

Industrial Worker

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EDUCATION ORGANIZATION EMANCIPATION

UK Wobblies Organising OBU

IWW members gathered at the Secular Hall, Leicester, on 7 and 8 March to discuss how to build the IWW in the British Isles.

Membership now stands at around 60, with a new job branch in New Milton, Hampshire, and a potential branch in the Tyne and Wear area. Members in Birmingham were working on renewed IWW activity after the end of the dockers strike and a Midlands branch is in the works.

GEB member Morgan Miller gave a report of the international situation and told of a meeting he had had with fellow workers in Paris in the CSR (Committee of Revolutionary Unionists), the SUD (an independent mainly rail-based union) and CNTF. A Finnish-based IWW was slowly coming together and there was interest in Colombia.

Morgan also gave a report about the IWW in the US and talked about the growth of the construction workers IU 330 and the Restaurant Workers IU 640 and plans to launch the union among printers (IU 450) and computer workers (IU 570).

The meeting then discussed IWW organising drives, including two potential campaigns aimed at transnational retail chains where international solidarity could play an important role.

Also discussed were possibilities for organizing the London hotel trade, offering workers an alternative to the collaborationist policies of the dominant union in the sector, the GMB. The trade is only 5 percent organised and many hotels have no union presence whatsoever.

Co Op workers lining up

The IWW has gone from 1 to 5 members in a very short time at the New Milton (Hampshire) Co-op, and others have expressed interest. IWW members have already had meetings with the bosses about the possible extension of shop opening times and had caused a great stir. The official union (USDAW) had done little and IWW membership now matched USDAW. Other issues of concern were flexible individual contracts and changes in hours.

The Co Op, as it is called, was established last century as a means of allowing working people access to food etc at reasonable prices. Twenty years ago it sold more goods than any other national chain, partly because of a 5 percent dividend which shop-

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In This Issue...

South Korea in Crisis

Honor Picket Lines:
Solidarity Not a Crime

Splicing Genes

Workers Fight Back in
Construction, Education



Work: The silent plague

It's a silent plague

It kills more than twice as many Americans as are murdered each year.

It costs more than heart disease and as much as cancer.

It's profitable to its perpetrators and brutal to its victims.

What is it?

Work.

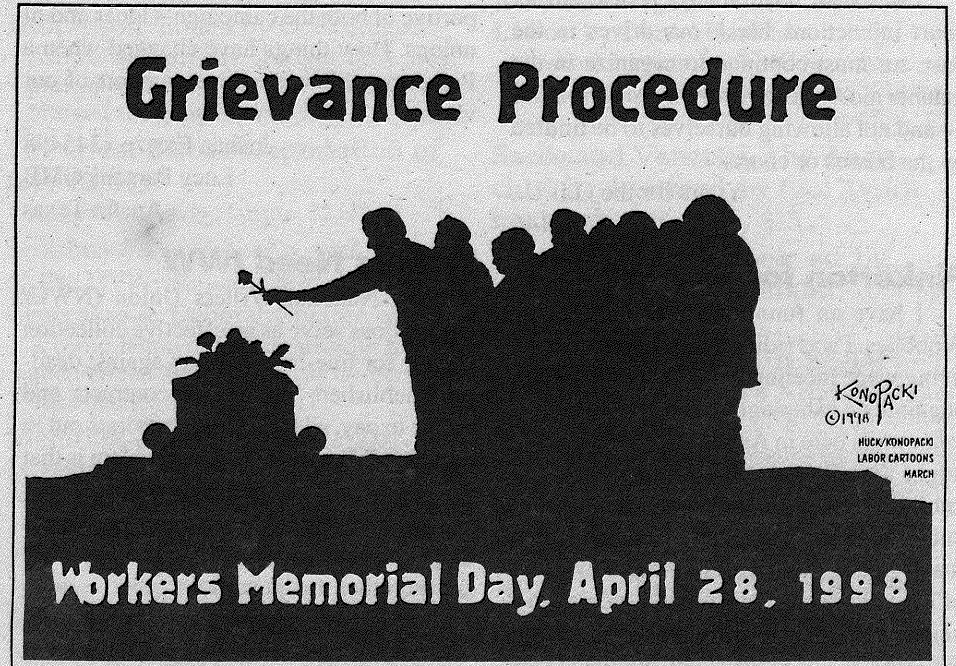
Each year 66,800 American workers die at work or from work related causes. That's 183 deaths every day. One every eight minutes.

Every day work injures 36,600 Americans and makes another 2,300 sick.

No "movies of the week." No removing CEOs for killing workers. No death penalty. No attention.

'Cept maybe on the union bulletin board - maybe - you'll see a notice of a worker dying in another plant. Or maybe it's your plant, and you hear stories. Or your department. And you knew that person and one day they went to work and didn't come home and a lot of lives changed for the worse.

There are stories. Terrible stories. In 1997 Great Lakes Steel in Ecorse, Michigan was the number one killer worksite in that state as well as nationally in the steel industry. Basically they decided to save money by not replacing worn out equipment. The state OSHA knew of such problems a year earlier. Well into 1998 Michigan OSHA has



neither fined nor cited the killer corporados.

There are gory details. An arc of 13 million volts in a suburban electricity substation, exploding, frying two workers who staggered blind out opposite doors, one to be found quickly by people working in a nearby restaurant and furniture store, the other, a thick cable fused to her thigh, lay on the ground for an hour. They lived a couple of days in misery. Months later the power company hasn't removed the burn marks

from the walls.

And subtle, less dramatic stories of the thousands who die each year not at work but because of work. Die slowly, painfully, soon after retirement. Die not really sure it was obedience to work that killed them.

We hear of murders by guns - 23,000 annually - a public health plague surely, but that's 35% of the 66,800 murdered by work. We hear of murders and unsafe streets constantly. In news and in movies. We can play

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Mexican rail workers wildcat

Wildcat strikes by several thousand railroad workers, beginning in the northern border state of Sonora, paralyzed freight and passenger movements on the Pacific-North Railroad line in late February, and have affected other railways as well. The wildcat strike movement, which was entering its third week in early March, is a response to privatization of the state-owned railroad, the failure of the new owners to rehire the railroad workers, the state's threatened cancellation of the workers' collective bargaining agreement, and company chiseling on severance pay.

Railroad workers, supported by their families, entire communities, students and local social movement activists have taken engines and cars out of service and blocked or destroyed railroad track in order to keep the trains from moving. The strikes and protests quickly spread from Sonora to several other states, mostly in western and northern Mexico.

The strike against Pacific-North, one of Mexico's principal railroad lines, began Feb. 16 in Local 8 of the Mexican Railroad Workers Union. Union leaders in Empalme called a general assembly where workers decided to shut down the system. Some 3,200 railroad workers in the cities of Nogales, Benjamin Hill, Hermosillo and Empalme then stopped company operations. Empalme is the headquarters of the company's operations, and an important railroad center.

Workers, their families, and towns people came out to make sure the trains didn't roll. When one train did try to leave, the crowds forced the train back to the roundhouse.

The workers were soon joined by members of a local group called Broad Front of

Social Organizations (FAOS) and by activists from the Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD) who came out to help shut down the freight and passenger service. Ford's Hermosillo auto plant was immediately affected by the shutdown.

Jose Guadalupe Esquivel Valenzuela explains that the railroad workers decided to strike in order to protest the company's failure to make the bi-weekly payroll and to pay severance pay. But he said they also struck because of a pending decision by the Board of Conciliation and Arbitration over whether or not the workers' collective bargaining agreement was to continue in force or to be nullified.

Management claims the contract expired when the government sold the railroad last year. The workers' key demand was that the railroad's new owners rehire all railroad workers previously employed by the state-owned company.

At the time of purchase, the line employed approximately 13,000 workers, members of the Mexican Railroad Workers Union (STFRM). The company was reportedly trying to force thousands of workers

into early retirement or unemployment, pressuring workers to sign voluntary retirement or severance agreements.

Victor Flores Morales, the authoritarian head of the government-linked Railroad Workers Union, has been a willing partner with the new private owners in carrying out layoffs, rewriting collective bargaining agreements, and disciplining workers who resisted the state or the company. Until recently, a handful of dissident workers have opposed him in the face of sometimes violent repression. Now, however, the state, the company and Flores Morales are faced with a mass movement from below.

Two years ago dissident railroad workers formed the Committee for the Defense of the Collective Bargaining Agreement to fight to defend the workers' union, contract and jobs during privatization. Last November, the group organized a caravan involving nearly 2,000 railroad workers who marched and rode from Nogales, Sonora, to Guadajajara, Jalisco.

The purpose of the caravan was to talk with and distribute information to Sonora's

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UK Wobs Meet...

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pers received from their purchases.

A massive expansion in the supermarket sector has done the co-op much damage and the naturally capitalist instincts of the managers has risen to the fore.

The Co Op have tried a number of traditional capitalist measures to restore "profits": they got rid of the dividend; they closed local stores; they developed large superstores; and they played hard-ball with the Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers - USDAW.

USDAW's role is important because it has only 300,000 members, a third of whom are employed in the Co Op. Up to a few years ago membership was compulsory for Co Op workers and the employer basically bankrolled the union. USDAW still favors the Co Op and has been very cooperative in Co Op plans to become more competitive.

Over the last couple of years store after store in Britain has extended opening hours from 6 to 7 and now to 10 p.m. A few stay open 24 hours. The Co Op has latched onto this idea as well and USDAW have not fought it. But in New Milton they came up against resistance for the first time. All 27 employees, mostly women and nearly all part time, were angry that the store would be forced to stay open till 10 p.m. and that they would be forced to work late night hours.

All the workers signed a collective grievance which stated that none of them were prepared to work extra hours, that none of them would sign new contracts and that anybody victimised would get the full support of their fellow workers.

The USDAW shop steward appeared to get absolutely no support from the union HQ whereas the lone IWW member (Ray Carr) was able to point to the value of self organisation and rank and file control of the decisions (as well as the IWW policy of low dues and no-frills unionism). The collective grievance was his suggestion and it worked!

Courier safety drive

Courier members are considering the launch of a "Courier Safety Campaign" along the lines of the Construction Safety Campaign on Workers Memorial Day (28 April), partly to expose the governments secrecy but also to fight for better and safer conditions for workers in the industry. Drivers and riders are being forced to risk their lives working long hours to secure a decent wage. The government keeps no details of death rates among drivers, and has refused to publish its report on rider safety.

Members also drew up a range of draft leaflets and adverts for various magazines and are looking at the prices of advertising and the establishment of a press fund.

Around Our Union

Two articles from Bread and Roses - the shorter working week and workplace democracy - have appeared along with extracts from the IWW preamble in *Weekly Insight*, a 100,000 circulation English-language newspaper in West Africa. It is produced in Ghana but is read throughout the continent. The editors have asked us to write more articles for them...

All in all it was a good weekend and the union has a number of positive activities planned for the future.

Chicago Wobs join anti-Hyundai action

Chicago Wobblies joined members of the Nicaragua Solidarity Committee and United Auto Workers Local 1268 to leaflet the annual Chicago Auto Show in support of Hyundai/Han Young auto workers in Tijuana, Mexico. Security guards initially prevented the 12 from leafletting directly in front of the sprawling McCormick complex, but they secured a beachhead on the right side of the street after being joined by 50 bike-riding members of Critical Mass.

Han Young workers often lack appropriate face shields, gloves or safety shoes. Some workers are burned, others are losing their vision due to constant exposure to lead fumes. Workers are paid \$36 to \$48 a week - not enough to afford basic necessities.

The workers twice defied company intimidation and voted to be represented by the independent union STIMAHCS. Han Young management refused to accept the first vote, and refused to negotiate with workers after the second vote. As of mid-February, the company president claimed not to have been officially notified of the union certification, while the government insisted the notification had been issued. Nevertheless, the government is not proceeding with the next step allowed by Mexican law of seizing the assets of a company that refuses to negotiate in good faith.

Supporters of the Hyundai workers and those concerned with safeguarding their own future wages can fax Han Young's attorney demanding that he advise his client to cease its violation of Mexican labor law and immediately negotiate in good faith with the STIMAHCS union: Lic. Ricardo Estrada, Tijuana, fax: 011-526-634-3554.

Boss Terror Breaks Applebee's Drive

Firings and threats enabled Applebee's management in Metairie, Louisiana, to defeat the IWW in a National Labor Relations Board election in a 15-41 vote March 10. The IWW had filed for union recognition six weeks earlier with authorization cards signed by two-thirds of the workers.

