and MTC know that the IWW will not sit by and watch injustices occur.

Keystone Center should also understand that we are watching their every move and union busting will not be tolerated. Call Center Director June Boswell at 1-800-864-0496 or fax: 717-788-1119 to check in and make sure she has been treating the student employees fairly.

Management and Training Corporation Main Office: Sam Hunter, Executive Vice President, 3293 Harrison Boulevard, Ogden UT 84403 tel.: 801-626-2000 fax.: 801-621-2685 e-mail: jobs@mtctrains.com

MTC Northeast Regional Office: Carol Glasser, Regional Director, 900 Lee Street, Charleston WV 25301-1721 tel.: 304-344-1788 tel.: 304-344-1759

MTC Southeast Regional Office: 229 Peachtree NE Suite 200, Atlanta GA 30305 tel.: 404-522-6810

U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Job Corps: Mary Silva, National Director of Job Corps, 200 Constitution Ave. NW, Washington DC 202-219-8550

This office of the Department of Labor is directly in charge of the Keystone Center: U.S. Department of Labor Office of Job Corps, Region III, 3535 Market Street, Philadelphia PA 19140 Fax: 215-596-5076; James A. Bodnar, Regional Director 215-596-6302; Lynn Intrepidi, Deputy Regional Director 215-596-6315.

# General Electric's Golden Harvest

General Electric, one of the world's largest and wealthiest corporations, made a record-breaking profit of \$7.28 billion in 1996, while eliminating 90,000 jobs, equal to 36 percent of its U.S. work force, in the past 12 years.

The company's profit rose to a mind-boggling \$30,400 per worker! (The average GE worker earns \$30,000 to \$35,000 a year.) GE's chief executive officer, Jack Welch, and other top executives have been giving themselves raises of from 12 to 17 percent annually, after inflation.

Over the last three years, Welch's salary and bonus increased by 16.9 percent each year. His total compensation for 1996, including stock and long-term incentives, soared to an estimated \$30 million. And in those three years, the average GE worker received a measly 1.2 percent annually.

So there was a slight hope that GE would show some appreciation to its 46,000 workers who had helped make those swollen profits possible by their superior productivity over rival competitors. The test came when a 14-union coalition representing those GE workers, began contract talks with company negotiators on May 27. When the bargaining ended on June 30 in a tentative three-year agreement, here is what it contained:

There will be wage increases for each of the three years—3.75 percent for the first and 2.5 percent for each of the two succeeding years. (This averages out to about \$1,000 per worker, per year) In addition, workers will receive a cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) of one cent for each 0.11 percent rise in the Consumer Price Index. If the inflation rate remains the same, the company estimates that COLA payments will add 73 cents an hour to a worker's base rate at the end of three years.)

— Alexis Buss

GE won a substantial give-back in the tentative agreement. Employees under the GE Insurance Plan will have to pay an additional \$150 a year for family coverage and \$50 for individual coverage. Deductibles are also increased, as are hospital co-payments and prescriptions, all of which can amount to several hundred dollars annually per family. The company agreed to some minor improvements in the hearing aid, vision care and dental benefits.

On job security, which was the top union demand, very little of substance was gained. The company made no concessions on outsourcing or relocating plants overseas—two of the company practices which have resulted in the elimination of thousands of jobs. (GE has increased its overseas work force from 56,000 to 84,000 in the past decade.)

The agreement calls for the establishment of Job Preservation Steering Committees at locations with 100 or more bargaining unit employees. These committees will "review job security and productivity matters including job creation opportunities, training for technology changes, potential outsourcing and work practices to increase efficiency."

Another important union demand was for improvements in the pension plan. GE's pension fund assets exceed \$33 billion, with the level of overfunding at \$10 billion. In 1995 alone, the GE Plan collected \$4.9

billion in investments and interest income. Each year, GE workers collectively contribute about \$80 million to the GE Pension Plan. The company has not contributed one cent since 1987.

Last year, the average hourly wage retiree at age 60 with 28 years of service received a basic pension of about \$200 a week.

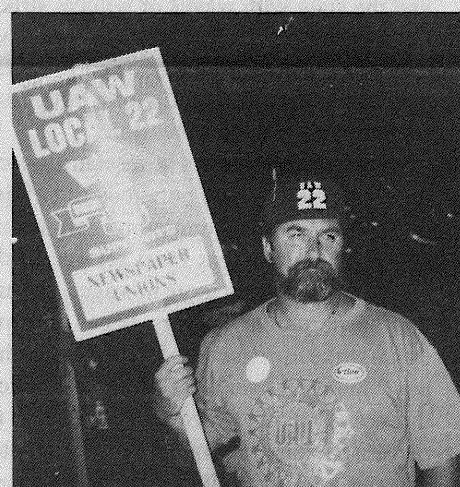
Union negotiators argued that much of the overfunded assets should be used to raise the pensions of retired workers. What the company finally agreed to was an increase of \$2 per month for those who were in a low-wage bracket at the time of retirement, and \$3 a month for the formerly higher-paid workers.

No formal action was taken on GE's plan to operate some of its 140 plants and locations on a 24-hour, 7-day basis, with two 12-hour shifts. However, a side letter between GE and the International Union of Electronic Workers (IUE), the largest of the negotiating unions, allows its locals to consider 12-hour shifts if the company decides on a 24-hour plan of operation. IUE officials claim that this will increase the number of jobs in any plant that adopts the plan.

It is more than likely that the 14 unions will accept the tentative agreement, since the alternative is to strike. None of the unions has made any preparations for a strike.

— Harry Kelber

## 30,000 march for Detroit newspaper strikers



Although the AFL-CIO did not organize picketing of the newspaper plants, Wobblies and other strike supporters set up picket lines at the Riverfront and Sterling Heights plants.

30,000 workers marched through downtown Detroit June 21, the day after NLRB Administrative Law Judge Thomas Wilks, in a 113-page opinion, ordered the *Detroit News* and the *Detroit Free Press* to "reinstate all unfair labor practice strikers to their former positions of ... displacing if necessary any replacement employees." The newspapers plan to appeal, saying they hope to drag the matter out for years to come.

IWW members came to Detroit from throughout the Midwest and East Coast to show their solidarity with the newspaper strikers, essentially abandoned by their unions' decision to rely upon the National Labor Relations Board and the courts, rather than direct action.

Despite official proclamations of victory, 200 Wobblies, Teamsters, United Farm Workers, some striking newspaper workers and other strike supporters picketed the Riverfront printing plant June 20. We slowed two trucks entering the main gate, but were spread too thin to hold the line when the newspapers began using a second gate. A 12-foot tall banner reading "Shut It Down" and a large IWW globe made local televi-

sion news. The next evening, thunderstorms held our numbers down to about 50 people at the North Plant, in Sterling Heights.

Wobblies passing out fliers directing demonstrators to the plant gates were harassed by parade marshalls from the Detroit Metro Central Labor Council, and fliers were taken from the hands of marchers.

At the march 40-50 Wobblies (plus supporters from Anti-Racist Action) stepped out with the Farm Workers. At one point we got mixed in with a large contingent of UAW members. Owen Bieber, past sellout UAW president, almost singlehandedly responsible for the two-tier wage contracts of the '80s, wound up in front of an IWW "We Never Forget" banner!

At the rally, AFL-CIO President John J. Sweeney told the crowd that the message for Gannett Corp., Knight-Ridder and their stockholders and boards of directors was: "We give fair warning. This fight is now our fight and now you will pay the price."

Sweeney did not explain why it took the AFL-CIO two years to make this fight "their" fight, or what measures the AFL intends to take to win the strike — other than to call for prayers for the striking/locked-out workers.

The interminable array of union bureaucrats who followed offered little more in the way of either promises of concrete solidarity or inspiring rhetoric, and people began streaming out of the rally site.

More than 1,500 workers are locked-out, while slightly more than 200 have been returned to their jobs since the unions surrendered last February.

