

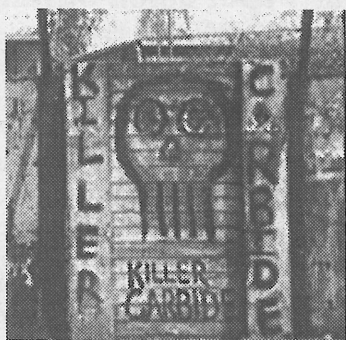
# Industrial Worker

OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER OF THE  
INDUSTRIAL WORKERS OF THE WORLD

October 2003

#1657 Vol. 100 No. 8

\$1.00 / 75 p



## Join the December 3 global day of action against corporate crime

Union paper workers in Bhopal, India – survivors of the worst industrial safety incident in history – have called for a Global Day of Action Against Corporate Crime December 3. Bhopal survivors want

corporate criminals around the world confronted on the anniversary of Union Carbide's 1984 slaughter of 8,000 people. Union Carbide is now a wholly owned subsidiary of Dow Chemical.

Some 8,000 people died within hours of the release of 40 tons of toxic chemicals from Union Carbide's pesticide factory, and 150,000 more suffer from exposure-related illnesses. About 400 people a year continue to die from the effects of the incident, with a total death toll of about 27,000 to date.

Although industrial disasters are commonly referred to as "accidents" they are not really "accidental." Union Carbide managers made several decisions contributing to the disaster, including not maintaining equipment, cutting trained safety personnel, turning off an emergency warning siren, and shutting off refrigeration equipment in the unit where the chemicals were stored to save on electricity bills.

On the night of December 3, 1984, water being used to clean pipes entered a tank containing methyl isocyanate (MIC) through leaking valves. When the water entered the tank of non-cooled MIC it set off a reaction, causing the release of a lethal gas mixture spewing a toxic cloud over an area of eight square miles.

Union Carbide CEO Warren Anderson and other company officials were arrested soon after but were released on bail and allowed to leave the country. Three years later a Bhopal District Court charged Union Carbide and its officials with culpable homicide and other serious offences. After five years a warrant was issued for Anderson's arrest. In June 2003 the Indian government was finally forced by survivors to petition the U.S. government for extradition of Warren Anderson. He is still at large.


Union Carbide blamed the disaster on a disgruntled (and unnamed) worker, abandoned the plant without cleaning up the area, and made a closed-doors "settlement" with the Indian government that gave survivors a paltry \$500-\$1,200 each. Many victims still haven't received this money and last month a local court directed the government to distribute the remaining \$280 million. Bhopal survivors have never given up their struggle for justice, and in December Dow sued several activists for lost production during recent protest actions.

In Detroit, targets for the day will be Dow World Automotive Headquarters in suburban Detroit and a neighborhood polluter in Detroit. Bhopal survivors are encouraging this kind of local action for the global day.

For more information, see [www.dowethics.com](http://www.dowethics.com) or <http://semcosh.org/bhopal.htm>

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Industrial Worker  
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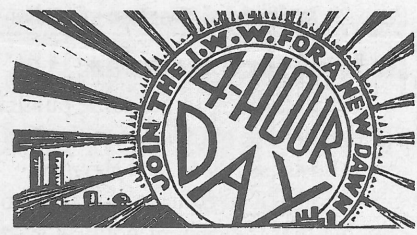
ISSN 0019-8870   
ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Periodicals Postage  
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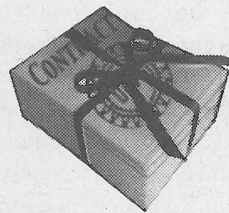
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## More Time for Life!

Special 4-page section on the fight to  
take back our time from the bosses.  
Direct Action for Shorter Hours,  
Overtime, Overwork, and more...



## We can't afford more gifts to the bosses



The wave of concessionary contracts sweeping the US is so stark that even *New York Times* labor reporter Steven Greenhouse recently hailed union leaders' "new realism and a new willingness to settle for less ... to keep their employers competitive and to preserve jobs."