Managers bombarded workers with anti-union propaganda, including frequent mailings to workers' homes, captive meetings and posters in the restaurant comparing IWW officials to Joseph Stalin and Fidel Castro. Letters sent to workers' homes pointedly told of long strikes at other area employers caused by management intransigence, suggesting that Applebee's, too, might prefer to force workers onto picket lines for months or years rather than agree to negotiate working conditions and pay.

Applebee's deliberately lied about the IWW, claiming that workers could be compelled to pay assessments on top of dues, would charge "up to \$15 a month in dues" (given Applebee's pathetic pay scales, it would have taken very substantial pay raises to bring Applebee's workers anywhere near that dues rate), and claimed that IWW organizers got to pocket half of union dues.

Much of this anti-union bluster was boilerplate* - one letter urged workers to ask union organizers to sign a pledge to guarantee that the boss wouldn't slash their pay and benefits during bargaining "even though my union has not been able to get those benefits for the employees who the union represents at other warehouses (sic)." This thinly veiled threat to slash workers' pay and benefits if they voted union was reinforced in meetings where the bosses threatened to bust kitchen workers down to minimum wage if the union won.

While franchise owner Tom Kellogg signed a "personal guarantee" that workers would not lose their jobs because they signed a union authorization card or attended a union meeting, workers had already learned how much that promise not to engage in illegal unfair labor practices was worth when a vocal union supporter was fired a week and a half before. Another union supporter was fired as Kellogg's personal guarantee was arriving at workers' homes. One worker walked off the job that night to protest this firing and the pattern of harassment of union supporters it represented.

To make sure no one missed the point, Kellogg's "personal guarantee" was accompanied by a letter noting that "There is no longer any question that this union is going to be beaten and beaten badly" and asking workers who still supported the union "to

Solidarity with the Jackson Advocate

We, the members of IU 450 of the IWW, printing and publishing industry workers, register our protest and outrage at the firebombing of the *Jackson Advocate* and stand in solidarity with the workers whose livelihood has been threatened by this horrifying act of terrorism.

The *Jackson (Mississippi) Advocate* is a black-owned weekly newspaper renowned for its investigative reporting and its critical examination of local politics. Publisher Charles Tisdale received an anonymous death threat three days before the January 26 attack which destroyed most of the *Advocate's* first floor offices and equipment. Losses are estimated to be \$100,000. Tisdale has operated the paper since the late 1970s and has been the victim of at least 20 other acts of vandalism and bombing attempts.

Despite this overwhelming pattern of terrorism, local officials have failed to respond in a manner that would indicate real concern for the safety of the *Advocate's* workers or for civil order in general. The Jackson, Mississippi, fire investigator, Vernon Hughes, said it would be difficult to

get on the right side - the winning side."

IWW organizers have filed several Unfair Labor Practice charges against Applebee's with the NLRB, pointing to threats made during and outside captive meetings, wrongful firings, and other actions which created a climate in which many union supporters were afraid to stand up for their rights. This climate of fear and intimidation unfortunately turned the tide against the union. As usual, the NLRB's foot-dragging enabled the bosses to continue their intimidation through the election. The NLRB's remedies, if any, will come far too late to undo the damage.



Several union supporters remain on the job at Applebee's, and will continue to fight to improve conditions there and to spread the union message far and wide. Taking a lesson from this recent experience, workers will continue to organize to better their conditions, not relying upon the NLRB to "certify" their right to act union.

A positive result of the drive was that a much-loathed supervisor was transferred out. She had been spying on and following union supporters, in addition to relentlessly nitpicking workers in general.

Hostesses at the Metairie restaurant, who saw their pay drop due to an "innovative" cost-saving system recently instituted by Applebee's which had their hourly wage paid out of servers' tips instead of the boss' profits, also won a lump-sum check which made up the difference between what they received in pay and the federal minimum wage. Management realized that the tip money garnished from the servers and given to the hostesses was a main concern that sparked the organizing drive. While the hostesses ended up winning the bare minimum they are entitled to by law, the company has not yet stopped garnishing servers' tips to pay a portion of the hourly rate.

*An interesting sidelight - a poster of a red dot with the caption, "blow on this dot, and if it turns blue, the union's promises will come true" was also used by management in a drive to certify an independent union of exotic dancers in Pennsylvania. In Metairie, workers report that after they blew on the poster, it was covered with blue dots. The poster was removed soon afterwards.

find a suspect because of what he considered a wide array of possible motives. To Tisdale, however, the motive is clear: "It is an attack on the freedom of the press," Tisdale said.

The racist implications in this case are obvious. The act of firebombing and attempting to silence an alternative voice smacks of 1960s-type racially motivated attacks aimed at civil rights activists. This overt racist violence aimed at the *Advocate's* employees sounds the call for action on their behalf.

We, the writers, printers, and other workers belonging to IU 450 of the IWW call on printing and publishing workers, union labor and all concerned citizens to send their statements of solidarity and demands for justice in the firebombing case of the *Jackson Advocate*. Donations can also be sent to: The Advocate, P.O. Box 3708, Jackson MS 39207

IU 450 contact: Nick Patti, 180 Washington Ave. #304, Albany NY 12210 (518) 426-0528

"An injury to one is an injury to all."

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.



This past February, your scribe and his beloved parole officer once again decided that this particular month was better spent in the sunny Mediterranean than in the Windy City. This time of year has kindlier air fares, not to mention that there is not the plethora of tourists that will be found in Greece and other Mediterranean areas in later months. With fellow worker wife to pull me out of any linguistic difficulties, I feel quite at home there, and a good five weeks was had by the both of us.

Greece, however, despite its "Socialistic" ruling party, is still under capitalism with all its attendant tribulations. It has been my long-standing observation that when a socialist administration comes to power via a popular election, that the people are ready for much more than liberal reforms. Likewise, "Socialist" politicians are essentially no different than their more conventional colleagues when it comes to making and keeping promises.

Consequently the country is beset by many strikes, as "socialism" does not cure the ills of a deteriorating global economy, and the results can be easily seen. Governments in Greece are more solicitous to the moneyed classes than they are toward their loyal electorate, and that goes for lately fallen "People's Republics" as well. The fact that Greece is collaborating with the European Common Market contributes to its present turbulence.

The Common Market wishes to cut down on the number of farmers in Greece, urging them to enter into factory work with the result that many highways, especially those connecting the larger population centers, are being roadblocked by tractors and other farm equipment. Throughout history those who worked the land have been looked down on as being backward and unprogressive by the supposedly more sophisticated city dwellers. But there have been many times in history when the tillers of the land, be they private landowners or serfs, realized their importance as food producers for the rest of the population – that the non-food producers depend on them, rather than they on the city dwellers.

Most of the social upheavals throughout human history have been initiated by those who work the land, be they laboring under peonage or have the fortune to be "free and independent" land owners. The modern descendants of ancient civilization who point with pride to the achievements of their predecessors on the most part give credit to the historical personages of those days.

There are still many architectural remnants extant in Greece today that attest to Greece being the first established civilization on the European peninsula. However, too few give credit where credit is due. What made Greece a maritime power three thousand years ago was the hands of those who worked the land. It was the cultivation of such staples as olives and wheat, as well as the growing of grapes and the production of wine, that made Greece a commercial power in that section of the earth and enabled an upper class to erect monumental edifices that have been admired for millennia.

In fact, those edifices would never have been erected without the sweat of half-naked laborers, and not by toga-clad philosophers strolling between those very columns. As Ralph Chaplin wrote: "They have taken untold millions that they never toiled to earn, But without our brains and muscle not a single wheel would turn!"

Athens, which was once one of the most beautiful cities on earth, has unfortunately become another sprawling urban monstrosity where too many cars crowd the too few avenues that are to be found among streets that were designed for vehicles of an earlier century. The plethora of carbon monoxide-belching monstrosities is having its adverse effect on the treasured antiquities, whose marble is being irreparably corroded.

Freedomland-style consumerism has also made inroads among these proud people. Despite a culinary tradition that has existed for thousands of years, there is a growing preponderance of Burger Kings and McDunghills that are another unpleasant disruption of the atmosphere. While Schlemiels and Cowboy-Killers do not hold a candle to the Greek-produced tobacco, they are by far outselling the local varieties. In the shopping areas, many of the shops are using English names with the emphasis on Americanisms.

However, a certain vitality remains among the people that is characteristically irrepressible. Where in Eastern Europe the many "people's republics" have been discredited, the Greek Communist Party (KKE) is still a vital force despite having sold out Greece at the end of World War Two. There are also many other splintered socialist groups, all leaving their graffiti around, and in recent years there has been appearing the encircled A, the international trademark of the anarchists. In one demonstration of striking teachers there were many black flags to be seen.

The traditional kafeneon, or Greek coffee house, still abounds – long-standing institutions where many ideological discussions ensue.

There are the olive trees that are thousands of years old, older in fact than the proud temples that they helped to build. So long as the olive trees bear their tangy fruit and oil and grizzled philosophers hold forth at the Kafenia, there is hope for our species.

— C.C. Redcloud

Down the rat hole

The Livingston/Maclean Counties *Union News* reports that the Illinois Senate failed to act on a single piece of legislation backed by the AFL-CIO. Of 15 "key bills" backed by the labor federation (banning slave labor goods, restoring legislation protecting construction workers' safety, barring labor law violators from state nursing home contracts, etc.) most did not even get a committee hearing, and none made it to a vote. This despite the fact that the AFL has poured hundreds of thousands of dollars into the politricksters' campaigns...

In England the Labour Party, largely financed from union dues, is the major shareholder on the Mersey Docks, which recently busted the country's last surviving dockers union with not a peep of protest from the workers' political "representatives."

Meanwhile, the AFL-CIO is locked in desperate struggle to stop proposed laws that would bar unions from spending money on politics without getting written permission from their members to do so each year. Polls indicate that 70 percent of California voters will vote in favor of a referendum to that effect – and that union members are just as likely to support the measure as non-union voters.

They have good reason. Every year the AFL-CIO and its affiliates spend more than a hundred million dollars on lobbying, contributions to politicians' campaigns, and other "political action."

I would say that this money was being poured down a rat hole were that not manifestly unfair to rats. Years back I knew someone with a pet rat, which he carried to school most days inside his shirt. Properly cared for, he insisted, rats were affectionate, sociable creatures; and I never knew his rat to bite or otherwise abuse him. I can not say

the same of politicians. Despite receiving lavish paychecks and living in luxurious accommodations, the politricksters persistently turn upon their faithful labor backers – and then have the nerve to demand our support, lest they should turn even more vicious in their depredations...

It's nothing but a protection racket, and if the politricksters want to stop taking our money, I say great! The American Fakeration of Labor would do much better putting that money into organizing or strike relief, or even shredding it for bedding for the rats.

The IWW, of course, has always refused to squander its members' dues money on pay-offs to politicians, or to engage in alliances with political parties. Individual

members can do as they please in this regard, but as a union we have much more useful things to occupy our energies and resources.

It's a sad commentary on the AFL-CIO that they think they don't...

Editor's Notebook



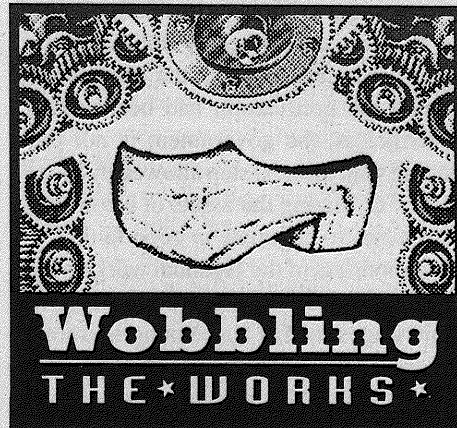
Poverty still growing

The U.S. Conference of Mayors reports that despite the "robust economy," the ranks of the homeless are growing. Demand for emergency food rose 16 percent last year, the largest increase since 1992. Many cities saw shelter requests rise, while the number of emergency shelter beds fell 3 percent. While more people are finding jobs, wages are so low that many workers have to choose between paying rent and buying food.

New York City Comptroller Alan Hevesi reports that Wall Street's bonuses (not salaries) came to \$10.7 billion for 1997.

And researchers at the Boston Medical Center and Children's Hospital report that unaffordable rents and crumbling, roach-infested buildings are taking a heavy toll on children. Thousands of children suffer de-

Acting Union at work



In my last column, I discussed the procedures for NLRB elections, but also urged workers interested in organizing to "act like a union" regardless of whether or not they had won certification in an election. Certification is not always won the first time around. Sometimes situations are created (by the very laws that are supposed to protect workers' rights) that make it difficult for a union to immediately win majority support in a workplace, despite the fact that many workers would like to see their conditions change. However, workers are still entitled to legal protection when we work together and attempt to secure better conditions from the boss, even if there is no union present at all.