### Dominican General Strike

A two-day general strike in the Dominican Republic forced the state to negotiate over the availability and affordability of basic goods and services July 9. Police murdered at least one striker and wounded at least 15 others. Strikers demanded a new hospital, airport, sports facilities and schools. The workers also demand affordable food and funding for local agriculture.

JOB  
CORPS  
NEEDS A  
UNION



INDUSTRIAL WORKERS OF THE WORLD  
PHILADELPHIA GENERAL MEMBERSHIP BRANCH  
15-724-1925 E-mail: phillyiww@iww.org

and the Keystone Center, prohibiting distributing union literature, and that he would be disciplined if other supporters continued organizing even if he was not present. Management Corporation officials, who were the center for the U.S. Department of Labor, also told Marra they would close the Keystone center if union activities were not permitted to proceed.

Organizers were not permitted to attend her hearing, and Joe and Matt were charged with specific charges in addition to their hearings so that they could mount a defense. An appeal of Matt's termination in the works and organizing is ongoing. The campaign has received extensive coverage in three local newspapers and is drawing growing support from the community.

Employees at the Keystone Job Center are determined to stand up for their rights, and the IWW will stand with every step of the way.

## Gannett/Burlington Free Press Picket

50 protestors rallied outside the Vermont Free Press Building in support of the locked-out newspaper workers in Detroit. The *Burlington Free Press* is owned by Gannett, one of the corporate criminals responsible for the dispute in Detroit — a blatant attempt to break the newspaper unions there. The picket in Burlington was quite spirited, due to the growing awareness in Vermont of class and labor issues, as well as indignation at the contemptible corporate outlaws such as Gannett. The rally transformed into a spontaneous march around the downtown area, carrying a message to a larger audience, disrupting traffic and irritating the Burlington police. Marchers chanted "No more union busting" and "Corporate greed has got to go" as well as encouraging local residents to join the "Boycott the Free Press." At the Free Press, many speakers addressed the crowd and the media. Among them were several I.W.W. members, who were involved in organizing the event. "We're here for three reasons," Fellow Worker Bob Heald told a local radio station. "To show our solidarity with our sisters and brothers in Detroit, ... to tell Gannett that the people of Vermont are disgusted with its anti-worker practices. But we're here because what's happening in Detroit is really an example of what employers are doing all over this country — including in Vermont. Workers need to get together and stand up against this."

Workers Anne Peterman and Angelina told the crowd about the criminal activity of Gannett's corporate practices. In addition to union-busting (and extremist organizing, pro-corporate editorial policies including outright censorship), the largest newspaper chain is buying

newsprint from a multinational paper company whose logging operations are devastating native land in Alberta, Canada. FW John Baver told people about development plans to bring union-busting Borders Books to town. He spoke about Miriam Fried, Borders' anti-worker posture and about local efforts to prevent the chain from locating a store just up the street from the rally site.

The successful event ended with a second rowdy march, again against the wishes of the cops. Burlington's finest seemed baffled by the fact that there was no single "leader" with whom they could negotiate to prevent protestors from taking to the streets. Maybe someday police will stop acting like scab-herders and start acting like unionists, but probably not until their jobs and unions have been privatized into oblivion.

Speaking of private security, Gannett had their out doing surveillance in an unmarked car. This didn't seem to frighten anyone, though; not even other Gannett employees. A few courageous workers at the *Free Press* came out to ask what was really happening in Detroit, since they knew their bosses were lying to them. So try as they might, these corporate scum will never be able to destroy working-class solidarity — especially where Wobblies are organizing.

An Injury to One Is An Injury to All!

— X340336

## 1997 IWW Assembly

The 1997 IWW General Assembly will meet in St. Louis, Missouri, Saturday August 30 through Monday September 1 (the final day being devoted to workshops). Agenda proposals and resolutions should be sent in to GA by August 1. For travel or housing information, contact Bob Tibbs Jr., 10072 Hedge Dr., St. Louis MO 63137.

# Hot summer in Europe

Workers in Europe began the summer focusing their various uprisings against European Union leaders and widely unpopular austerity cutbacks. "We've tried the free market; Let's make Europe for the workers," chanted railroad workers in Paris who marched with burning flares in their hands. On June 9, transportation workers blocked roads between France, Spain, Italy, Belgium and Switzerland in protest of 80-hour work weeks for only 56-hours pay. The workers demand an equal decrease in working hours across Europe.

On June 10, 100,000 workers in Paris coincided their protests against unemployment with firefighters and police in Germany who blocked roads and blew sirens outside Chancellor Kohl's office in Bonn. The actions in France remind the bosses and bureaucrats that promises made during previous general strikes and the recent election must be kept. In Germany, workers targeted state plans of layoffs, retirement-age increases, and bonus reductions.

## 200 protest Guess sweatshops

Some 200 unionists marched on Dillard's Department Store in Las Vegas June 11, demanding that the retailer take responsibility for the conditions of workers who make the Guess clothing it sells. Guess was removed from the U.S. Department of Labor's apparel industry Trendsetter List last November after investigations uncovered illegal industrial homework and violations of minimum wage and overtime laws at Guess contractors in Los Angeles. Guess is also under investigation by the National Labor Relations Board for illegally harassing, spying on, and terminating workers as well as illegally relocating work to Mexico to thwart unionization efforts by garment workers.

In late May, two hundred activists stormed the upscale South Coast Plaza Mall in Orange County, California, while Guess held its first Annual Shareholders Meeting nearby, to demand that retailers Nordstroms and Robinsons-May similarly take steps to end Guess' use of sweatshops. Protesters distributed leaflets stating, "It's time to take stock of the Guess greed in these stores."

For a free 8-minute "Guess?" video in English and Spanish or more information about the campaign, contact Ginny Coughlin at the Stop Sweatshops Partnership, 1710 Broadway, New York NY 10019; (212) 332-9312; stopsweatshops@uniteunion.org

All states in the European Union face fines if their budget deficits rise after adopting the new common currency.

Meanwhile, municipal workers in Athens, Greece struck the first week of June in front of the main garbage truck garage to force the permanent hiring of fellow workers on temporary contracts. At press time, the national government was threatening to declare the strike illegal.

Local transport workers in Rome and Milan held wildcat strikes May 23 against contract negotiations between the government and far-removed national union.

The workers are angry that working practices outlined in the new contract would result in wage cuts.

## French "socialists" in retreat

Elected only two months ago, unions are criticizing France's new Socialist premier, Lionel Jospin, for abandoning his promise to create more jobs. "We will not allow the government to forget its commitments in the name of realism," said Marc Blondel, leader of the Workers' Force (FO) union.

Jospin told members of his party that measures to create the 700,000 jobs he promised during his campaign would have to await an audit of the government's books. His government is allowing Renault, an auto maker in which the government has a 47 percent stake, to go ahead with a decision to close an assembly plant in Belgium. Jospin joined a protest against the closing last spring, before the election.

## Wildcats in Zimbabwe

Workers in Zimbabwe have hit capital and the state with waves of wildcat strikes throughout July. The official Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions tried to curtail the strikes through negotiations, but bosses replied with violent repression.

On July 10, bosses at a security company opened fire on hundreds of striking workers who were removing various vehicles and equipment from service in demands of 50 percent more in wages. On July 4, transportation workers began a slow-down strike in demands of 40 percent higher pay. On July 2, over 11,000 railway workers threw their tools down to strike for a 60 percent payraise. The railway workers united across trades, including clerical, mechanical, and service workers.

Banking, textile and clothing, construction, private security services, hotel and catering and rail transport workers have all taken wildcat direct action in June and July.

# "Action! Motown '97"

Tens of thousands of labor activists marched in Detroit for Action! Motown '97 on June 21

in solidarity with the Detroit News and Free Press strikers to help them beat the lock-out

and win amnesty for all strikers and a union contract once again.

The march wound down Michigan Ave. in front of the News and Free Press buildings on Lafayette and headed down Woodward to Hart Plaza on the Detroit River.

Unions lined up one after the other: a sea of purple-shirted CWA workers followed by a sea of yellow teamster signs and then the blue-and-yellow UAW shirts - handed out for free.