Recent agreements with General Motors, Ford, DaimlerChrysler, Goodyear and Verizon all contained substantial concessions, Greenhouse reports. "While it is unclear whether this apparent change in attitude stems from a new weakness, or a new wisdom, on labor's part, it is clear that the unions at these companies have adopted a more understanding posture toward management."

Far from preserving jobs, the UAW has agreed to the closing of as many as 20 facilities and the loss of up to 50,000 jobs as automakers continue to shift work overseas. Even the weak job guarantees that remain are unlikely to be enforced; the automakers owe thousands of jobs under the expired contracts.

In the midst of an economic collapse that has cost some 2.7 million U.S. manufacturing jobs over the past three years, unions agreed to some form of wage freeze in each of these high-profile settlements. Even where unions have claimed dramatic victories, as in HERE's recent settlement with Yale University, workers paid a stiff price for pay hikes (see related article page 4).

At Verizon, the Communications Workers and IBEW agreed to a one-year wage freeze (with a bonus), as part of a five-year contract that will almost certainly see wages lose ground to inflation. While Verizon unions made a public show of preparing for strike action, in the end they continued working without a contract and traded off wages for job protections. Verizon executives were delighted, saying the wage freeze and cuts in health coverage would save the company \$1 billion over five years.

The United Steelworkers' new contract with Goodyear, the largest U.S. tire manufacturer, freezes wages for all three years of the agreement, though workers will be eligible for

modest cost-of-living adjustments and profit-sharing bonuses. Both of these contracts do contain relatively strong job security provisions, including language that recently forced Verizon to reinstate more than a thousand workers laid-off in violation of the prior agreement. Goodyear agreed to keep its 12 plants open and not reduce employment below 85 percent of current levels.

The United Auto Workers' new contracts similarly contain a first-year wage freeze, offset by small bonuses. Cost-of-living increases will continue, but under a revised formula designed to lag inflation. Workers will also see the cost of their health plans increase, although by less than management had demanded. And new hires at UAW-represented auto parts plants will receive wages far lower than those paid current employees.

Meanwhile, just two months after car-haulers ratified a five-year contract freezing wages for two years, the Teamsters have slashed health benefits for western car-haulers, and are reportedly about to slash benefits from its Central States plan as well. Teamster stewards at Allied's Spring Hill Saturn terminal have pressured workers into "voluntarily" signing away their sick days, under the gun of company threats to close the facility.

The new agreements accelerate the largest round of concessions since the mid-1980s, when unions agreed to massive pay cuts, two-tier pay schemes, round-the-clock operations, outsourcing and work rules changes in a desperate attempt to persuade employers that union workers could be just as cheap or cheaper as their nonunion counterparts. The only results were to whet employers' appetite for even cheaper labor, and to convince millions of workers that unions were either too weak to defend their interests, or in bed with the bosses.

Having evidently learned nothing from that round of concessions, the business unions are once again serving workers to the bosses on their silver platters – trussed up and ready for carving. Resisting this new round of concessions will require building strong workers' organizations on the shop floor – unions that recognize that the working class and the employing class have nothing in common, and are prepared to act on that fact.

## Wobblies discuss future

Seventy-one delegates from across North America participated in the IWW's annual General Assembly in Portland, Oregon, August 30 – 31. Members who couldn't make it to Portland were able to observe the proceedings through a web simulcast, organized by the IWW computer workers of ReVolt, Ltd.

We met in Norse Hall, a survivor of the many halls established by immigrant workers over the years now celebrating its 75th anniversary. While delegates conducted union business in the main hall, a few Portland Wobs worked in the kitchen keeping us well fed and supplied with coffee and tea.