Legal protection for concerted activity (actions that workers take together) falls under Section 7 of the National Labor Relations Act: "Employees have the right to self-organization, to form, join, or assist labor organizations, to bargain collectively through representatives of their own choosing, and to engage in other concerted activities for the purpose of mutual aid or protection..."

Be prepared! When workers make demands on the boss, sometimes the boss gets

bent out of shape and retaliates – often by firing the head troublemakers.

Such firings are 100% illegal, but the legal protections workers have in the United States are slim. Your boss will never go to jail for committing unfair labor practices, despite the fact that his actions might propel an honest worker into poverty. The remedies that the NLRB offers workers can be one or more of the following: back pay; reinstatement; or a notice posting, which is basically a written admission of wrongdoing. These "solutions" often come more than a year after the harm has been done. Realizing how limited our legal standing is as workers is important, so that we do not make the mistake of solely relying upon the government for protection – since it is quite clear whose side they are out to protect.

One common complaint that working people have is that a supervisor is particularly nasty, or that he is not good at the job and makes it difficult to get work done. Such was the case in *Atlantic-Pacific Construction Co., Inc. v. NLRB* 52 F.3d 260 (9th Cir 1995), where workers decided to pass around a petition which they submitted to the boss demanding that he rid them of a disliked and unqualified supervisor. The instigator of the petition was fired, but his reinstatement was ordered by the Board. The boss tried to appeal the NLRB's ruling, saying that the petition was a result of personal animosity, which everyone agreed did exist. However, the court did not accept the argument, and in its decision stated, "The nexus between the activity and working conditions must be gleaned from the totality of the circumstances, as even wholly inarticulate activity, like walkouts or work slowdowns, may be protected activity."

Sometimes workers are also concerned

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bilitating asthma attacks as a result (and hundreds die each year), lead poisoning is common, and many children are starving. Each winter, Boston City Hospital finds that young children's growth slows as their parents choose between paying heating bills and buying food. Overall, one in five kids on a waiting list for affordable housing show signs of stunted growth, compared to one in 30 for kids whose families had already been placed. Many of these children will suffer the consequences of this malnutrition in their early years for the rest of their lives.

The researchers conclude that this is a case of societal child abuse; abuse that could easily be prevented were human lives given as much importance as profits. Ain't capitalism great?

"Responsible" capitalism

One might be tempted to say that finding a responsible capitalist is like looking for a needle in a haystack, except that it isn't nearly that easy. A few days ago my pension plan sent the grisly details on how their "socially responsible" fund has put my money into such upstanding corporate citizens as Gannett and Knight-Ridder (busting unions in Detroit since 1995), McDonalds, Columbia/HCA Healthcare (one of the country's largest and most ruthless for-profit hospital chains), Nike, Wal-Mart and other corporate criminals too numerous to name.

Citizens Trust's portfolio is similar, including such "socially responsible" outfits as American Express, Coca Cola, Kaiser and Microsoft (which uses prison slave labor to package its software).

It's a rotten system, and the only thing to be done with it is to bring it to a quick, merciful (for the vast majority of the population) end.

In the Labor Press

The Winter 1998 *Laborer* opens to a full-color photograph of a smiling Labor-

ers' Union President Arthur Coia, explaining that they have agreed to another year of government oversight "in order to continue the progress towards making our Union a more democratic and progressive organization..." Thumbing through to the small print on page 28, we learn that government charges were filed Nov. 6 charging Coia with mob ties and taking kickbacks.

According to the small-print reports, Laborers' officials gave over \$200,000 to a Political Action Committee official after he was expelled for racketeering; a Local 5 Business Manager was indicted for first degree murder; Local 1030, 324 and 394 Business Agents have been charged with taking pay-offs from employers; and Local 1030's former Recording Secretary recruited members to work for non-union contractors under unsafe conditions.

Government prosecutors make lousy unionists. The government-appointed Appellate Officer has overturned a union trial board's decision that a foreman (and union member) acted improperly in firing a union steward for arguing over conditions. The government-appointed GEB Attorney obtained a Temporary Restraining Order against and is now attempting to expel several union members for an "insurgency" in which they occupied their union hall in an attempt to block the imposition of a trusteeship. It's a sad day when unionists aren't permitted to decide their own affairs, whether it's the piecards or the mobsters or the gumpets who stand in the way.

That's why the IWW insists on keeping control of the union firmly in the hands of the membership, insisting on annual elections, term limits, and the right of every member to inspect the union records at any time. Workers don't need high-priced bureaucrats and lawyers to run our union for us, we're perfectly capable of making our own decisions...

— Jon Bekken

Readers' Soapbox...

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Pseudo-romantic past

The Minneapolis/St. Paul branch is growing rapidly, adding about 2 members a month. We will go GMB shortly.

At the last monthly meeting we decided that the time had come to stop living in the "pseudo-romantic" past of the IWW and its martyrs, as far as songs and music are concerned. Since many of our local FWs are

musicians, we decided it was a fitting time to have some songs in other idioms, such as jazz, rock, blues, etc. (We realize that other FWs are and have been doing good work in the folk mode, like Mark Ross and Utah Phillips.) We encourage all fellow workers to take up the challenge.

We also decided to do our bit in the history project, and are looking for information on IWW activities in our region. In the early 1900s, Minneapolis was the Upper Midwest headquarters for nefarious operators who in modern parlance would be called temporary job agencies. These job sharks would take money from job-seekers and send them out to, e.g., farm jobs in Iowa and South Dakota. Frequently there was no job at all on the other end. I am looking for information on IWW efforts to suppress much of this illegal activity. Any historical input from knowledgeable FWs in this area would be much appreciated.

Don Kurth, X345101

Corporate May Day

For four years I have marched in the Minneapolis May Day Parade with the New Union Party. Several progressive groups such as the Vets for Peace and other labor-oriented groups join the march each year.

The Puppet Theatre marches their huge, beautiful puppets, so there is a mixed bag of political activists and artists who celebrate the beautiful month of May.

But recently I found out that the Puppet Theatre, which marches with the political groups on May Day, is financed by corporate businesses. Don't the New Union Party and the IWW support corporate America by marching with them? I strongly feel that we should promote ourselves as the real revolutionary group that will uplift the working class, and be careful of other so-called political or art groups that fool the people and make money off the workers.

ONCE IN A WHILE procrastination pays off. I kept postponing writing my monthly column for lack of an inspiring topic. The military madness I wrote about last month seems to have cooled for the moment. While the situation certainly bears watching and preparation for the next time Clinton and Blair renew their sabre rattling, it didn't seem like a good topic to rehash at the moment.

I thought of writing about the proposed legislation in California which will require labor unions to get permission from their members before putting union dues into financial campaigns. But I kept getting stuck after "The IWW has opposed endorsing political candidates for over 90 years. Union financial support for politicians is wasted money." Seems kinda obvious to me.

Anyway, I was banging my head up against a mental block when the mail carrier arrived with certified mail from a law firm. Uh oh, thinks I, the union's finally going to be made part of the lawsuit against the good Fellow Workers who blocked the Neptune Jade from delivering its scab cargo to San Francisco. But I opened it to find that we were being threatened by yet another boss: Applebee's. So thanks to the law firm of Shook, Hardy and Bacon of Kansas City for providing me with grist for the mill this time around.

from the desk of...

The letter says that we are violating copyright law by using mock-ups of their logo, replacing "Applebee's" with "Bad Apple" and "Wobblies." They tell us that our "organizing activities must be conducted within the law, which is not presently the case" and that our "use of our client's adulterated trademark in your newspaper ... goes beyond the perimeters (sic - shouldn't that be parameters? Maybe I should offer them my services as a copy editor) of free speech." Now I've never claimed to be a lawyer, but if they're right, then it would seem that free speech rights have been eroded far more than even I had realized.

They go on to say "We would ask for your written assurance that the enclosed materials will be immediately withdrawn and that no further use of Applebee's trademarks will be made. If this does not occur and the illegal activity continues, Applebee's will seek appropriate relief through the courts." Oof! Ouch! Ya got me! Being the democratic and decentralized union that we are, I don't make policy. But if Applebee's is waiting for a letter of compliance from me personally, I hope they're very patient folks. I have better things to do with my time.

We received a similar letter from Borders in '96. We ignored that one and continued with our campaign, using the "Are you furious?" take-off of their "Are you curious?" slogan. The threatened lawsuit wasn't forthcoming. I'll bet the larger Borders has even more high-powered lawyers than li'l ol' Applebee's. If they decided not to sue us it had to be either because they knew they didn't have a case or they figured the publicity for their union busting activities would do them far more harm than a lawsuit would do us. Publicity about us thumbing our noses at the bosses once again couldn't help but endear us to a growing segment of the working class. The union as a whole might take a different position on this matter, although that would surprise me. Personally I'm inclined to respond to such threats with a "come get me" attitude. Show yourselves to the world for the union busters you are.

It amazes me to think of how little they must know of our history when they try to scare us with lawsuits. Lessee, we've had organizers shot, hanged, mutilated, tarred and feathered, imprisoned and deported by the bosses in collaboration with the government. Now we're supposed to be intimidated by threats of a lawsuit? I don't think so.

We'll check with some lawyers to see if Applebee's has any grounds for suing. But my personal approach to lawyers, one that I think is popular within the ranks of Wobblies, is not to let them tell us what we can and can't do, only to let them tell us how they're going to defend us after we've done what we think is right, regardless of whether or not it's legal. Most law, particularly business law, is a tool of the bosses for the suppression of the working class. If we let ourselves be intimidated by their lame threats, the prospects for advancing the interests of our class become nil.

Well, gotta go design some flyers for distribution at our local Applebee's restaurant. Now where did I put that "Bad Apple" logo?

See you on the picket line.

— Fred Chase, IWW General Secretary-Treasurer

Throughout history, May Day was a celebration of a change of seasons; and over 100 years ago the beginning of the 8 hour workday. I propose that the New Union Party and the IWW should celebrate May Day separately from other groups.

Steven Hatcher
Editor's Note: In nearly 20 years in the struggle I have sometimes found myself in what I considered unsavory company, standing on picket lines alongside politicians and piecards (but also, and this is what matters, rank-and-file workers) and joining protests against various of the outrages endemic to this rotten system organized by people who seemingly want only to ameliorate the damage it causes. A couple of years ago I heckled Cambridge's vice mayor when she spoke at a local May Day rally, speaking of workers and bosses having common interests.

It is often repulsive to encounter such

fakers, but they can be avoided only by sealing ourselves off and talking only with those with whom we already agree.

I, for one, would far rather celebrate May Day with a few hundred of my fellow workers with whom I can discuss our common problems and their solution than hold a meeting with the relative handful who already know that capitalism must be overthrown, and that it will take One Big Union solidarity to do the trick.

Nor would this suggestion seem completely consistent with the IWW's policy of political independence.

Industrial Worker Sustaining Fund

Ric Garren, Fairport NY	\$40
Dennis Georg, Butte MT	10
Tom Johnson, Newmarket NH	15

Many thanks, fellow workers, for your generous support.

Suggestions for contributors

This is the members' newspaper, and we welcome and need your letters, articles, photos, artwork and ideas. We're particularly looking for material dealing with direct action on the job, successful solidarity campaigns, IWW organizing and other activities, as well as union scabbing and efforts for greater democracy in our unions and on our jobs.

Your articles should include specific details, rather than generalities, so readers can visualize the situation you're discussing for themselves. Please double-check the spelling of names, correct titles and such, as it is difficult to catch errors like these on this end. Copy should be sent on disk (saved as a straight text file and in up to version 5.0 of any major word processing format) or by email if possible, so it does not have to be reset here.

The paper is produced on the second weekend of each month, and it's helpful if copy arrives a few days earlier. Submissions go to our Cambridge address, not to Ypsilanti. Don't use UPS to overnight things here, as they will not deliver here. I cannot receive faxes.

Thanks for your support and assistance in making our paper better, and in getting the union word out.

Gene-Splicing and Monopolization of Food

Guess What's Coming to Dinner

Disgusted at what is being done to our food supply, an increasing number of people are turning to joining food coops or purchasing organic food (grown from natural seeds without chemical agents). Unfortunately, many working people do not have this option. Those who rush home from work, grab the kids from daycare, dash to the clinic and try to get home in time for dinner may have to buy food the easiest way possible – at the supermarket.