The UAW was loud. They chanted in unison: "Everywhere we go, people want to know, who we are, so we tell them, we are the union, mighty mighty union, scab-kickin' union, mighty! union!" They were well rehearsed.

The IWW carried banners with the black sabo-cat and the slogan, "Shut It Down," and the Wobblies sang songs off their little Detroit song sheet.

They sang: "Solidarity forever, solidarity forever, solidarity forever, for the union makes us strong!"

The IWW also picketed the Riverfront and Sterling Heights plants on Friday and Saturday nights - against the wishes of AFL-CIO leadership.

From all different unions, we gathered and marched together in the main event Saturday for four hours.

The sun beat down and burned some of us, and we enjoyed the cool breeze off the Detroit River on the lawn of Hart Plaza.

We rallied there for another two hours and heard speeches from all kinds of top union brass.

"Your struggle is our struggle!" promised Richard Trumka, AFL-CIO leader.

We assembled from all over - Michigan and Ohio, sure, but also Massachusetts, D.C., California, Hawaii, Canada.

The rally was a massive show of support, but what impact did we have?

The day before our big rally, the National Labor Relations Board finally ruled in favor of the unions on the unfair labor practice charges dating back to 1995.

Still the order to rehire all locked-out strikers was not binding. The unions will have to wait for a 10(j) federal court injunction to force the companies to rehire the strikers.

Even if the unions win that battle, the 200 strikers fired for alleged strike-related misconduct—including non-violent civil disobedience - will still not be brought back on the job.

Only continued struggle can win amnesty for all locked-out workers.

And even if the unions beat back the lock-out entirely, they still will lack a union contract.

So the struggle is long.

Can we rely on the courts to win our battles for us - to regain jobs with fair contracts? No!

There is only one way to win this fight, and that is direct action at the point of production.

We must shut it down, or we'll never win.

— Nick Patti, Capital District IWW/New York GMB

### THE UNORGANIZED

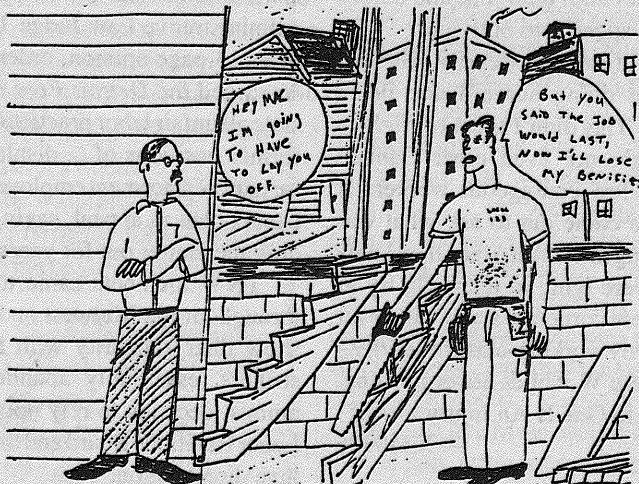


#### This Ever Happen to You?

Do a job for short dough and end up eating it, or work for a rat contractor that expects miracles with substandard stock and shoddy tools at breakneck speed.

Why you've got to bust your hump six days a week just to pay your bills. Doesn't seem right, does it?

### THE CRAFT ORGANIZED



#### How About This?

Some B.A. or steward you never see on the job gives you your walking papers to head down to unenjoyment. Meanwhile his buddies, "the in crowd," rack up some sweet overtime.

That can't be right. See ya around the hall, porkchop!

### THE INDUSTRIALLY ORGANIZED



#### Now Wouldn't This Be Nice

Let's all organize industrially and live in a true democracy, work for use and not for profit. We'll all get a fair shake and plenty of time to relax like real men and women.

- ★ Educate
- ★ Organize
- ★ Emancipate

Join the IWW

Marc duPont X345100



## Swedish rail workers fight union scabbing

Members of the Swedish Central Workers' Organization (SAC) who work in Stockholm's commuter transit system, Stockholm Lokaltrafik, have been on strike since June. SL is run by the railway company SJ.

Platform guards who sell and check tickets in the central station protested against having to do cleaning work while working an obligatory shift once a month in outlying stations. This is to cover for sick leave, but only workers from the central station are allocated these shifts. SAC members want the work to be shared by workers from the other districts and regular cleaners to be employed.

Blockades, strikes and lockouts have followed and no solution is in sight.

SAC members declared a blockade on this shift and went on strike. Members from SEKO, the state employees union were sent to work there instead. The chairman of the SEKO section denied the charges of union scabbing and said that they are neutral in the SAC strike. A strange example of neutral behaviour!

The SEKO workers used as strike-breakers do not have a permanent jobs but work on an temporary basis and are often immigrants, this puts them in a much weaker position and they don't dare to protest.

A train driver and member of SAC stopped his train for a half an hour a week later as a sympathy action and to counter the strike-breaking. SL answered by lockouting all SAC members. Many SAC members have key jobs on the system, as such as train drivers and so-called train guards, resulting in disrupted traffic.

The SAC section has appointed a negotiating committee and is demanding negotiations in an effort to reach a solution.

Send letter of support (and copies of protests) to SAC fax: +46-8-673 35 80 and Stockholm's LS of SAC, Storstockholm's Transportsyndikatet, Bergsundsgatan 10 nb, 117 37 Stockholm, fax: +46-8-84 97 99 international.committee@sac.se

Send protests to SJ, SL pendeltraffiken, 10550 Stockholm, Sweden fax: +46-8 - 762 55 94 and to SEKO Central and local union offices: SEKO- trafik OEst, Box 304, 101 26 Sollentuna, Sweden fax: +46-8-762 45 54. SEKO Stockholm, Box 1149, 111 81 Stockholm, Sweden fax: +46-8-454 84 12

## Mersey dockers win TGWU conference

Transport & General Workers Union delegates ended a fiery debate on the Liverpool docks dispute with a 283-182 defeat of a TGWU Executive motion July 8. Conference then voted unanimously for a motion from Liverpool docks branch to "call upon the Government to intervene in the long running Liverpool Docks Dispute in order to return the sacked dockworkers to their rightful place of work in the Port of Liverpool" and to "commend the sacked Liverpool dockworkers for their heroic and inspirational struggle against an unscrupulous employer."

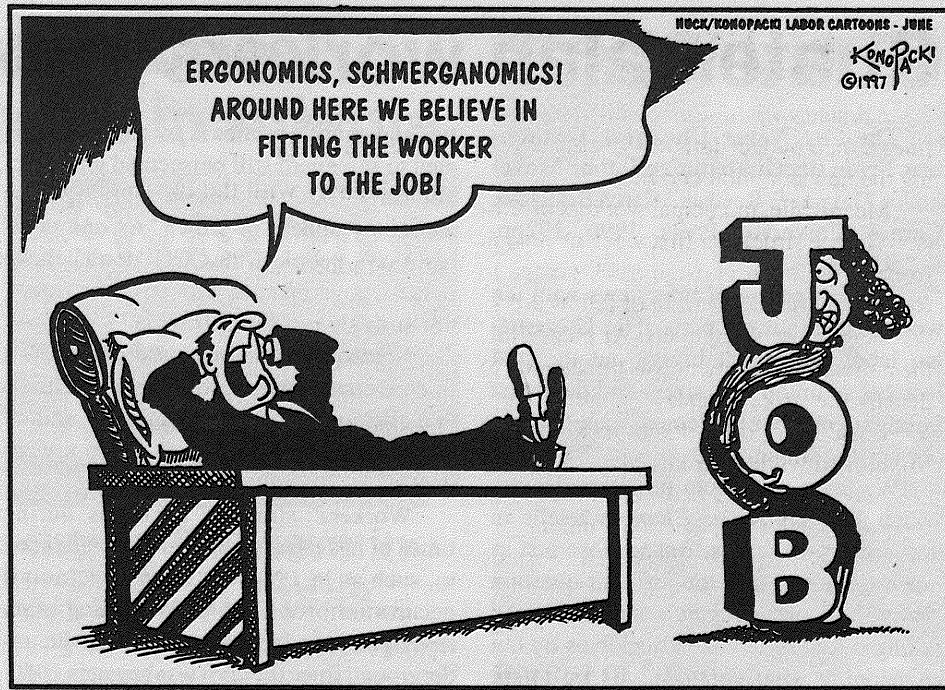
The conference chair had declared the Executive motion carried on voice vote, but was forced to back down after delegates refused to allow an adjournment. That mo-

### British Airways...

*continued from page 1*

If all BA employees were in Air Transport Workers IU 550 it would be "An Injury to One is An Injury to All." During the 72-hour strike no aircraft would have flown, and any scabs stupid enough to carry on working would have had to load the planes themselves.