General Secretary-Treasurer Alexis Buss reported that union finances are on a sounder footing. Several new job branches have been established in the last year, and more than 200 members have participated in IWW Organizer Training programs held in 15 cities over the past year. The Organizer Training Committee is working to broaden the number of trainers, and is in the early stages of developing curricula to support branch administration and negotiating.

Her report also noted the need to address the union's long-standing problem with high

membership turnover, recommending that we explore changes in how the union collects dues as part of this process.

General Executive Board chairman Jim Ellsworth's report addressed one of the most controversial issues to be taken up: the Board's decision in early August to modify the wording of IWW application forms after construction and education delegates complained that the form's sweeping language concerning the power to hire and fire was ill-suited to actual conditions in their industries.

Some members were circulating a petition to overturn the decision as the Assembly convened, and a special committee was struck to examine the controversy. After extensive deliberations, the Assembly voted for compromise language on the application forms and established a committee (which will report to next year's Assembly) to develop clearer standards for the future.

Fellow Worker Ellsworth's report also raised the need to develop formal mechanisms within the union to address problems that arise in handling shop floor grievances, and continuing problems with the Regional

*continued on page 3*

## Defend Jack Heyman

We are hoping to get some publicity for the legal defense of ILWU Local 10 (San Francisco) Business Agent Jack Heyman.

Our goal is to educate as many people as possible that the current political system, at the behest of global corporations, is managing very successfully to attack immigrants, civil liberties, unions and the right of those unions to represent their members.

As you are already aware, these attacks against the working class are being completed by bipartisan legis-

lation (Patriot Act, Homeland Security Act, etc.) designed to smother our freedoms. In addition we would like to point out what happens to anyone who dares to stand up against the military invasions/occupations currently in vogue by the administration.

Jack Heyman was representing ILWU union members respecting a picket set up by anti-war demonstrators protesting war supplies being sent to Iraq. The supplies were being sent by American Presidents Line and Stevedore Services America.

Contributions to the Jack Heyman Defense Committee can be sent to: ILWU Local 10 Jack Heyman Defense Committee, 400 North Point St., San Francisco CA 94133. It would also be great if protest letters demanding that all charges be dropped against Jack Heyman and other demonstrators could be faxed to Oakland Mayor Jerry Brown at 510-238-4731 and to Alameda County District Attorney Thomas Orloff at 510-208-3695.

There is also a good website with quite a bit of information for the Heyman defense at [www.defendilwuba.com](http://www.defendilwuba.com).

In Solidarity,  
Jack Mulcahy, ILWU 8 Portland  
Editor, *Maritime Worker Monitor*

## Defend Pakistani workers

On September 17 police attacked a protest rally held under the umbrella of Pakistan Workers Confederation Punjab. Workers rallied in Lahore against anti-worker policies,

price hikes, unemployment, privatization, down-sizing, bans on union activities, discrimination and violence against women.

Thousands of workers belonging to nine national union federations participated. When we reached Lukshmi Chock, heavily armed police stopped the procession and put barriers in the way. But the demonstrators refused to stop their march, continuing toward Parliament House.

Workers exercised their basic right of agitation but police have brought criminal cases against Gulzar Ahmed Chaudhary, president Pakistan Workers Confederation Punjab and general secretary of All Pakistan Trade Union Federation, Khrshid Ahmed, general secretary of Pakistan Workers Confederation, and six other union leaders on the basis of marching without the permission of district administration, criticizing government policies and chanting slogans against the government, stoppage of traffic, etc.

We strongly condemn this anti-worker action and ask you to write the government urging it to drop the charges against the eight union leaders, stop workplace threats and harassment of union leaders, and negotiate with the unions in good faith.

We assure all the peace loving and democratic workers and people of the world that our struggle will continue until the emancipation of the working class.