Through early 1998, many supermarkets at least had some food marked “organically grown.” Through early 1998, this label meant something. But if the food industry has its way, the label will mean nothing. If Congress approves proposed changes, the “organic” label could be put on food which was genetically engineered, fertilized with sewage sludge, or irradiated with nuclear waste.

Genetic engineering is the process of inserting a gene from one species into a totally different species. The best-known example is the “flavr savr tomato,” which is tomato whose seed had a fish gene spliced in so that it would have longer shelf life.

The unsuspecting consumer may be allergic to fish (or be allergic to the new artificial combination of genes). Those who shop to avoid certain toxic or allergenic foods will find it difficult to impossible to protect themselves as more and more bizarre products hit the supermarket. Far from helping to protect us, the biotechnology industry is working hard to ensure that food is never labeled as genetically altered, making it impossible for us to know the true content of food.

Are you a vegetarian, meaning you want to know if you are eating vegetables contaminated with fish genes? The food multinationals see no reason that you should have that right, since it could threaten their profits. Are you Jewish or Muslim, meaning you would like to know if your food has been spliced with pig genes? Irrelevant – your religious beliefs are being sacrificed on the

alter of corporate greed.

It gets worse. We are aware of some toxic and allergic reactions to foods. But the nature of genetic engineering is that it creates food with a genetic structure which has never existed before. If a small number of



people have allergic reactions to new genetic combinations, it may be extremely difficult to identify the problem and treat the reaction. Is the food company which created the problem going to admit it, compensate the people poisoned, and withdraw the product? Or will the corporation hire researchers to produce fake data, hire public relations firms to produce slick TV ads, and pay politicians to write laws making sure they can't be sued? If you have any doubt of whether corporations will knowingly kill millions of consumers for profit, simply look at the history of the tobacco industry. The biotechnology industry is considerably more powerful than tobacco.

It gets worse. Monsanto is genetically engineering plants to be resistant to its herbicide Roundup. Others are being designed to be resistant to pesticides. As agribusiness

applies even more chemicals to its “designer crops,” farmworkers are exposed to more toxins and working people buy produce with greater pesticide residues. (But it looks so shiny on the supermarket shelf!)

If agribusiness and chemical companies would only be so kind as to limit themselves to poisoning us in the ways already described. They are not so kind. The greatest threat posed by genetic engineering is the very real possibility of world famine.

That these people could justify what they are doing with the duplicitous claim that they want to feed the world's hungry shows the depths of cynicism to which they plunge. They pronounce that they will be able to feed the hungry by growing more food per acre, by developing pest-be resistant plants, and by marketing produce with a longer shelf life.

The truth is that world famine exists side by side with destruction of massive quantities of food. Hunger exists because bankers make sure that food does not reach those who do not pay for it (unless they pose for a PR commercial). Increasing the quantity of food grown will do nothing to reduce hunger – but it will lower the price of food, thereby destroying the livelihood of millions of small farmers and allowing agribusiness to buy their land for a cheap price.

Remember the potato famine in Ireland? It is the classic example of what can happen from growing a small variety of vegetables (i.e., reduced biodiversity). As the food moguls spread like a plague across the planet, they replace native plants with those engineered in a far away laboratory. The world market forces each grower to rely on the “ideal” variety of vegetable. Hundreds or thousands of species of corn are reduced to a few score or less (just as dozens of automobile companies were replaced by the Big Three). Enter superweed. Enter superbug. Both mutated and now resistant to the most carcinogenic pesticide. The Irish potato looms on a global horizon.

Several factors increase the chances of this “silent spring.” The genetic structure of plants has evolved during millennia in an interconnected ecosystem. Genes do not exist in isolation, but as part of an interconnected whole. When a gene which causes a plant to resist pests is removed and put in another plant, it can have completely novel effects when it interacts with genes in the new plant. In addition to resisting insect pests, one such gene killed microorganisms in the soil which were necessary for plant growth.

A genetically engineered plant might cross-pollinate with related species to produce a new herbicide-resistant weed. Such a superweed could spread like kudzu, choking out edible crops. Unlike defective cars, it is not possible to recall a genetically engineered species gone wild.

If there is a massive world crop failure and hunger becomes more widespread than it already is, guess which class will get the food which is still available and guess which class will be given bullets to eat.

Agribusiness has almost completed its dream of exterminating the American family farmer. But tens of millions of farmers around the world are actively resisting Monsanto's “final solution” to organic vegetables. Family farmers are the natural ally of working people in demanding that we not be poisoned at the supermarket.

On July 17 - 19 environmentalists and food activists from throughout the US will get together for the “First Grassroots Gathering on Biodevastation: Genetic Engineering.” Hosted by the Gateway Green Alliance, Pure Food Campaign and the Edmonds Institute, the gathering will be in St. Louis, home of Monsanto, the most powerful single player in the biotechnology industry. The first group to become a cosponsor was the St. Louis branch of the IWW. If you want to find out more, call the Gateway Greens at 314/727-8554 or send an e-mail to fitzdon@aol.com

A good part of the genetic engineering gathering will be devoted to building action networks between environmentalists, farmers and workers. If you come to St. Louis, wear your Wobbly t-shirt.

— Don Fitz, St. Louis IWW
Gateway Greens

NLRB orders Avondale CEO to apologize to shipyard workers

The National Labor Relations Board has directed Avondale Shipyard CEO Albert Bossier to personally read a cease and desist order to 4,100 current and former shipyard workers, reinstate 28 fired workers and rescind disciplinary actions taken against another 15. The company owes workers some \$3 million in back pay.

The order covers hundreds of actions by the company to try to reverse the results of a 1993 union representation election won by the New Orleans Metal Trades Council at the massive New Orleans-based shipyard.

John Meese, president of the Metal Trades Department in Washington, said the union is heartened by the decision, but frustrated by the inability of the government to put any muscle behind its findings. “If Mr. Bossier were held personally and financially liable for the damage he has done, we would probably see an end to this reprehensible behavior. As long as Avondale gets away with spending government tax dollars to frustrate the organizing rights of its workers, Avondale is going to continue breaking the law with impunity.”

Avondale currently has more than \$10 billion in U.S. Navy shipbuilding contracts.

NLRB Administrative Law Judge David L. Evans took the unusual step of ordering Bossier to personally read a Board cease and desist order. Evans said the “extraordinary remedies” his decision called for are necessary “because of (Avondale's) egregious misconduct, demonstrating a general disregard for the employees' fundamental rights...”

Several other complaints are pending, including the case of a woman fired just weeks before the NLRB decision for sending a letter to Bossier protesting Avondale's self-description as the only major nonunion shipyard in America. “I know [and] you know ... that we the workers at Avondale Shipyard voted to be represented by the union about four years ago,” Betty Dumas wrote. Bossier replied with a pink slip.

Goodyear workers say No

Union workers in Union City, Tenn., have rejected a contract which would have converted their jobs to 7-days-a-week, round-the-clock operations. Goodyear had threatened to cut 310 jobs and cancel planned investments to modernize the plants if workers did not accept continuous work.

Ryder school bus drivers win jobs

Five women fired summarily for a solidarity strike at Ryder Transportation in Nashua, NH, last October have been reinstated with full pay after a March 3 NLRB hearing. The company agreed to rehire them, after it became clear that the Board would rule in the workers' favor, finding that workers who are not unionized have the same rights to engage in “concerted job actions” as unionized workers.

Carol Comeau, the 21-year Ryder veteran driver whose firing led to the women's walkout still hasn't been rehired. She was fired because management had made an absolute rule that drivers who have a single preventable action will be fired. If there had been a union, workers might have participated in writing the rulebook, and objected to the one-strike-and-you're-out rule. Time will tell whether the current settlement will stick.

Ryder management received many angry letters and phone calls when the incident was reported in the local papers, and more when the *Industrial Worker* reported the news two months later.

An Injury to One An Injury to All

May Day Mass Strike Called in Ontario

For the first time since the Haymarket Incident in 1886 there will be a mass strike on May Day in North America. On February 21 the Ontario Federation of Labour announced that the next Day of Action against the Tory government of Mike Harris and his ruthlessly anti-labour policies will take place in St. Catharines, Ontario, on May 1st.

Thousands of protesters will fill the streets and picket lines will go up at 12:00 a.m. at workplaces across the city where General Motors is the largest employer. The May 1st action is meant to send a powerful message of mass protest to Harris' Tory regime. It is also meant as a run up event towards a province-wide strike across Ontario later this year.

Month-long strike in Dominican Republic

The Autonomous University of Santo Domingo (UASD) was the site of a more than three-week strike by workers in February and March for 20 percent more wages. The professors' separate union debated joining the strike for a 20 percent raise of their own, and a change in their job categories. The university claims it does not have enough money in its budget for workers.

Report on a Direct Action

There were 3 general foremen and 27 foremen on the job. Each foreman had a 10 man crew. The superintendent was being a real asshole and constantly arguing with the general foreman as to how the job would be run. Out of the general foremen, 1 was a wobbly; out of the 27 foremen, 6 were Wobs. Not bad for a job that size, almost 25% of the leadership were Wobs.

Anyway, back to the story. One of the Wobbly foremen's job was finished, so the superintendent broke up the crew. But another phase of the job was starting in which new foremen were needed. The general foreman (a Wob) wanted to set up the old crew and foreman on the next phase. A real pissing-match erupted between the superintendent and general foreman as to who was running this job. The superintendent isn't like the foreman because of past differences - the foreman was good to his crew and stood up to the company. So the general foreman call a meeting with the superintendent in which they would have a showdown with him. If he still refused to reinstate the foreman, then they would all throw their "white-hats" on the floor and go back to packing tools. To put this in perspective, the foreman wears a white hard hat and average workers wear red ones.

We watched the door of the superintendent's trailer and after 20 minutes, the 3 general foremen walked out wearing red hard hats. So they lost the pissing match but not the battle.

The word went around fast and within a half hour 25 out of 27 foremen went into the superintendent's office and threw their white hats in and grabbed red hats. We told him if

Dying for work...

continued from page 1

murderous computer games. But it's really more dangerous to go to work than to walk inner city streets.

Still no TV detective drama pits clever do-gooders against big bucks corporate honchos armed with law books and threats to move work south. Instead we're sold NAFTA and other international trade treaties that in regards to workplace and environmental laws are a race to the bottom.

The insatiable need to increase profits is the root cause of workplace injuries and deaths. Safe substitutes? Alternative methods? Less speed and stress? No, these things "cost too much." We workers are cheaper for the bosses to replace than the machines we use.

Some unions don't help much, using health and safety as a chip to negotiate away, at least that's my own experience. Some years ago working at an auto plant we called the union health and safety rep to the machining department and pointed out the obvious - the air was filled with the vapor from the oil sprayed at the drill bits. My older, more cynical (I thought) co-workers had bet the H&S rep just wouldn't come to the department. It took seven weeks but he showed up. My co-workers said he'd leave after saying nothing could be done.

Well, that full-time, lifetime gig, health and safety rep said he didn't know what was in the vapors, agreed it was in our clothes, skin and lungs, agreed it probably couldn't be doing us any good, pointed out some of us smoked tobacco, and said "that's how it is." And left. And one of my older co-workers, no longer looking so cynical to me, laughed and poured a shot from his flask into my cardboard coffee cup and said "that's our union."

Does it need to be? Do we work to die?

Dealing with health and safety issues means confronting a big complicated mess of chemical analyses and legal regulations that make understanding a collective bargaining agreement simple by comparison. Still common sense and a co-worker with

The Wobbly

News from IU 330-Construction Workers

he wants to run the fucking job he could do it without us. There were only 2 rat bastards that wouldn't give up their foremen's job. Within a matter of days posters depicting them as rats were up all over the job.

What came of all this?

One general foreman and 4 foremen quit. The International office of our Trade Union and the V.P. of the contractor had to come to town for a "big meeting." I don't think conditions have changed that much, but our actions did show the boss there is real solidarity among the working men. And it made the superintendent look like a jerk to his boss, the V.P. Anyway it was a positive action because it did clear the air somewhat.

Local Reports:

Boston: Commercial work coming up. Carpenters union (AFL) doing residential organizing. Big jobs in Boston right now. Two schools and one courthouse coming up in Brockton, MA.

Portland IU 330 Branch: We're still meeting regularly. Things are kind of slow right now as most of the Carpenters have been laid off for a while. More hell raising to start with spring.