— Kevin Brandstatter, Swindon, UK



## General Motors dismisses strikers

Several hundred General Motors workers walked out on a wildcat strike on June 12, demanding a salary raise and greater profit-sharing. The workers, employees of General Motors Delco Division in Reynosa, Mexico, were not satisfied with the \$32 each that the automotive giant gave them in profit-sharing for 1996. GM posted profits of 4.963 billion dollars in 1996.

Faced with a paralyzing work stoppage, the GM negotiated a quick settlement, agreeing to review its wage and profit-sharing policies. On June 19, GM offered workers \$45 more in profit-sharing plus \$32 in coupons that could be redeemed in local stores, but offered no kind of wage increase. The workers, desperate for any kind of improvement, accepted the offer.

Firings began June 23. Workers say a total of 33 workers have been fired, while GM placed the total at 23. The firings are in retaliation for a work stoppage of between 7 and 13 hours that swept through most of G.M.'s six plants.

Some of the fired workers have been with GM 17 years. Every member of a committee elected by workers before the strike were fired, as were several workers caught up in the wildcat movement. The firings have been carried out in a highly visible and intimidating manner. Uniformed guards have entered assembly lines to escort workers to "a meeting." Workers who refuse to walk with the guards were physically removed from the assembly line.

tion would have endorsed the union leadership's strategy and handling of the dispute and attacked media coverage which has criticised the union.

Speaker after speaker insisted that the dockers had been right to refuse to cross their sons' picket line despite the anti-union legislation, and that the Executive must withdraw their Statement so that a strategy for winning the dispute could now be discussed and voted on. While the TGWU leaders called for a repudiation of the Mersey dockers' struggle, dockers leafleted outside the hall and held placards reading "democracy and debate are not disloyalty," "Dockers Built this Union," "Scabs Out, Not Sell Out!" "Will the TGWU recruit the scabs?" "Jim Larkin's Fighting Spirit Lives On in Liverpool"...

A sacked Liverpool docker was battered unconscious by Merseyside Police July 2 during arrests at the Alexandra Dock gate. Steve Stanton was one of 37 pickets on the gate when police arrested sacked docker Kenny Weston, who had been targeted following a previous incident. Police have repeatedly attacked pickets, even though the dockers have obeyed all instructions issued by police.

## Business as Usual in New Hong Kong

A pro-business political party has called on Hong Kong's new government to scrap a set of labor laws passed by the former legislative council strengthening Hong Kong's traditionally weak unions.

"The urgency is that if we do not do it and let it drag on ... there will be hundreds of unions being formed, being legalized," said James Tien, spokesman for the Liberal Party.

The current labor laws grant unions a voice in business decisions including relocation, sale of company stock, mergers and partnerships.

### Mexican workers attacked

Education workers and campesinos in Mexico have been under violent attack from the army there and request solidarity.

On June 20, educator Ignacio Garcia Muez, who also coordinates a local social work organization, was robbed by soldiers of 58,100 pesos of the group's funds. And on June 27, campesino unionist Jose Pacheco Pineda was reportedly arrested by state agents, although the government denies the detention.

Fax Mexican president Ernesto Zedillo in protest at (+ 52 5) 515 57 29 and e-mail the National Human Rights Commission at cndh@laneta.apc.org. The World Organisation Against Torture requests that people e-mail them news of any solidarity taken at omct@iprolink.ch.

### Intercepting office calls ruled breach of privacy in Europe

After an English policewoman entered into sex discrimination proceedings against her employer and other authorities, they retaliated by listening to her private phone conversations on both her home and office phones. Now, in Halford v. United Kingdom, the European Court of Human Rights has declared that employees have the right to respect for their private life and correspondence, even on the job. U.S. workers, of course, have no such right.

The Court awarded more than £35,000 in compensation for the intrusion into her privacy and legal expenses.

## Worker inspectors

Tired of waiting for the U.S. Occupational Safety & Health Administration to do its job, the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers Union is in the process of training full-time health and safety representatives on every job it represents. These inspectors will work with rank-and-file workers on the job to identify safety hazards, document problems, and ensure that they are resolved.

### Direct Action Gets Goods

Members of the 1840 Local in Opelika, Alabama, used direct action in order to better working conditions at the Lesther mill weave room. The women's bathroom on the floor had a bursted pipe and was not functioning properly. It had been malfunctioning for three weeks and despite many complaints, the company did not move to fix it.

The women workers decided to take a washroom break at the same time, thereby slowing production. Within 10 minutes a plumber was at the scene and he was finished in 30 minutes.

With organization and direct action we can get functioning washrooms...and a whole lot more.

## Repression on rise

The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions reports that union repression occurred in 108 countries during 1996, the largest number it has ever recorded. General Secretary Bill Jordan attributed the increased repression to increased poverty and inequality in poor countries, "which globalisation has drawn into a downward spiral of ever lower labour standards to attract investment and meet the demands of enterprises seeking a fast profit."

At least 264 unionists were murdered in 1996, with most of the killings taking place in Latin America - 98 workers were murdered in Colombia, 24 in Brazil and nine in Bolivia - as well as Algeria, Lesotho and Nigeria. Nearly 2,000 suffered serious injuries in the course of their union activities.

At least 4,264 trade unionists were arrested last year for union activities, and some 153,494 workers were dismissed for being union members.

China has "one of the worst records of trade union repression, with hundreds of trade unionists and their families being ill-treated or imprisoned in labour camps for minor crimes like printing tee-shirts with slogans advocating free trade unions."

## Strawberries...

*continued from page 1*

with not even a moment's notice.

With social and political institutions in place favoring the growers, even the gains of organizing are easily undone. These institutions can only be attacked by unified communities willing to demand justice and to support the efforts of working people.

To show your support for Oregon's farmworkers, please boycott Flav-R-Pac and Wholesome & Hearty foods, including GardenBurger.

— Travis Thomas

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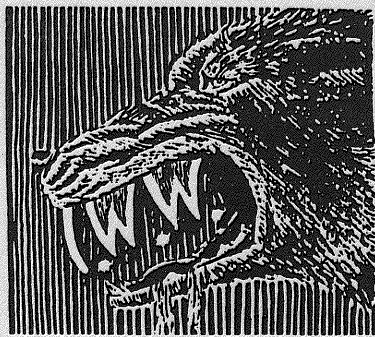
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## FWs Phillips and Ross on the stump for workers' culture

Longtime IWW musicians Bruce "Utah" Phillips and Mark Ross, nearly 70 years between them holding red cards, toured together in early summer with songs and stories of the hobo life, mining disasters and a great deal of talk about the IWW. The Wobbly troubadours brought their tales of industrial unionism to thousands.

Phillips and Ross began a Northern California stint, the "Rose Tattoo" concerts, joined by FWs Larry Penn and Bruce Brackney, with appearances in Sacramento, Davis and San Francisco.

Their billing in the 17th annual Old Songs Festival in Altamont, N.Y., outside Albany, was one of the highlights of the diverse, labor-friendly gathering of traditional artists, Utah and Mark were able to swap tales and tunes with performers and patrons alike, participating in several workshop stages and main stage concerts during the three day event. Their labor songs workshop, joined by the likes of Peggy Seeger, Sandy and Caroline Paton, and AFM Local 1000 organizer John O'Connor, was attended by over 200. Wobbly literature and IWs were gobbled up and some old and new songs were enjoyed by everyone. O'Connor is a talented singer-songwriter who spins working folks' stories into lively songs with a hook. He was a special guest of Capital District IWW and an old friend of Bruce Phillips.