Nasir Chaudhary  
All Pakistan Trade Union Federation  
14 N, Gulberg Industrial Area  
Gulberg II, Lahore, Pakistan

Write: Honorable Mr. General Pervaiz Musharaf, President, Chief Executive House, Islamabad, email: [ce@pak.gov.pk](mailto:ce@pak.gov.pk); Honorable Mr. Zafrullah Khan Jamali, Prime Minister, Prime Minister House, Islamabad; Honorable Ch Pervaiz Elahi, Chief Minister of Punjab, Chief Minister House, Punjab; Mr. Abdus Sattar Lalika, Federal Minister of Labour, UBL building 9th Floor, Jinnah Avenue Branch, Islamabad, Fax: 92 - 51- 9228490.

## Real Food closes to escape union drive

San Francisco's Noe Valley Real Food store abruptly closed "for renovations" August 29, throwing 30 workers on the street in the midst of a union organizing drive. Workers were told of the closing at 9:30 p.m. the night before; customers learned of it from signs in the window after the store had closed.

Although managers now claim they had no idea that an IWW organizing drive was underway, they met with a union committee a few weeks before the closing and had announced a staff meeting to respond to workers' concerns. That meeting never took place, the store was closed first.

While management claims the closing had long been planned in order to convert

the store into a Fresh Organics outlet, new shipments of produce and dairy products arrived just one day before the abrupt closing. They landed in a dumpster the next day. The company also did not take out building permits for the renovations.

Utah-based Nutraceutical International bought the three Real Food stores through its Fresh Organics subsidiary in March 2002. *Forbes* magazine recently labeled the vitamin giant one of the 200 best small companies in the United States because of its steady profits. Nutraceutical is expanding into the natural foods market in an attempt to bolster sales through a chain of captive markets.

IWW organizers have filed unfair labor practice charges over the closing and the firing of union supporters Mitch Genlot and Adriel Ahern for "bad attitude" during the lead-up to the closing. Community supporters have been replacing information about the dispute on the shuttered store each day, and have established a web log where the community can voice its outrage.

Updated information can be found at the IWW web site at [www.iww.org/organize/news](http://www.iww.org/organize/news)

## East Bay Depot union-busting

Even after the IWW won an NLRB election, the East Bay Depot for Creative Reuse has continued the abuse of workers that led workers to organize in the first place.

Management has laid-off union supporters, harassed workers into quitting, yelled at and assaulted workers, and fired workers charged with speaking out about conditions. Management also continues to ignore safety standards for the handling of toxic materials.

Mismanagement has also cost several jobs, as the Depot has lost grants that funded many of its programs. The result is a financial crisis that endangers the Depot's very survival, and the jobs of the remaining workers.

While the San Francisco GMB continues efforts to negotiate an agreement, community supporters are calling on the board of directors to resign and make way for a new board which would honor the Depot's original vision.



## From the editor

When we went to mail our September issue, the Philadelphia post office refused to accept it and after several days of trying to resolve the problem we were forced to drive it to Boston for mailing. We subsequently established that the Post Office had, without notice to us, revoked our mailing permit two years ago as a result of irregular publication in 2000. This issue was delayed while we worked to resolve the situation.

I also suffered a breakdown in email systems that meant that many articles submitted for this issue became inaccessible. My root email address was shut down without warning, cutting off access to stored messages and our address book. I am still attempting to regain access to this data, and am now working off a temporary email account. Your patience is appreciated.

## In November We Remember

Our next issue includes our annual commemoration of IWW history. Many branches have traditionally taken out greeting ads, for which we ask \$10 per column inch (1" tall, by 2 3/8"); \$30 for a 4-column inch ad, or \$50 for an eighth of a page.

Copy for ads must be received by October 14. No commercial notices, please.

## Industrial Worker

The Voice of Revolutionary  
Industrial Unionism

- ★ ORGANIZATION
- ★ EDUCATION
- ★ EMANCIPATION

Official newspaper of the  
**Industrial Workers  
of the World**

Post Office Box 13476  
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ISSN 0019-8870 Periodicals  
postage paid Philadelphia, PA.