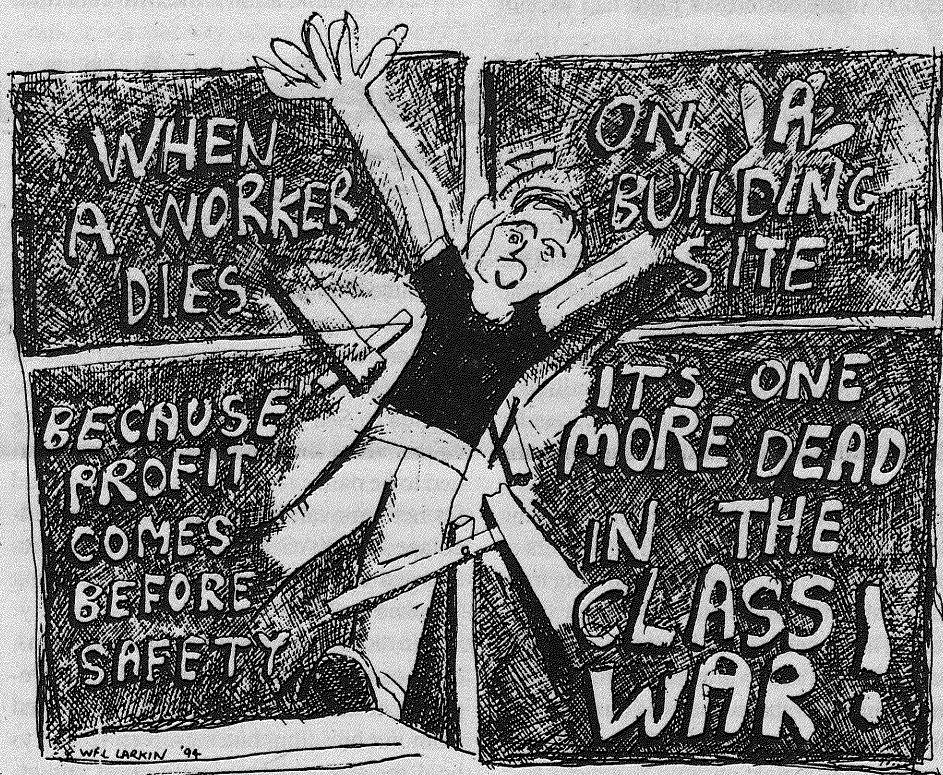
St. Louis: Not much work for carpenters. Hopefully work will pick up in the spring. Lowes hardware might build 17-18 stores. They are very anti-union however and are attempting to bring in non-union workers.

Richmond: Lots of residential and commercial work.

On the Road?

Remember the IWW is the One Big Union. Get involved wherever you are by contacting the local IU 330 delegate listed below or General Membership Branch listed on page 2 of this newspaper.

On-Line: Portland IU 330 Branch is maintaining a World-Wide Web page at: www.teleport.com/~obu/330.html



internet access combine to make much of this confusion understandable.

Day to day for many individuals confronting health and safety issues can imply not being "tough enough" to fit into a workgroup that's "always done it that way." Or needing the money to pay the bills now seems more important than possible long term risks. But who is really "not tough enough"? The person who stands up to the boss and tries to change things or the person who endures the hazards?

Fast workers die young. We're paid by the hour. Shouldn't we slow down and live.

Environmental problems start on the shop floor in our daily work lives. Environmental problems leave the place of production and go down wind or down river where we live. Meanwhile the bosses and stockholders live safely where they can avoid the results of toxic production methods.

Despite myths to the contrary, capitalist economies make longer work days and unsafe working conditions the logical result of development. NAFTA may accelerate things, strong unions may delay them, but only worker control of production will change it.

Workers Memorial Day in the US or Workers Day of Mourning in Canada is an annual day to remember our co-workers killed or injured by work. Workers Memorial Day began in Canada in 1989 and has spread internationally. The date - April 28 - commemorates the founding of the U.S.

Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).

In Detroit the Southeast Michigan Coalition on Occupational Safety and Health (SEMCOH), one of 30 COSH groups nationwide is organizing a Workers Memorial Day March in Downtown Detroit. The marchers will demonstrate at the state and federal office buildings then move on to the scab newspaper headquarters for a Worker Speak Out! about health and safety. The Detroit IWW branch is constructing giant puppets for the march.

In California worker health and safety advocates will be focusing on the boss backed referendum to cripple unions ability to engage in activities other than collective bargaining.

In other towns and cities other memorial services and campaigns will be happening. These include public forums and town meetings on job safety, demonstrations at unsafe workplaces, demonstrations to protest the further weakening of OSHA and workers compensation, and job site mini-strikes to improve specific health and safety concerns.

— Martin St. John

**SUPPORT THE
WORKERS' PRESS**
Contribute to the IWW
Sustaining Fund

IU 330 Delegates:

IWW Delegates can sign up new members and take dues. If you are already a member consider becoming a delegate by contacting IWW Headquarters.

UK- For contacts ring the IWW on 0116-266-1835

USA

Asheville, NC: John 704-258-4879

Boston: Mark Dupont 508-584-9881

Butte: Dennis Georg 406-494-5837 e-mail hotstick14@aol.com

Cape May Courthouse, NJ: Richard Neill, POB 261, Cape May Courthouse, NJ

Detroit: Jason 313-832-4074

Denver: Bob Madsen 303-823-6091

W. Michigan/N. Indiana: Patrick Klocke (Vicksburg, MI) 616-649-1214

Monterey, CA: Ray Brown, 1240 3rd St. 93940

Portland, OR: Ian 503-650-7187

Richmond, VA: Tom Williams 804-285-3699

Seattle/Tacoma: Mark 206-935-9012 or Paul Harris 425-271-0518

St. Louis: Tom Madden 314-647-2093

Got news for 330s? Want to be a contact? Call the Portland IWW Hot-line at 503-650-7187 and leave a message. We'll call you back! Or mail to POB 15005, Portland OR 97293, USA. E-mail to obu@teleport.com

McUnion Busting

Friday the 13th brought bad luck to McDonald's workers in St-Hubert, Quebec. It saw management permanently close the store they were in the process of unionizing.

According to McDonald's officials, the store was closed because it had been unprofitable for 17 years. The fact that the workers were due to gain accreditation with the Teamsters Union in just a few weeks had absolutely nothing to do with it.

"It's a wildcat closure!" fumed Jacques Godbout, president of the FTQ (Quebec Federation of Workers).

For Godbout the fight is not yet over: "We have not ruled out calling for a boycott ... McDo is rapidly losing ground in public opinion. They might find their decision to be rather painful."

Workers were taken by surprise, informed only 24 hours before the closure. This is a violation of Quebec law which demands seven days notice.

This would have been the first unionized McDonald's in Canada. Still, every black cloud has a silver lining. There is now one less McDo in Quebec.

— Patrick Borden

Borders invades Australia

Union-busting Borders Books has signed a lease for a 26,000 square foot store in Melbourne's Jam Factory complex, due to open in October. Four more stores are slated to open in 1999. Borders says it will order books for the stores from its Ann Arbor headquarters, but will open a warehouse in Melbourne to handle shipments.

Borders is also converting its Charing Cross Books, Etc. store in London to a Borders. Meanwhile, members of the National Writers Union in New York City are circulating a petition urging Borders to begin good-faith bargaining with workers in its World Trade Center store.

Temps demand standards

The Campaign for Contingent Work and other temp worker organizations around the country are in the final stages of developing an Employers Code of Conduct which they will try to get large temp agencies to sign on to. The Code covers issues ranging from orientation and training procedures to benefits and other working conditions. For information: CCW, 650 Beacon St. 4th Fl, Boston MA 02215, 617/236-0044.

The IMF Bailout Hustle

You don't have to be an expert in international finance to figure out that there's something fishy in the behavior of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) when it offers to help a country in a deep economic crisis. The IMF has been financing bailouts in Indonesia, Thailand and South Korea with a whopping \$100 billion or more to rescue them from financial chaos. But to receive these funds, these Asia countries have to subscribe to a series of dictated terms which, in effect, put them under IMF's economic trusteeship.

The IMF economic program imposed on a borrowing nation is a tight-fisted one which appears both logical and necessary, even though it impoverishes working people and places its middle-class in jeopardy. Here are some of the basic elements of that program and their rationale:

Reimburse the foreign speculators who invested their money in commercial and financial enterprises that went sour. For the future of the country, it's important to attract foreign investors by minimizing their risks.

Increase interest rates. That's a good way to promote savings and investments, both foreign and domestic, even though it might raise the cost of food and consumer goods for the population.

April 18 Actions to Target Nike

The Philadelphia IWW will be joining other unions and political groups in a national day of action April 18th to protest the continuing horrific working conditions at Nike manufacturing plants in Indonesia.

In Philadelphia, a protest will be held at the Foot Locker at 6th & South. Demonstrators can meet at the Wooden Shoe Bookstore, around the corner at 508 S. 5th Street, at noon to pick up props, fliers and posters.

The Foot Locker chain is a particular target of the April 18 actions, as it is one of Nike's largest sales outlets.

United Auto Workers Local 892 in Saline, Michigan, has voted to ban Nike apparel from all union-sponsored activities because the company continues to rely on low-wage sweatshops to produce the merchandise it sells for premium prices.

Nike athletic shoes and clothing are made in Indonesia, Vietnam, China and other countries where workers are paid just a few dollars a day and often forced to work 60 hours a week. Unions are either banned or controlled by repressive governments. "Buying Nike is supporting child abuse," noted 892 member Gale Kyner, pointing to Nike's use of child labor. The local is also working to keep Nike from gaining a promotional foothold in area schools.

Indonesian Unionists Arrested for Organizing

The independent SBSI (Serikat Buruh Sejahtera Indonesia) union is experiencing a new wave of anti-union repression. Since March 8, eight SBSI activists have been arrested on charges which include conducting an "unauthorized" union demonstration, holding "illegal" union meetings, distributing protest letters to the public and trying to set up a local branch of the union.

The Indonesian union leaders who have been detained are Farah Diba (Head of Women and Child Labour department of SBSI), Yudi Rahmat (Vice-Chairman of the national board of SBSI), Yudi Hermanto (Chairman of the SBSI in Padang), Sukirman, (SBSI member from Lampung), Sanusi (SBSI member of Tanjung Priok-Jakarta) and Seno, Mahmut and Sumantri (activists of the SBSI local branch in Serang - West Java).

Shut down or privatize government-owned industries and institutions that require subsidies for their continued operation. Any country steeped in debt cannot afford to finance unprofitable enterprises.

Develop an "austerity" budget. A country must learn to live within its means, especially a chronically debtor one. That requires cutting down or eliminating costly social programs.

Reorganize the industrial system to increase productivity and profitability. It may require depriving hundreds of thousands of workers of a livelihood, but that is the price that has to be paid for past investment blunders and self-enriching policies of the nation's government officials.

We Americans can recall something of the IMF bailout of Mexico. The Clinton administration keeps bragging that investors were repaid; the U.S. Treasury got its money back with interest, and more investment started coming back to the country.

But what has happened to the Mexican people? Since the Mexican bailout in 1994, some 2,000,000 workers have lost their jobs. The purchasing power of real wages has declined by a shocking 40 percent. About 25,000 small businesses have had to shut

Black Youth Defend Museum

Volunteers at the African Heritage Museum and Cultural Center have successfully fought to keep the museum as a community-based project and gave notice to the bosses that the Museum would stay in the hands of working folks and Black youth.

Nearly 12 years ago an abandoned school in Seattle was occupied by militants in the Black Community including founder Omari Tahir, who is still active with the Museum. The occupation lasted eight years, making it the longest continuous building occupation in US history, and after years of organizing the purchase of the building from the Seattle School District has been finalized. The museum will also serve as a center for building a survival structure for Blacks, independent of the interests of business and government for the community, and Black youth in particular.