Phillips has limited his touring to one or two engagements each month due to his congestive heart disease, but this time off the road has allowed him to produce a wealth of material, a veritable renaissance for the Wobbly bard.

The Folk Alliance recently honored Bruce with a lifetime achievement award, while Phillips' and Rosalie Sorrels' CD, "The Long Memory" was voted best in its category in 1996 by the National Association of Independent Record Distributors. There's the Phillips-Ani Difrancio collaboration "The Past Didn't Go Anywhere," Utah's many stories set to lively, sometimes rap/hip hop jams, and the Phillips and Mark Ross effort called "Loafer's Glory," full of hobos, pranks and old Wobbly lore.

"Mark is one of the best of the old time musicians," Phillips told the crowds at Old Songs, with Ross backing up on guitar, banjo and harmonica. Ross also sings with spirit and conviction, especially when he selects a chestnut like Ralph Chaplin's "Glimmering Rails," which is also heard on "Rebel Voices," available through IWW lit.

Decked out in rugged work-a-day outfits, sporting their IWW buttons, travelling light, Phillips and Ross embrace their history and promote working class culture with pleasure and ease. They're quick with a joke, a gag or a quote from old Wobs like Art Nurse or Tom Scribner.

"I called in well at 17," Ross said of his working life, avoiding the 9 to 5 trap for nearly 30 years. "Never own anything you have to feed or paint," Phillips said, quoting an old timer. There is narry a dull moment with these two...

Future appearances are in the works. Contact FW Ross in Bute, Montana through the IWW directory for more information.

— X341883

# Guatemalan workers speak

**The Sky Never Changes: Testimonies From the Guatemalan Labor Movement.** Thomas F. Reed and Karen Brandow, Cornell University Press, 1996, 192pp, \$15.95.

This collection of interviews with ten workers from various parts of the Guatemalan labor movement brings out the best insights of union organizers and the worst failings of our own movement's approach to our current situation.

We learn a lot from past experiences, which *The Sky Never Changes* retells in unionists' own words. But we lose just as much by not posing the difficult question "Why?" to our struggle's successes and failings. And we weaken ourselves by not envisioning what organizations we might build on top of capitalism once we have burnt it down. *The Sky Never Changes* sticks to its stated focus of "putting a human face" on bureaucratic human rights reports common throughout the 1980s and today.

The book's brief historical introduction complements the interviews well. General facts like how Guatemalan students, workers, campesinos and radical Catholics built up a near revolutionary historical turning point in the 1970s are vital backdrops to the 1980s struggles which the book focuses on.

Some unionists featured in *The Sky Never Changes* describe earlier precedents to the current situation, especially in the CUC (Committee of Campesino Unity) and sister federations of urban factory workers. The CUC's fascinating roots in popular grassroots organizing and anti-statist left ideology are discussed at length and encapsulated in the motto 'Clear head, solidarity of heart, and combative fist.'

Union independence from political par-

ties and guerilla armies is perhaps exaggerated to safeguard still persecuted unionists, but early CUC lessons in working-class autonomy appear in-grown. As one organizer says, people in the CUC "don't believe in laws, governments, parties, or the vote.... our struggle is a class struggle."

Urban factory unionists share the CUC's intense commitment and necessity: there is "no alternative to keep organizing" and "if one is indifferent, one takes a step toward death."

Workers' strategic decisions during times of historical change are also attended to, such as in 1984-'85 when a victorious occupation of a Coca-Cola bottling plant reinvigorated a labor movement driven underground since the civil war began in 1980. At times like these, unionists "keep in mind what it takes to win" and "begin strategizing about the movement's revival."

During the Coca-Cola workers' occupation, UNSITRAGUA (Unity of Guatemalan Workers) formed, and within three years the International Union of Food-workers opened offices in Guatemala and the indigenous CUC returned to the streets from its clandestine cover during the civil war.

Workers in other factories also took up the occupation tactic and learned "if one is a traitor to the workers, one loses all options," such as when bosses cheated turncoat workers out of bribes they had accepted. In the case of an auto factory, workers build upon shopfloor organizing to move toward self-management (the goal is "to set up our own workshop, our own factory" and direct earnings to union organizing).

Now, with the civil war officially over, campesinos taking direct possession of rural lands leads the union movement, and are

unfortunately not included in *The Sky Never Changes*.

Guatemalan unionists remind us of crucial commonalities – the useful strength of solidarity, the sad isolation between workers at different workplaces – and confront us with examples of how brutally violent capital and the state become when faced with revolutionary class struggle.

In unionists own words, stories of working class struggle fill *The Sky Never Changes* with interesting and brilliant discussions of organizing against all odds.

— Chris Vance

## Book Reviews

**From Bughouse Square to the Beat Generation: Selected Ravings of Slim Brundage.** Edited by Franklin Rosemont. Charles H. Kerr Publishing Co., 176 pages, \$14.

Some decades back there was a colorful institution on the Northside of Chicago known as the College of Complexes. It was in reality an indoor free speech hangout that carried on the tradition of such well-known venues as Chicago's Bughouse Square, New York's Union Square, Seattle's Pioneer Square, Los Angeles' Pershing Square, and many others of that ilk. No less colorful than the College of Complexes was its founder, a crusty old Wobbly by the name of Slim Brundage who had worked at many lines of work before deciding to open up his indoor free speech forum. This place existed for several decades, along with sporadic attempts at revival in recent decades.

It was at this place where ideologues of all stripes would expound their particular brand of world-saving. Even such right-wing groups as the Klan and the American Nazi Party were not turned away. The latter did not come too often, as they would invariably be challenged by some very pointed debate.

One of my fondest memories was during one of Slim's poetry nights where a young woman named Erika, who was a member of the local Nazis, read some poems by George Lincoln Rockwell and others of his ilk before expounding on the superiority of German culture that results in some subtle catcalling.

The assemblage was rather taken aback when your reviewer got up to support her assertions. Said young woman was gloating quite smugly as your reviewer was listing some of the great men of letters in the visual arts, well-known classical composers and symphonic conductors, but at the mention of Freud and Einstein she realized the tittering of the audience and suddenly began losing her composure as she realized that all the names were those of German Jews. She soon found it to her convenience to make her departure from the College.

These sessions were by no means completely unstructured. Certain nights were given over to particular themes, and many well-known guest speakers were invited to talk, fully aware that they could be subjected to some very pithy disagreements.

This book in the main consists of Slim Brundage's own writings and talks, with which the reader may find some disagreement but will assuredly not be bored. During the epoch of the Beat Generation that predated the Hippie movement, Slim was an enthusiastic support of the Beats. He even helped to initiate a campaign for a Beat candidate for president.

This tome is well-illustrated with photographs from the long history of the institution that was incepted by Slim Brundage. The reader can be assured of some pleasant as well as enlightening reading.

— Punapilvi

## That's capitalism

A hurdle as important as the 4 minute mile was finally overcome when a CEO cracked the \$100 million compensation barrier in the non-Bill Gates division. This stunning achievement was attained by Lawrence Coss, head of Green Tree Financial, a firm loaning money for mobile homes. Mr. Coss was given a \$102 million bonus because, said spokesman John Dolphin, "The shareholders are delighted with Green Tree's performance... The only downside is you have to answer the media critics."

Ryanair CEO Michael O'Leary received £16.75 million in bonuses alone over the last three years. This is enough to provide all 650 of his low-paid staff with £25,760 each. O'Leary has refused employees' demands for improvements in pay and conditions because the company "can not afford it."

— Workers Solidarity, No 51

## Boycott Borders...

*continued from page 3*

makes the IWW's position on the boycott clear, "folks who prefer not to help fund Borders' ongoing anti-union campaign will still shop elsewhere. Why not wait until Borders signs a union contract that gives workers a living wage before rewarding the company with your business?"