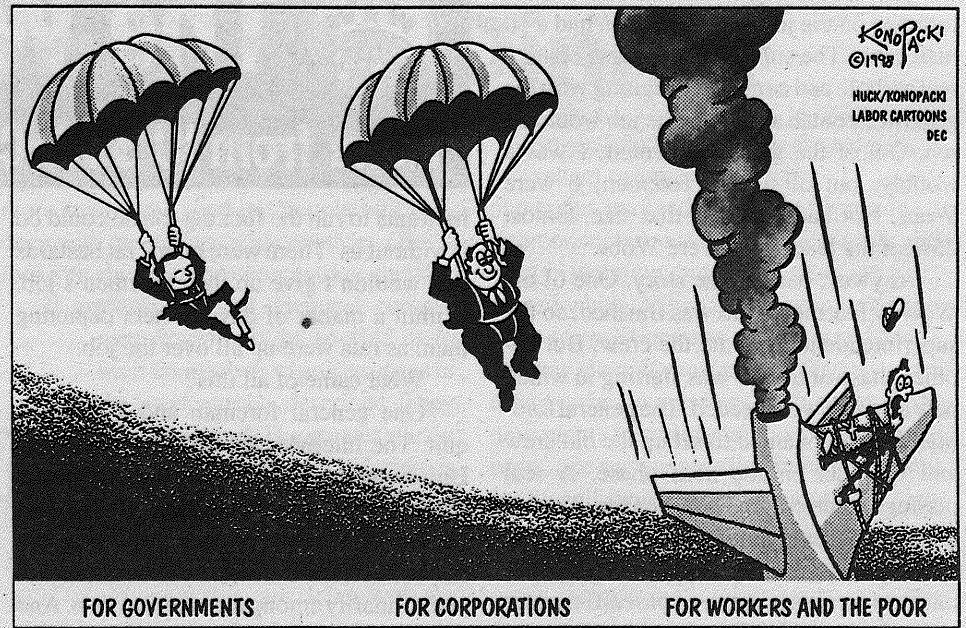
The programs includes vocational training, independent electronic media, free health care, free child care, a community owned and operated restaurant and theater, and support for community-run events and groups, like the Umoja Festival and Copwatch 206. Naturally this involves lots of money, and the project attracted business-friendly folks who saw it as a potential money-making private institution, rather than a grassroots-controlled organization.

Trouble began to brew when Bob Flowers, senior vice president of Washington Mutual Bank, was asked to do the book-keeping and public relations for the Museum last year. Museum volunteers became suspicious of financial activity, and members of the Youth Action Committee began to complain that they were being pushed out of the process and were routinely being ignored at Museum Board meetings.

In addition, the YAC and Tahir charged that a "clique" of business friendly board members—including Flowers as the chair, Program Director Pat Chandler, Treasurer Bob Luciano, and Vice Chair Harolynn Bobis—were ignoring board resolutions and misappropriating funds. The Museum, founded as a community-based project, was displaying the characteristics of an unaccountable corporation.

The Youth Action Committee and supporters demanded full disclosure of all meeting minutes and financial transactions, since under law a nonprofit receiving public funds must do so for anyone requesting the infor-

HOW "BAILOUTS" WORK



down and the country's middle class has been seriously squeezed.

Although the IMF is a voluntary organization of 182 member countries with an executive board and a management structure, its policies and activities, in actuality, are controlled by the U.S. Treasury and, to a lesser extent, the major financial ministries of the European Union and Japan.

In economic affairs, the IMF functions

virtually as a super-government, playing a significant role in influencing the financial policies of nearly 75 underdeveloped nations around the world, with a combined population of 1.4 billion.

Not even the experts are sure how the Asian financial crisis and bailouts will play out and the effect it will have on U.S. workers, but we should be wary of the IMF's role.

— Harry Kelber

mation. When Flowers and Luciano refused, their employers—Washington Mutual Bank—became the target of leafletting by Museum volunteers and supporters. Museum volunteers and supporters continued to gather evidence as the pressure mounted on Flowers to turn over receipts. When some of the checks were finally obtained, many were written to Sea-first bank without anything on the memo line, and Pat Chandler continued to be paid even though the board called for her removal. Board meetings were videotaped by YAC supporters as volunteers charged that meeting minutes were being "cooked up."

In response to the questions being raised, calls came in from the Seattle Police Department that the YAC were to be evicted from the building, but members vowed to hold the fort and physically resist any attempts at removal. This police threat later turned out to be a bluff, as did several subsequent threats. Volunteers also complained of increased police harassment, such as patrol cars following them after meetings, and a raid of a workshop at Garfield High School that the YAC had organized. Letters from Bob Flowers to museum volunteers made references to unauthorized people at the museum, even though he rarely came to the site himself.

On January 14th, IWW members were invited to attend a Museum board meeting. Although Flowers had moved the meeting to a different location, the YAC and supporters turned out by the dozens. As the Black youth began to pack the room, it was clear that this would not be a typical boring nonprofit business meeting. Omari Tahir laid out the charges on the "clique"—misappropriation of funds, trying to seize control of the project and push the youth out, denial of information requests, and a concerted effort to hide it from the community. With a nervous smile, Flowers insisted that a parliamentary procedure of voting was not necessary, and attempted to take charge of the meeting. YAC supporters fired questions and showed evidence of corruption as the meeting erupted into a near brawl.

As Flowers attempted to adjourn the meeting, the youth filed toward the doorway, blockading the entrance, and Tahir announced—"Bob Flowers, you are gone, and we have a new chair ... and we have a new program director..." As videotape rolled,

the crowd cheered and hollered.

In the midst of the meeting chaos, a resolution was passed to purchase the Coleman School for \$339,000—a cheap price that a developer would have killed to take advantage of to further gentrify the Central District with condos and maybe another Starbucks.

While it looks as though the Black Community is building and defending an institution for themselves, there was little doubt among some volunteers that a counter-offensive will come from the friends of the ousted board members from the city or the courts. The YAC and supporters continued their pressure campaign for the official resignation of Flowers amid rumors that he had actually quit, until he recently agreed to cooperate with the demands of the museum volunteers, or so it seemed.

Another "closed board meeting" was called with one agenda item; "remove member from board." The member was Omari Tahir, and when the meeting was called to order he was faced with a meeting packed with friends of the ruling clique who had not been around for months, even years. A cop was posted with a radio ready to give the order to the 15 or so officers in unmarked cars in the parking lot if the motion passed. Tahir filibustered the meeting for an hour, and informed everyone that the paperwork had been filed with the state redefining who was on the board; legally the museum is no longer under the control of Flowers and company. Eventually the meeting fell apart and the community won another battle.

Rumors surfaced that Seattle police were going to evict museum volunteers from the office on March 15th. As we go to press, food and supplies are still being collected for a possible occupation to resist.

Support from the (primarily white) left in Seattle remains scant, in spite of their calls to defend "affirmative action" and other government programs. IWW members approached local independent media outlets to cover the story, and received good response from one, while another has still refused to run the story. Members of the General Defense Committee sent press packets to various left publications and local newspapers to spread the word, and at least one mainstream weekly has assigned a reporter to the story.

— John Persak

South Korea in Crisis

South Korean workers and the International Monetary Fund are on a collision course. The recent collapse of Asian economies from Indonesia to Japan has left South Korea in shambles. Confronted with the likelihood of a free-fall into economic disintegration, the government has acceded to the conditions set by the IMF as a prerequisite for receiving billions of dollars in loans. With their usual disregard for the welfare of working people, the IMF has insisted that South Korean corporations be permitted to fire employees at will, thus overturning a long tradition of job security.

Given the bleak prospects of the global economy, the IMF "solution" to the Korean crisis will bring massive unemployment, with a million workers or more being dumped on the streets. In a country where safety net provisions are meager, this can only mean homelessness, starvation and death.

This is a scenario that has been repeated all too often, as the rapacious greed of multinational corporate conglomerates undermines the health and welfare of working people around the globe.

Yet South Korean workers have not quietly accepted the coming disaster. Indeed, Korean workers have built a proud history of militant struggle. A little more than a year ago, the country's second largest union federation, the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions (KCTU), organized a series of strikes and demonstrations demanding official recognition.

This time, officials of both union federations signed off on an agreement with the South Korean government implementing the IMF dicta. To their surprise, when the

KCTU leaders sought to sell this capitulation to rank-and-file delegates, the agreement went down to an overwhelming defeat. Workers then removed the existing leaders and replaced them with a new executive board, one committed to an unyielding rejection of the IMF austerity measures.

The newly elected executive board proceeded to announce its intention of calling a general strike. This represented a courageous act of defiance. The KCTU was not only defying the IMF, and with it the inexorable logic of the global economy; the union also demanded that the accumulated wealth of the corporate bosses be redistributed for the benefit of the entire populace of South Korea. Obviously, the South Korean establishment took this as a frontal assault on its power and privileges, and responded with force. The government warned the union federation that its leaders would be arrested, and its members barred from employment, if the strike took place. Hundreds of riot police patrolled the streets of Seoul, ready to crush the strike.

Under threat of violence and repression, the KCTU reluctantly postponed the strike. The union federation's leaders say they are committed to renewing the call for action once the new layoff measure is actually implemented. It is too much to expect that the South Korean working class, acting on its own, can overcome the vast power of the IMF, and the corporations that stand behind it. The tentacles of global capitalism can be defeated, but only by a militant movement that advances international solidarity across national borders.

— Eric Chester

Mexican rail strike...

continued from page 1

railroad workers about privatization. For example, on the North East line, bought by the Transportes Ferroviarios Mexicanos (TFM), with the backing of the U.S. corporation Kansas City Industries, the company rehired only 4,500 out of 8,700 workers. The collective bargaining agreement was reduced from 3,045 clauses to 38 clauses; the train crews cut from six to three workers; and the maximum continuous service time lengthened from 12 to 25-40 hours.

Workers on the North-Pacific line could see the handwriting on the wall.

But the railroad workers have real economic power. Northern Mexico, particularly Sonora, has been an important industrial area for more than a hundred years. But during the last two decades, largely because of the proximity of the U.S. border and investments by U.S. corporations, a whole northern industrial region has been created which includes not only the thousands of maquiladoras on the U.S.-Mexican border, but also major auto plants. Many of these plants depend on railroad transportation.

The strike immediately affected operations not only at Ford Motor Company, but also at some of Mexico's industrial giants, such as CEMEX (Mexican Cement Company), Gamesa, Aceites del Mayo, Mexicana de Cananea, and Mexicana de Cobre. In addition, thousands of passengers found themselves stranded in Sonora.

The wildcat strike on the Pacific-North line has also affected workers on other lines such as Transportes Ferroviarios Mexicanos (TFM) to the east. Trains carrying containers on that line, bound for the General Motors plant in Arizpe, Coahuila were temporarily sidelined. Learning of the strike in Sonora, workers in the states of Sinaloa and Jalisco held meetings, engaged in sit-ins, demonstrations and other forms of protest.

In Aguascalientes, workers demanded to be rehired. Some 70 machinists' helpers said they would fix the machines so they wouldn't work if everyone didn't get their

job back. In Ciudad Juarez, workers met in "permanent assembly," while waiting to see that everyone was re-hired.

The Mexican government and the employers have forced some railroad workers back, but without effectively breaking the strike. The government brought charges against workers in Local 8 for the felony of "obstruction of general ways of communication." Those and other pressures led workers in Empalme to return to work with a local agreement Feb. 25. But at the same time, workers in Local 40 in Benjamin Hill stopped the trains, with the same result — still nothing moved on the Pacific-North line.

In Mexico City, 200 members of the dissident National Coordinating Committee for Defense of the Collective Contract marched in support, calling for Flores Morales' expulsion from the union.

Three days after the strike began, the Railroad Workers Union leader told workers that like it or not, they would have to accept their severance or retirement, before they could be rehired by the new company. Flores Morales also signed a new collective bargaining agreement with the company, providing for a 15 percent wage increase and six-man crews.

Workers in Local 8 rejected the new contact as another betrayal, demanding that the jobs of all 13,500 workers must be protected.

— Mexican Labor News and Analysis
www.igc.apc.org/unitedelect/ or
103144.2651@compuserve.com

Solidarity closes airport

Dublin international airport was brought to a standstill for two days in early March as emergency and ground staff refused to cross picket lines set up in support of a strike by 39 baggage handlers working for Ryanair. Aer Lingus canceled all its operations.

Ryanair had refused to negotiate with the strikers for eight weeks, prompting the broader picketing.

Multilateral Agreement on Investments returns to World Trade Organization

The Multilateral Agreement on Investments, currently being negotiated in Europe by national states and global organizations of capitalists and workers' unions, is reportedly moving away from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development back to the World Trade Organization, where national congresses and parliaments would not have to approve the treaty.

US/Africa "free" trade

The proposed US law on trade with Africa would force African states to compete against each other for US approval of its austere economic system of privatization and globalization.

The US would control forgiveness of debt and a \$650 million fund for infrastructure and small businesses. Within a year, according to the law, the US President would report on a US/Sub-Saharan Africa "free" trade agreement. In the US, textile unions stand alone in opposition to the agreement against the US Congress. Non Governmental Organizations, including churches, are currently deciding their position.



US interest in Iraq still oil

The petroleum industry remains central to threats of war in the Middle East, according to less-publicized findings of the US presidential administration.

In 1994, Clinton's office estimated that a lifting of sanctions against Iraq would lower oil prices by almost 50 percent. In fact, when Iraq was allowed to sell limited amounts of oil in January 1997, world prices collapsed 25 percent. Meanwhile, petroleum industry workers and indigenous people on oil fields face violent repression by petroleum capitalists and national governments in Mexico, Nigeria, Chechnya (in Russia), Papua New Guinea, and the Caspian region. The sanctions against Iraq are part of a global imposition of austerity against the global working class.

source: George Caffentzis, Midnight Notes Collective, gcaffentz@aol.com

Free education campaign launched in Palestine

Workers and students at Birzeit University in Palestine recently increased efforts to obtain free access to their campus with an Academic Freedom First campaign against continued Israeli state repression.

The campaigners protest the "all-time high" of Israeli harassment and border closures despite state promises in peace accords of free movement. During 1995-96, in order for students to remain obedient to Israeli restrictions, they would have missed 75 percent of their classes. In 1993, the Israeli state imposed an enclosure around all Palestinians areas which denied them access to any other area without special permits. In 1996, Israeli military arrested 300 students and tortured at least one.

The students and workers at Birzeit demand recognition of their right to education and the implementation of a process to achieve this. E-mail protests to the Israeli Prime Minister <likud1@likud.org.il> and the Israeli Embassy in the US <dcisrael@ix.netcom.com>.

Rural workers in Brazil continue takeovers

Tens of thousands of people in the Movement of Landless Rural Workers (MST) in Brazil have almost expropriated as many estates in the first quarter of this year as in all of 1997. Since the movement first organized as the MST in 1984, over 150,000 families have reclaimed land.

Meanwhile, over 125 families are squatting on land claimed for inheritance by the University of Sao Paulo in Brazil. The squatters assert their use of the land above any university plans: "why can't we stay here if they are not going to do anything with the area," said one homeless person. The dispute is currently being dealt with in the state court system.

Bolivian educators strike against planned firings

Teachers in the cities of Bolivia struck for two days March 5-6 against planned mass firings. Unionists name a "program of institutionalization and restructuring of the administrative hierarchy" but the state denies this while offering bribes to scabs. Health workers also struck at the same time for higher pay, demanding a minimum wage 1000 percent more than the state offered.

Anti-social working hours spread in engineering

Workers at Tamrock Mechanical Workshop in Tampere, Finland, struck Feb. 17 to protest the company's unilateral decision to extend the work week to Saturdays (though maintaining the 36.5 hour work week).

Tamrock is globally one of the leading producers of mining and earthworking machines. The originally Finnish company recently became a subsidiary of the Swedish multinational Sandviken.

Reviving Saturday work represents a trend that has already been going on for a long time as investors seek to increase the utilization rate of their capital investments, i.e. sophisticated machinery such as huge automatic machine tools.

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Wobbling the Works

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with the quality of the product or service their workplace produces.

In Philadelphia, a real concern of the workers for their customers was part of the inspiration of the IWW drive at Borders Bookstore. But, be careful, the NLRB will not protect you if you and your co-workers circulate literature which only deals with the quality of the goods or services your boss is allowing to go out the door (*NLRB v. Local 1229 IBEW 346 U.S. 464*). In 1953, workers at Jefferson Standard Broadcasting Company, a television station broadcasting as WBT, were negotiating a contract and the boss was giving them a hard time.

The workers, frustrated with not only their boss' stubbornness about their conditions, but also with programming on the station, made fliers as "WBT Technicians." The flier, titled "Is Charlotte a Second-Class City?" and discussed the lack of local programming and the company's failure to buy equipment to air coverage of local sports or events. The company fired ten people, and the NLRB upheld the boss' decision since the workers' flier made no reference to their workplace conditions. As many successful organizing drives are attached to the needs of the surrounding community, it is always important to articulate how the conditions that affect the community are also an issue for the workers themselves.

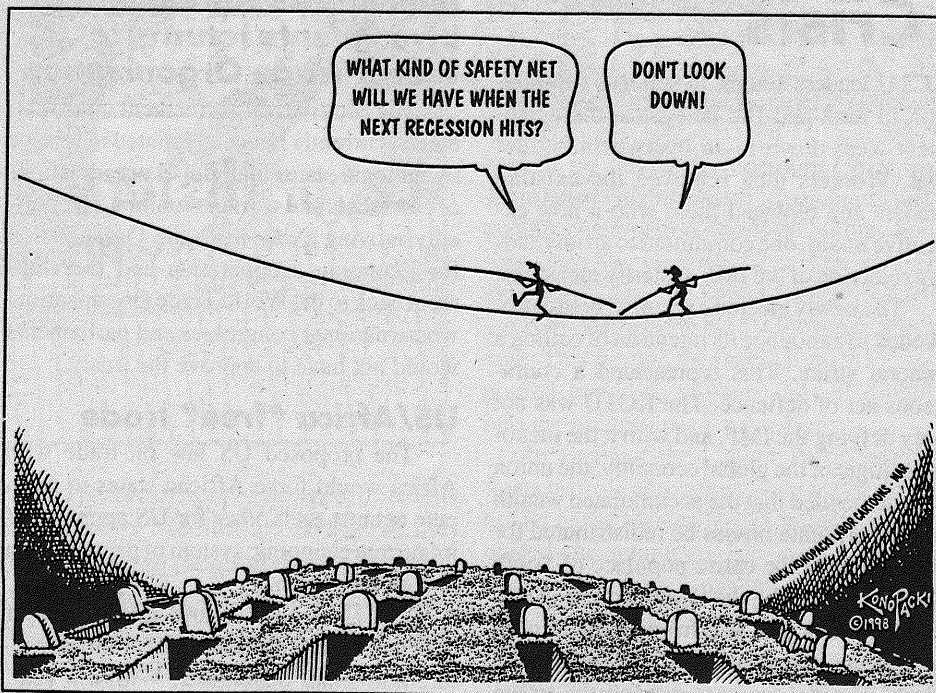
A couple of interesting items have come across my desk in the past week – the first is a notice from UAW's magazine, *Solidarity*. Sixty workers from Champ, a forklift plant in El Monte, California, involved in an unfair labor practice strike are getting a combined back pay settlement of \$1 million. Problem is, nobody knows where these workers are, since the workers went out on strike in 1979. Twenty years later, the boss forks over the cash, and the NLRB declares another victory for workers' rights. Yep.

My friends keep asking me, "Now that Latrell Sprewell can go back to playing basketball with the Warriors next season, does that mean I can go to the NLRB if I get fired for choking my boss?" My usual answer is that the issue of Sprewell's reinstatement had to do with disciplinary actions his contract outlined. It didn't have a relation to concerted activity. Some people might try to extrapolate that they would be protected if they tried to strangle their boss in a concerted manner, perhaps having co-workers hold the boss down, but really you'd be setting yourself up for a legal mess with assault charges (which Coach Peter Carlesimo didn't pursue) and the NLRB would not come to your aid – believe me.

To end on a positive note, congratulations to Carlene O'Neil and Jessica Gomes, heroic workers at Bently Nevada, a company near Reno, Nevada, who refused to sign for packages being delivered by scabs last August during the UPS strike. They were fired. Surprise for the boss, the NLRB in Washington overturned the regional office's decision and is pursuing their unfair labor practice charges. In their appeal, it was noted that "both [workers] expressed support for the goals and position of the UPS drivers, and they undertook concerted activities to support those drivers by refusing to sign for packages when the UPS drivers were on strike. This is activity reasonably designed to assist a labor organization in its goal of improving workers rights, a goal enunciated by both [workers]."

— Alexis Buss

Wobbling the Works aims to help workers use their meager protections under U.S. labor law to make it safer to organize and undertake direct action for better conditions. If there is an issue you would like to see addressed, write FW Buss at PO Box 42531, Philadelphia PA 19101, or email phillyiww@iww.org



Education worker news

U Mass TAs Settle

Negotiations at the University of Massachusetts resumed Feb. 26, after administrators were forced back to the table. A new contract was reached after two days of nearly around-the-clock mediation. The Graduate Employees Organization says the agreement offers modest gains on wages, union rights and issues of access to child care and affirmative action.

"Chancellor David Scott declared war on graduate employees, and we will never forget that," said GEO President Mahmood Ketabchi. "We have shown him that Chancellors will come and Chancellors will go, but that GEO is here to stay. We have won undeniable gains that the University never wanted to give us. What we didn't win this time, we will be back to fight for next year."

Victory at McGill

Teaching Assistants at McGill University (Quebec) have approved their first collective agreement after 1,400 days of negotiations. The Association of Graduate Students Employed at McGill (AGSEM) was certified in January 1993 to represent the 800 graduate students employed as part-time TAs and Lab Demonstrators by McGill.

Under the agreement TAs will receive their first salary increases since 1988, rising

Announcements

8th Continental Conference on Social Ecology: *Education And Social Ecology*. Social ecology integrates the study of human and natural ecosystems through understanding the interrelationships of culture and nature. The 8th continental conference will explore the history and practice of modern education with its relationship to capitalism and hierarchy, contrasting it to an educational practice whose goals are social freedom and municipal direct democracy. April 3 to 5, Montreal. \$25 sliding. To preregister, or get further information, please write: QPIRG, 2130 Mackay room 101, Montreal Quebec, Canada H3G 2J1. QPIRG@alcor.concordia.ca

Soupstock will celebrate the 18th anniversary of Food Not Bombs with a free concert with food and fun Saturday April 25, from 11:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. at the Golden Gate Park Band Shell, San Francisco. Food Not Bombs serves free means in U.N. Plaza to oppose war, poverty and hunger.

The *Paul Robeson 100th Birthday Committee* (c/o Columbia College, 600 S Michigan Ave., Chicago IL 60605, 312/344-7114 robeson.centennial@pobox.com, www.pobox.com/~robeson) has posted over 70 pages of teacher lesson plans, distributes a documentary on Robeson's life, and has information on activities around the world to mark Robeson's contributions.

an average wages of 9.6% by June 2000, when the contract expires. Other gains include protection of TA work for graduate students, clear and non-arbitrary hiring procedures, and a signing bonus.

1,600 teachers locked-out

Racine, Wisconsin, authorities closed schools Feb. 20, locking out 1,600 teachers after four days of job actions in which many teachers called in sick and students walked out of classes to support their teachers.

Administrators said they would dock teachers' pay for the days they were locked-out. The contract dispute dates back to 1993, when a new state law passed allowing school districts to avoid taking contract disputes to arbitration. Instead, schools can declare a deadlock and impose wage and benefit increases. Teachers in 167 districts, about a third of Wisconsin's school systems, are now without contracts.

Living Wage at Wisconsin

University of Wisconsin workers are fighting to establish a living wage at the Madison campus. After months of hard work put in by a coalition of students, campus workers, and community members, students at UW-Madison have voted yes in a general referendum to raise wages to a minimum of \$7.50 by 2001. The wage increase will affect over 600 workers, both students and full-time employees, in General Student Services, the Wisconsin Unions on campus, Rec Sports, and University Health Services.

Community College of Philadelphia strike won

After six days on picket lines CCP faculty agreed to a four-year contract that would raise pay 3 percent a year for full-timers and 4 percent for part-timers. Part-timers receive 38 percent less per credit hour taught than full-timers, and have demanded that the gap be closed.

Part-Timers Organizing

Part-time instructors have recently unionized at Columbia College, New Jersey's state colleges, the University of Alaska, and other schools. Adjunct faculty now teach about half of all college level courses, but are paid only a fraction of what full-time faculty are paid on a per-course basis and have no job security and few other protections.

Adjunct Faculty Meet

"Our Time Has Come" is the theme of the second National Conference of Part-Time, Adjunct, Non-Tenure-Track and GTA Faculty. The conference begins April 3 at 3 p.m. at the City University of New York Graduate Center, and runs through the 5th. For information, call Eric at 212/642-2143 <vtirelli@email.gc.cuny.edu>

A Rebel's Toast

On March 14th, Fellow Worker Mattie O'Boyle performed his one-man show, "A Rebel's Toast," which included poetry and stories from the early days of the Wobblies, fiddle music, and free mulligan stew for all who attended. The program included "The Sheep and Goats," "The Two Bums," Ralph Chaplin's "Mourn Not the Dead," Joe Hill's "The Rebel's Toast" and "Joe Hill's Will," Jim Seymour's "The Dishwasher," Haywire Mac McClintock's "Hymn of Hate," and Arturo Giovanitti's "The Walker," among other poems.