— Alexis Buss

## Borders store goes union

Borders workers at the downtown New York store have voted for union representation (the fourth thus far), while Borders workers in Seattle voted 23-16 against UFCW representation. Thus far, Borders has refused to reach a contract with workers at any of its stores.

Dave Stewart, the manager who fired Miriam Fried, has quit rather than accept a demotion to Borders' new Atlantic City store. Wobs had planned to greet his debut in Atlantic City with a picket line.

## Boss 'downsized' at Seattle's Lincoln Park Mini Mart

While Wobblies long ago declined to return to their jobs at Seattle's Lincoln Park Mini Mart after a 150-day ULP strike, it looks like someone else will no longer be employed there either – the boss. The store has been sold and manager Larry Parko, who was found to have committed several unfair labor practices during the course of the IWW drive, was not chosen by the new owners to continue managing the store.

## Guinea Pig Zero Backs Borders Ban

IWW member Robert Helms has been sued for libel by the Allegheny University for the Health Sciences in retaliation for an article originally published in his zine, *Guinea Pig Zero*, and subsequently excerpted in *Harper's*, which has also been sued. *Guinea Pig Zero* is a journal for human research subjects. Its August 1996 issue evaluated three research facilities in the Philadelphia area, giving Allegheny low ratings.

The zine's new issue includes a full-page notice advising that *Guinea Pig Zero* can not be purchased in stores owned by the Borders Group Inc. because of its union-busting practices. The issue also includes articles on conditions in French research facilities (which contrast favorably to U.S. labs); the tragic story of a fellow researcher who suffered a mental breakdown as a result of a SmithKline Beecham study; experimentation on human subjects by the Nazis, Japanese military and in the Renaissance; a first-hand account of a sleep study; a sexual harassment complaint; and several reviews. Oddly enough, no union bug is present.

Sample copies are \$3 (subscriptions \$10) from Guinea Pig Zero, P. O. Box 42531, Philadelphia PA 19101 bhelms@iww.org Back issues are available.

# New Arrivals

**Bread & Roses, \$2**  
British IWW magazine #1 Cover asks: Five More Years of Hard Labour?

**Red November Black November: Culture and Community in the Industrial Workers of the World** by Salvatore Salerno. \$21.95  
Examines the interactions between the IWW and the anarcho-syndicalist movements, with more attention than usual to the IWW's foreign-language papers.

**War Against the Greens: the "Wise-Use" Movement, the New Right, and Anti-Environmental Violence** by David Helvarg  
In-depth investigation of the backlash against environmentalism as manifest in the "Wise-Use" movement backed by the National Rifle Association, the Heritage Foundation and the Unification Church. 502 pages, Sierra Club, published at \$25, Our price \$15

**The River Ran Red: Homestead 1892, ed. D.P. Demarest Jr. & F. Weingartner**  
An anthology of period texts & artwork tell the story of the lockout at the Homestead Steel Works in 1892, a deadly conflict in which the Carnegie family's Pinkertons battled the iron-mill workers' attempts to unionize. Illus. 232 pages, Pittsburgh, published at \$49.95. Our price \$22

**Education for Struggle: American Labor Colleges of the 1920s & 1930s** by Richard J. Attelbaugh  
Looks at three schools: the IWW's Work People's College in Minnesota, Brockwood in New York, and Commonwealth College in Arkansas to examine the phenomena of schools founded by and for workers. 339 pages, Temple, published at \$39.95. Our price \$20

**Schooling for "Good Rebels": Socialist Education for Children in the United States, 1900-1920** by Kenneth Teitelbaum  
Explores the development and curricula of the weekend schools American socialists organized for their children to teach them about social justice. 258 pages, Temple, published at \$44.95. Our price \$20

**Work Without End: Abandoning Shorter Hours for the Right to Work** by Benjamin Kline Hunnicutt  
Tells how workers have lost the American dream as economists and businessmen began in the 1920s to realize that shorter work hours would interfere with the "gospel of consumption." 404 pages, Temple, published at \$39.95. Our price \$15

**Rebels Against War: The American Peace Movement, 1933-1983** by Lawrence S. Wittner  
Analyzes the movement during the period to show its changing nature, its collapse during WW II, the impact of the Cold War and McCarthyism, nuclear protests of the late 1950s and the Vietnam War protests of the 1960s. 364 pages, paper, Temple, published at \$18.95. Our price \$10

# Books for Rebel Workers

**One Big Union.** by IWW.  
The basic introduction to the structure and methods of the Industrial Workers of the World. \$2

**The General Strike.**  
Ralph Chaplin's musical version of the IWW Preamble notes "without our brain and muscle not a single wheel can turn." He develops that idea in this essay. \$2

**Labor Law for the Rank & Filer.** by Staughton Lynd.  
Revised and updated, this classic self-help manual is subtitled: "building solidarity while staying clear of the law." \$7

**IWW Organizing Manual (2nd Ed.)**  
A guide to building the IWW on the job. \$5

**Solidarity Unionism.** by Staughton Lynd.  
Critical reading for all who care about the future of the labor movement. \$7

**Democratic Rights for Union Members: A Guide to Internal Union Democracy.** by H.W. Benson  
What you need to know to take on union bureaucracy through established procedures, \$8.

**Baseball caps \$9**  
Black globe on red cap, adjustable sizing.

**Joe Hill T-shirts**  
Gray w/ pocket. Front has picture of Joe Hill, back IWW Globe & "Because capitalism cannot be reformed" \$12

**IWW Buttons**  
**Fire Your Boss! \$1.**  
**Black Cat/Direct Action, \$1.**  
**IWW Globe** circled by motto: "Labor is Entitled to All it Creates." Black & Red, \$1.50.

**Cassettes, \$10 each.**  
**Heartland, Anne Feeney Live** includes "War on the Workers"  
**Good News.** Sweet Honey in the Rock  
**All Used Up.** Utah Phillips  
**Rebel Voices.** IWW Songs sung by IU 630 Wobs  
**We Have Fed You All for 1,000 Years.** Utah Phillips  
**Don't Mourn, Organize!** Songs of Joe Hill by various artists  
**I Have Seen Freedom.** Si Kahn  
**As Seen on No TV.** Chris Chandler  
**Smash the State and Have a Nice Day.** Citizens Band  
**It Takes A Lot of People.** Tribute to Woody Guthrie by Larry Long & kids  
**A World to Win.** Tom Juravich  
**Greenfire.** Dakota Sid, Travers Clifford  
**Food Phone Gas Lodging.** Charlie King  
**Justice.** Toshi Reagon  
**Out of Darkness.** Tom Juravich

**Compact Disks \$15 each.**  
**Look to the Left.** Anne Feeney  
**Heartland, Anne Feeney Live**

# Workers' Culture

**Juice is Stranger than Friction.** by T-Bone Slim.  
Funny and irreverent, Slim's popular writings for the *Industrial Worker* of the 20s and 30s are collected for the first time. \$8

**IWW Little Red Songbook (36th Edition)**  
103 labor songs from around the world, with music. Includes classics and new songs by Billy Bragg, Anne Feeney, Charlie King, Utah Phillips, etc. \$10

**Canadian IWW Songbook**  
41 songs by Arlene Mantle, Rick Fielding, Faith Nolan, Len Wallace & others, with music & chords. \$5.

**Posters** by Carlos Cortez  
Lucy Parsons, Ben Fletcher or Joe Hill. \$15

**Crystal Gazing the Amber Fluid.** by Carlos Cortez.  
IWW artist's poetic take on life today. \$4

**Images of Labor.** compiled by John Gorman  
Memorabilia from the National Museum of Labor History, London - badges, banners, buttons, sculpture, paintings, etc. from the British labor movement. \$12

**Images of Labor.** ed. by Moe Foner  
A coffee-table book alternating color art work and quotes. \$10

**Art for the Masses: A Radical Magazine and its Graphics, 1911-1917** by Rebecca Zurier  
Critical history of an innovative revolutionary magazine that featured articles and essays by Walter Lippmann, John Reed, Sherwood Anderson, Carl Sandburg and Amy Lowell; and showcased artwork and cartoons by Robert Minor, Art Young, and Pablo Picasso to name a few. 150 illustrations, 217 pages, Temple, 9 1/4" x 12" paper, published at \$19.95. Our price \$10

**Mad in the USA.** by Gary Huck & Mike Konopacki.  
Their third cartoon collection. "These unbeheldden bozos are the best class-warrior cartoonists of our time." \$12

**Woodie's 20 Grow Big Songs.**  
Woodie Guthrie's songbook for little kids. Hardcover, \$10.

**RAW, High Culture for Low-brows** ed. by Art Spiegelman & Francoise Mouly, \$10.

**X, Pictures by Sue Coe** by Coe and Judith Moore  
Life of Malcolm X, \$5.

**Food Not Bombs.**  
Veggie recipes and how-to information for feeding the hungry in this society where food is a privilege. \$9

**Break Their Haughty Power.** by Eugene Nelson.  
Fictionalized biography of Joe Murphy, who was an IWW member between 1919 and 1924. \$12

# Radical Thought

**Live From Death Row** by Mumia Abu-Jamal, \$17.

**Death Blossoms** by Mumia Abu-Jamal  
More death row writings by America's most famous political prisoner. \$12

**A Little Working Class Sense** by Gilbert Mers  
A veteran labor activist calls on workers to once again take up the struggle against capitalism. \$3

**The World Bank: A tale of power, plunder & resistance** by Alec Dubra & Mike Konopacki  
A comic book in lurid color. \$2.95

**Behind the Silicon Curtain, The Seductions of Work in a Lonely Era.** by Dennis Hayes.  
All the dirt and alienation of technomad-"paradise," \$6.

**Life & Thought of Friedrich Engels, A Reinterpretation.** J.D. Hunley. \$15

**The Political Economy of Participatory Economics.** by Michael Albert & Robn Hahnel.  
A nuts-and-bolts approach to a participatory, egalitarian economy. \$8.

**Opposing NAFTA, International Opposition to NAFTA.** Jason Justice, \$1

**Classrooms First! The 1996 Oakland Teachers' Strike.** Jason Justice. \$2

**A New Union Vision**  
Arthur J. Miller reflects on the need for revolutionary unions today. \$2

**Fields, Factories and Workshops.** by Peter Kropotkin.  
Analysis of early 20th Century production of relevance to contemporary adherents of decentralized production. \$10.

**The Disappearance of Local 717: An Underground History of Packard Electric** by Benj. Sachs, \$3.

**Progress Without People: In Defense of Luddism.** David Noble.  
Technology is a political question, and too often workers are excluded from the decisions. A detailed analysis of technology's effects and working-class responses, \$15.

**From the Ground Up, Essays on Grassroots & Workplace Democracy.** by George Benello  
Essays by eminent libertarian philosopher with commentaries by others, \$6.

**Mask of Democracy: Labor Suppression in Mexico.** by Dan LaBotz.  
Rank & file insurgencies, maquiladoras and NAFTA all get attention. The need for world labor solidarity is inescapable. \$14

**Stonewall** by Martin Duberman, \$15.

**The Movement and the Sixties, Protest in America from Greensboro to Wounded Knee.** Terry Anderson. \$15

**The Yale Strike of 1984-85** \$4

## Available from IWW Branches

### T-SHIRTS

**I'm A Little Wobbly** Red with black kitten (childrens sizes 11-12 & 14-16 only) \$8. **The Hand That Will Rule the World - One Big Union** Grey pocket-t, IWW on pocket, workers with fist on back. \$15. **An Injury To One Is An Injury To All** Navy pocket-t, SLC branch seal on pocket, sab cat on back \$15. **Joe Hill** White t with picture by FW Cortez \$10. **Employing Class** Red sabo cat t-shirt \$10. Salt Lake IWW, PO Box 520514, Salt Lake City, UT 84152-0514  
**IWW "Wings"** 3" wide bullion pin, IWW Globe between sabots. \$10. Zeta-max, POB 8882, Baltimore MD 21224.

**Workers' Guide to Organizing** \$4.50. **Guide to Direct Action** \$4.50; both \$8.25. Lehigh Valley GMB, POB 4133, Bethlehem PA 18018.  
**Collective Bargaining Manual** \$2.50. New York GMB, RD 1 Box 158-B, Hartwick NY 13348  
**Out of the Depths (Ludlow Massacre)** \$11.95; **Introduction to the U.S.: An Autonomist Political History** by Noel Ignatiev. \$7. P & L Printing, 2298 Clay St., Denver CO 80211  
**British Isles - Songbook** (36 Edition) £4 post-paid; a selection of IWW literature is available from IWW, 75 Humberstone Gate, Leicester LE1.

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# Teaching in a bureaucratic minefield

## New British IWW Paper

British Wobblies have launched *Bread & Roses*, a quarterly magazine available from the IWW Literature Dept. in North America, or for £1 per copy from IWW, 75 Humberstone Gate, Leicester LE1 4WB. The Summer 1997 issue reports on undercounting of British unemployment rates, warns workers against relying on the new Labour government, suggests that Zairean workers have little to look forward to from their new regime, and addresses the need for a radical labour movement prepared to transform society and to win the world for the workers.

Industrial reports point to the failure of trades unionism in health care, public service and education. A healthworker points to the miserable pay offers accepted by the official unions as proof of the ineffectiveness of dividing workers into 30+ unions. "This joke of a pay rise should prove beyond any doubt that the age-old tactic of divide and rule favoured by governments and bosses throughout the world is working well within the National Health Service. The only way to challenge this 'divide and rule' is to speak, united with one voice, in One Big Union."

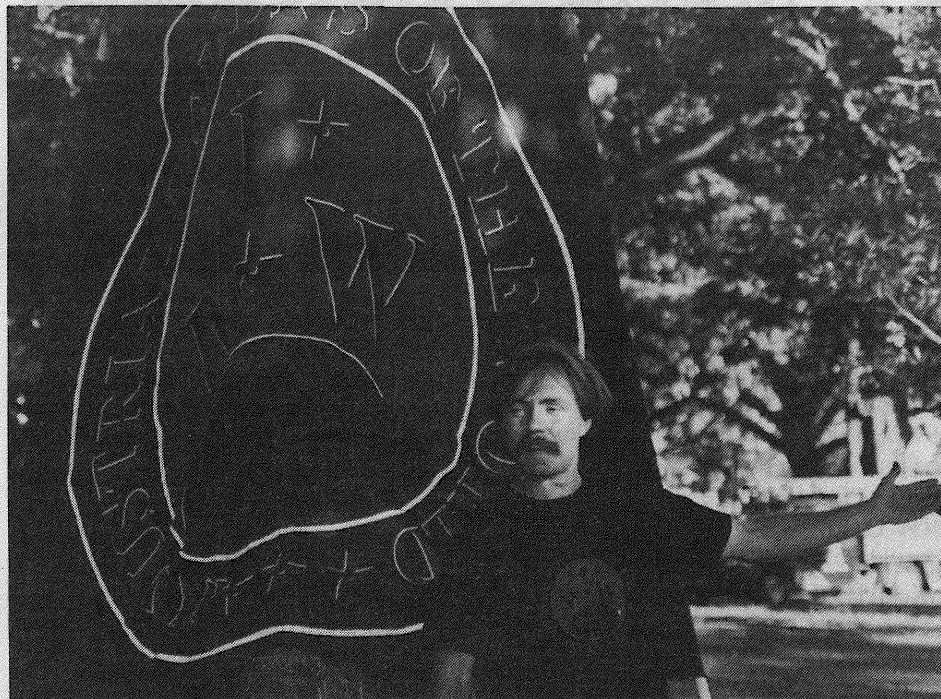
## Kafka Comes to College

(The following is excerpted from Alison Douglas's report from the trenches at Stevenson College, where the IWW's Education Workers Industrial Union has an active branch.)