Reviews

Fellow Worker O'Boyle introduced the poems with stories from IWW and labor history, recalling an earlier age – before culture became something to be bought and sold – when workers wrote poetry and made their own entertainment as a matter of course.

The 90-minute show was performed to a packed house at West Philadelphia's A Space, the community center the Philadelphia Wobblies use for meetings. Audio tapes of the show will soon be available from the Philadelphia GMB, watch for a listing on the literature page next issue. Also available are an attractive program and wallet-sized poem cards featuring several of the readings. FW O'Boyle is also interested in taking the program on the road.

The Story of Mary MacLane

The Story of Mary MacLane and other Writings by Mary MacLane. Charles H. Kerr, 1997.

Mary MacLane was an infamous writer in 1902. Her first published work, essays written from her childhood bedroom in Butte when she was not yet 20 years old, became an instant best-seller entitled *The Story of Mary MacLane*. My mother probably hid a copy under her mattress.

Defiant of middle-class propriety and expressive of the pain of her circumscribed life as a young woman, her writings are simple and ingenuous. They have the effect on me of evoking and making more accessible the memories of my own girlhood. But MacLane seems to have been more a figure of scandal, representing the danger to society of wild and rebellious women, than an author whose words were heard. Fifteen years later, when *I, Mary MacLane* was published, she was called "Montana's Greatest Author," although by then she had moved to Chicago and become a quiet member of the dissident intellectual community there. In 1910 she wrote a piece called "Men Who Have Made Love to Me"; in 1917 she made a movie by that name which has not survived except in outraged comments such as that of Louella Parsons that her acting "consisted of little more than smoking, swearing and drinking."

A substantial portion of this volume is devoted to defenses of her work and life, many by persons now more famous than she: Clarence Darrow, Henry Blake Fuller, Harriet Monroe, H.L. Mencken and Penelope Rosemont. The latter finds Chicago's treatment of MacLane "sadly typical of Chicago's response to its finest authors. Hail them briefly when they're young, forget about them for the rest of their lives."

If Mary MacLane refused to adjust to "the misery and hypocrisy of an unjust and exploitative social order," I suspect that her life rather than her writing was her finest achievement. There are hints that she steadfastly maintained her originality and independence in her last years, flouting racial taboos and homophobia. If more is discovered about her, we'll be glad to hear about it.

— R.D. Levno

Radical Thought

Direct Action & Sabotage

Three classic IWW pamphlets by Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, Walker C. Smith and Wm. Trautman, showing how these age-old practices can be integrated into the struggle for industrial freedom. \$15

Sisterhood & Solidarity by Diane Balser
Feminism & labor in modern times, \$10

Walking to the Edge: Essays of Resistance by Margaret Randall
Testimonial of how women reclaim history, memory and self. \$12

The Rise of Public Woman by Glenna Matthews
Woman's power and woman's place in the U.S. 1630-1970. \$12

American Women in the Progressive Era Doroth & Carl Schnieder
Change, challenge and the struggle for women's rights \$10

The Case of Leonard Peltier
by Arthur J Miller & Pio Celestino. An introduction to Peltier's frame-up for his political activities. \$3

Fields, Factories & Workshops by Peter Kropotkin.
A classic vision of how we could redirect production to meet human needs, with a new introduction by Yaacov Oved. \$7.50

The Racist Mind: Portraits of American Neo-Nazis and Klansmen by Raphael Ezekiel \$10

The Muckrakers by Louis Filler
Their vivid exposes of political corruption, industrial brutality, and social injustice sparked a surge of reform. \$10

The Story of Mary Maclane
A vigorous early feminist attack on conformity and puritanism. \$15

Rank and File or Broad Left: Democracy vs Bureaucracy
A short history of the Building Worker Group; analysis of a militant labor struggle in the U.K. in 1996. \$2.50

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

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

A Little Working Class Sense
Veteran labor activist Gilbert Mers 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. \$6.

The Political Economy of Participatory Economics. by Michael Albert & Robn Hahnel.

A nuts-and-bolts approach to a participatory, egalitarian economy. \$8.

Solidarity Unionism.
by Staughton Lynd. \$7

From the Ground Up, Essays on Grassroots & Workplace Democracy. by George Benello

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

Bread & Roses, \$2

British IWW magazine #1 Lead story: Five More Years of Hard Labour?

A New Union Vision

Arthur J. Miller reflects on the need for revolutionary unions today. \$2

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

Fellow Workers, Remember!

At least 1,300 Wobblies were locked up under 'espionage' and 'criminal syndicalism' frame-ups between 1917 and 1920; this collection documents their plight and IWW efforts to fight the persecution. \$5

Rebel Voices.

IWW Songs sung by IU 630 Wobs. Tape \$10.

We Have Fed You All for 1,000 Years.

Utah Phillips sings Wobbly songs. Tape \$10.

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.

Posters by Carlos Cortez

Lucy Parsons, Ben Fletcher, Joe Hill or Mother Jones. \$25

Silent Agitators

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Mersey backers still face lawsuit

An Alameda County Superior Court judge has dismissed the Pacific Maritime Association's lawsuit against ILWU member Jack Heyman and the Labor Party for their role in an Oakland picket line that blocked scab cargo from being unloaded from the Neptune Jade. However, the judge refused to dismiss claims against picket captain Robert Irminger, the Peace and Freedom Party and the Laney College Labor Studies Group, which also participated in the picket.

The lawsuit seeks hundreds of thousands of dollars in damages, and the bosses' association has also sought to compel defendants to turn over internal records and name all Mersey supporters known to them. The defendants have refused to comply.

Five hundred demonstrators showed up bright and early (8 a.m.) to the Pacific Maritime Association's downtown Oakland office Feb. 27 to protest the suit. Not bad for a working day morning. Union members and officials from ILWU locals up and down the west coast as well as IWW, HERE, SEIU, IBT, OCAW and scores of others were on hand. We even set up a micro-power radio transmitter to broadcast the demonstration to the surrounding community.

Speakers and demonstrators urged the PMA to drop its lawsuit and to respect the rights of free speech, free assembly and the right of workers to picket. Demonstrators wore stickers proclaiming, "I picketed the Neptune Jade" and signed letters asking Miniace, head of the PMA to sue them as well. Essentially if the PMA wants a witch-hunt, they're gonna have to hunt a great many witches.

Afterwards, we marched over to the courthouse where the hearing was scheduled to take place, but the PMA managed to consolidate the scheduled hearing with another and stall things for a week. Instead, we had more speeches, and the radical street-theater/puppet show troupe, Art & Revolution held a skit re-enacting the now world-famous pickets, including a large mock-up of the Neptune Jade.

Then we marched to Laney College to protest the Laney College & Peralta Community College District's crack down on the Laney College Labor Studies Club for "allowing" two members of that group to participate in the picket and hold a "dangerous and threatening banner" that apparently influenced the PMA's decision to sue that group as well.

Laney President Ernie Crutchfield, who had once participated in student demonstra-

Wobble Is A Verb

The essential value of union lies in what it can do. What it can do for you and yours and for your class as a whole. What you can do with it. How you can use it to do what you need to do. To do is a verb. Action is what we're talking about.

When we come together on the job to address our common problems with the shared strength of our common action, we are doing something. We're not talking about it, though that's important, and we're not reading or thinking about it, we're not seeking publicity and making a big show of it, though these things can be valuable in their place. We are acting on it. Doing. We are the subjects, to put it in grammatical terms, and the problem is our object, upon which we, in common activity, act to change. That's action. Verb.

In the construction trades the verb "to wobble" is commonly used to describe a group action that seeks to address and fix a problem on the job, a problem with the boss, as on the job problems tend to be. To wobble the job is to walk out, slow down, all go to



tions himself, had called out an armada of sheriffs to arrest us, but when he was shown that he *himself* had signed a permit allowing our demonstration on the campus that day, he suddenly retreated to his office, and the police parted like the red sea.

We then soapboxed for a while on campus, and spread the word to the Laney College student body.

I hope we can prove once and for all that when free speech and freedom of assembly go head to head with international

capital, that free speech and freedom of assembly should prevail. This will be a very interesting test case to show whether or not the First Amendment will be squashed by State-Capitalism and multinational corporations.

— X344543

Contributions to help cover the costs of this battle may be sent to the Liverpool Dockers Defense Committee, P.O. Box 2574, Oakland CA 94614 or the IWW, 2022 Blake Street, Berkeley CA 94704.

Cat workers won't give up

More than six years and two unsuccessful strikes after their last contract with Caterpillar expired, some 13,000 United Auto Workers members have rejected a proposed contract which would have continued a two-tier pay scheme, offered workers modest pay hikes, required the union to readmit former members who crossed picket lines, and would have required the union to drop 441 Unfair Labor Practice charges.

Although most of the 160 workers who were illegally fired during the dispute would have gotten their jobs back, they would not have received the back pay they are legally entitled to. And 50 fired workers would have to take their cases to arbitration. UAW officials refused to release a list of the workers whose jobs had been bargained away.

While UAW officials supported the deal, apparently deciding it was time to cut their losses and get dues-collecting back to usual, 58 percent of workers voted to reject the pact. While many workers were outraged by

the boss for a confab on work time, to come together to address the problem by direct means. That's what it's all about.

It's happening all the time, all over the place. It's a necessary part of daily life on the job. You can do it to. You and your fellow workers, on your job, can wobble the situation to make it better. That's job control, and that's the thing we need to establish and protect, for our own safety and health, to ensure good compensation for our precious time, for fun and profit and relief from the boredom and loneliness that pervades our lives in this modern workaday world.

The key to good wobbling is union. That's small u union, meaning cooperation and concerted effort amongst fellows, people with the same needs and circumstance, i.e.: the people you work next to day after day. Alone we are weak and ineffectual. Together we are awesome in our power. We have only to organize this power and to wield it, for our common good, to make this world a better place. Together we can win. We just have to do (verb) it. Let's act now. Think it over join the I.W.W.

Piecards Aided Mersey Scabs

A few weeks into the Liverpool Lock-out, Mersey Docks and Harbour Company turned to Drake Port Distribution Services for scabs. Throughout the dispute, the T&GWU (the "union" also "representing" the locked-out workers) continued to service union scabs who stayed on the job performing a variety of support services.

A bulletin published by the Drake scabs, *The Dart*, shows that even some scabs know better than to trust the bosses. They ask, "In what way will our working conditions change now that the dispute is over and management has a free hand? Will we see more casual labour at Seaforth Container Terminal? This has, unfortunately, been the case in other areas of the dock complex ... It must also be said the evidence shows that these casual workers are not provided with the correct safety apparel."

The scabs lament that their health and safety officer has resigned after being continuously over-ruled on safety matters. And they have the nerve to protest that T&GWU officials have given higher priority to servicing the union scabs who were on the Mersey payroll all along than to the scabs who were brought in to replace the locked-out workers. *The Dart* says the scabs will join the T&GWU "at the first opportunity." But it is a sorry sort of "unionism" that crosses picket lines and scabs on workers locked-out of their jobs for standing by their fellow workers.

Fortunately some unions have better practice. The International Longshore & Warehouse Union's *The Dispatcher* notes that the ILWU's "Ten Guiding Principles" include the provision that "Every picket line must be respected as though it were our own." That's a sentiment any Wobbly can get behind.

The January 1998 issue quotes Mersey docker Bobby Morton as follows: "What we desperately needed - and I think it was the straw that broke the camel's back because we didn't get it - was another hit on either Atlantic Container Lines or CAST Shipping. ... We were trying to work on taking an action against one of those lines, similar to the one we took in December 1995 in Newark ... but when it didn't happen we weren't having the effect on MD&HC."

Tragically, shortly before the Mersey dockers were forced to surrender, East Coast IWW members were meeting with other labor activists to organize picketing against an ACL freighter making the Liverpool run. Unfortunately, when ILA officials indicated they would not honor the picket line it was decided over Wob objections to transform the action from a full-out picket to a one-shot demonstration at a closed Port Elizabeth dock where cargo bound for the scab port was to be loaded. Not having details on when the ship would be loaded it was impossible for us to proceed alone.

Union activists reinstated

Landis Plastics of Syracuse, NY, has been ordered to immediately return two workers to their jobs. Kathy Saumier was fired 13 months ago after organizing union meetings and alerting federal officials to serious safety problems at the plant. The NLRB had sought an unusual emergency injunction to reinstate Saumier and another union supporter and stop further retaliation.

Landis also threatened to close the plant if workers organized, and discriminated against pro-union workers. Last year OSHA fined Landis \$729,700 for underreporting injuries at the plant.

Be a Wobbly - Join the IWW...

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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 \$1,000: \$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.
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