I stand at the threshold, summoning all my strength, checking that I have all the necessary equipment: nerves of steel; the key to being in three different places at once; the confidence to smile professionally while I am being mercilessly scrutinised from above, below and sideways (but especially from behind my back)... Satisfied I am as I should be, I take a deep breath, cross the threshold and bravely march on towards my workroom to prepare for another ordinary day of teaching.

Are all lecturers as paranoid as I am? Well, no ... but far too many of us are. In my department, at least, people seldom retire amidst celebrations of a successfully completed career — they disappear, before their time, shipped out on stretchers, suffering from stress-related symptoms.

It is not that we have a natural tendency



Soapboxing on the Sidney (Australia) Domain

towards neuroticism. It's simply that that's what happens when people who want to do a good job are given too much to do, too little time to do it in, too little job security, too much blame for things they have no power over, too many bosses, and very little support.

Having successfully waded towards the classroom, through piles of triplicate admin, lecturers are faced with mobs of students who, quite rightly, know their rights, and understandably assume that we genuinely represent the college and the ridiculously rigid rules our modular curriculum requires. Consequently, we are the ones who are in the direct firing line of their complaints — complaints which many of us agree with and have frequently voiced ourselves, to no avail. Dodging these misdirected bullets can get a trifle tedious, to say the least. Moreover, it is a constant reminder of our powerlessness within an education system which generally dismisses the informed opinions of its highly trained, professional, and genuinely caring staff. A fine recipe for psychological distress.

As well as dealing with that particular conflict, we are expected to create a positive, healthy learning environment, establishing a trusting bond with our students. Many of them have poor academic histories and need to feel they can try out new skills

without too much fear of failure. Unfortunately, as well as being their teachers and encouragers, we are also their assessors... This conflict of roles is a recipe for disaster... All good teachers are suffering from the normal result of it — stress, at the very least... And not only are we teachers and assessors, but we are also the assessed. Our assessments are assessed by other assessors, and we assess other assessors' assessments...

In the midst of all this chaotic confusion and stress, it is essential that colleagues support each other and stick together in the face of adversity. But we don't.

With the general trend of a shrinking staff and shrinking hours, we are all forced to be part of a "team" which is internally riven through having to compete for essential "extra" temporary contract hours. And with constant rumours and facts about job losses in Further Education establishments throughout Scotland, even fully permanent staff are in fear of losing their posts... what ensues is the violation of trust between group members, the hiding of information... I've seen my colleagues become defensive, territorial, conspiratorial, and, very understandably, paranoid...

Meanwhile, the untouchable spectre of the real harasser — our dysfunctional education and employment system — looms on unchallenged, because those of us who know its ultimate effects are saturated with anxiety and overloaded with ammunition which we are too damned tired to fire in the right direction

There are only three ways of coping: some of us resign ourselves to becoming another piece of "natural wastage" and hope for a comfortable stretcher; others just get regularly wasted; and a few of us remain stubbornly optimistic about humanity and carry on, very Wobbly.

## Be a Wobbly — Join the IWW...

**Real Democracy!** All policy decisions are made by referendum. The IWW has just one (modestly) paid officer, the General Secretary-Treasurer. The 7-member General Executive Board is elected annually by the entire membership. All officers may be recalled by referendum. IWW workplaces and branches make their own decisions about bargaining and strategy.

**To Join** mail this form with a check or money order for initiation and first month's dues to IWW, 103 West Michigan Ave., Ypsilanti MI 48197, or contact your local delegate. **Dues:** Monthly income under \$800: \$5 per month; Income \$1,000-2,000: \$10 monthly; Over \$2,000: Dues \$15. Initiation Fee is same as one month's dues. A low-income worker can join for as little as \$10.00

I affirm that I am a worker, and that I am not an employer.  
 I agree to abide by the IWW constitution and regulations.  
 I will study its principles and make myself acquainted with its purposes.  
 Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_  
 State/Prov.: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Membership includes a subscription to the Industrial Worker

## Australia frees Wobbly speaker

The Australian Government was forced to withdraw a decision by Acting Immigration Minister Amanda Vanstone cancelling the visa of IWW member Lorenzo Kom'boa Ervin July 11, and was ordered to pay FW Ervin's legal costs. Ervin was arrested July 8 in Brisbane while on a speaking tour, after right-wing politicians took exception to his condemnation of racism in Australia and around the world.

The arrest was met with a hail of protest faxes and telephone calls, demonstrations and picket lines in Australia and around the world. In the United States, Wobblies joined protests at Australian offices in Atlanta, Los Angeles, New York and San Francisco, and IWW General Secretary-Treasurer Fred Chase protested the arrest and threatened deportation in a fax to Australian authorities. The Seamen's Union in Brisbane voted for strike action, if necessary, to prevent FW Ervin from being deported through the Brisbane port.

As we go to press, FW Ervin is set to resume his tour, with talks set in Lismore, Sydney, Canberra and Melbourne.

Authorities withdrew their deportation order when it was proved that they had issued it without following proper legal process, but were threatening new proceedings at press time.

## Libros Sin Fronteras workers go IWW

Workers at Libros Sin Fronteras, an Olympia, WA-based distributor of Spanish-language books, have joined the IWW and are demanding union recognition. Owner Michael Shapiro is challenging their right to union representation before the National Labor Relations Board, claiming that IWW delegate Jess Grant's position as book keeper makes him part of management.

Shapiro has also begun disciplinary proceedings against FW Grant, charging him with harassing the firm's two non-union workers (at Shapiro's direction, FW Grant noted that they had come in late on their time cards), and directed FW Grant to teach Shapiro how to do his job. Shapiro evidently hopes the NLRB will go along with his ludicrous claim that FW Grant is in management so that he can fire him with impunity.

Five of the firm's seven workers have taken out IWW membership, as has a worker fired May 15th, after the organizing drive had begun. NLRB charges of retaliatory discharge are pending in that case.

Libros Sin Fronteras imports and distributes books from Latin America. The boss claims to support unions and to have a "progressive" work environment. He's put posters around the place of Sandinistas and even Cesar Chavez. But when it comes to "his" workers organizing to defend their rights, suddenly he changes his tune.

## Privatization gets failing grade

A 17-month evaluation of contracting out demonstrated clearly that contractors could not do the work in Edmonton, Canada's Public Schools. Public school staff were significantly more productive than contract cleaning staff, while the contract staff also undermined school security, leaving doors and windows open and through high turnover creating a situation where school staff could not identify who was supposed to be in the facility.

## Steelworkers shot at on picketline

Three Marietta, Ohio, United Steelworkers of America (USWA) pickets narrowly escaped injury June 20 when a gunman laid down a barrage of shots into and around a trailer being used as a headquarters by workers on strike against Magnetic Specialty Inc. The shots appeared to come from MSI's loading dock area.

Scabs brought in to break the 18-week strike at MSI have repeatedly threatened union members with firearms. In May a MSI scab gunned down a state trooper in Charleston, W.V., before being shot twice and apprehended.

## Academic Freedom

Education worker Fathi Subuh of Al-Azhar University in Gaza, Palestine, was arrested by the Palestinian Preventive Security Service July 2. As of July 10, Subuh had been held for eight days longer than legally allowed before facing a magistrate.

Subuh was arrested — although the state denies this — for posing exam questions to students asking about their university and country's corruption.

Fax protests to Palestinian president Yassar Arafat at 011972-7-822365. For more information, e-mail sharriso@aiusa.org.

## Barricades in Managua

Education workers and students in Managua, Nicaragua, set up barricades June 30 to demand funding at the constitutionally mandated level of 6 percent of the budget. Police attacked the strikers and the state argued the 6 percent funding-level did not include state revenue from international aid.

Sandinista leader Daniel Ortega, in power throughout the 1980s, called for another popular upsurge of direct action to force the people's will for higher social spending.

On July 3, workers from surrounding communities joined the education strikes and rural sugar workers rallied against corrupt privatization of cooperatives.