**Postmaster:** Send address  
changes to: Industrial Worker,  
POB 13476, Phila. PA 19101 USA

**Individual Subscriptions:** \$15  
**Library Subs:** \$20/year  
(Member sub included in dues)  
Published ten times per year

Articles not so designated do not  
reflect the official position of the  
IWW. Contributions welcome.

Press Date: September 20, 2003



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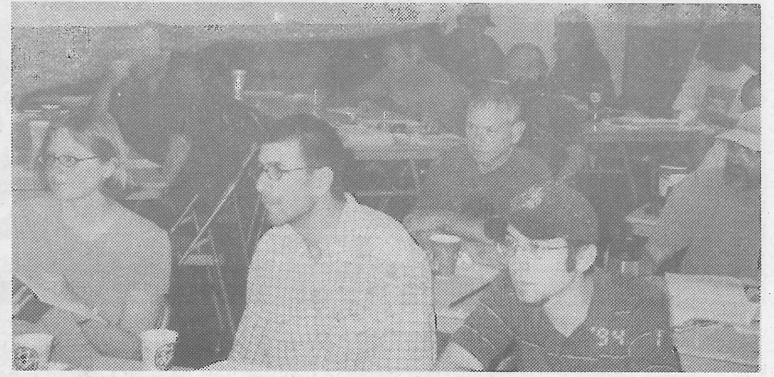
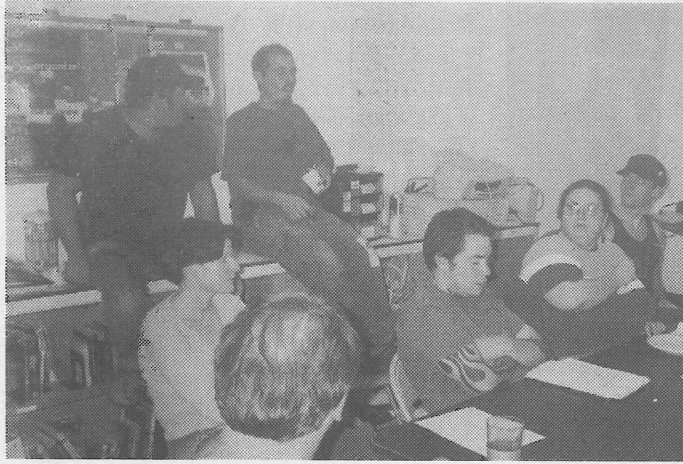
Milwaukee GMB: IWW, PO Box 070632,  
53207.

# IWW General Assembly

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Organising Committee structure. While the IWW has maintained a persistent presence in Australia and the U.K. for the past several years, these ROCs remain too small to function without stronger administrative support.

*Industrial Worker* editor Jon Bekken's report also aroused some controversy, with some delegates complaining that the paper is written at too difficult a level for the average worker, and was not agitational enough. Others called for more poetry (and some for less), and for articles in Chinese and Spanish. The IWW has a growing number of members whose first language is Spanish. FW Bekken noted that despite several years of lessons, his



Left: A committee hashed out a proposal to address the hire/fire controversy Saturday evening.

Above: Delegates listen Sunday morning as proposed constitutional amendments are debated.

Below: The credentials committee reports on eligible delegates.

Spanish is not good enough to do editing and suggested that a branch with several Spanish speakers could seek union funds for a Spanish-language paper, and articles could be swapped as appropriate.

Other reports were heard from the General Defense Committee and the Committee on Industrial Classification, which reported on its efforts to revamp the IWW's industrial union classifications. The Committee anticipates presenting a comprehensive proposal to the 2004 Assembly.

Another topic of discussion was the need to step up the planning process for the IWW's centenary in 2005. While arrangements are under way for a historical conference and a new edition of the IWW's official history, we are committed to organizing a more forward-looking commemoration. FW Buss proposed adding a temporary position at headquarters to coordinate centenary events, a proposal that will be taken up by the General Executive Board in the coming months.

Brief industrial union caucuses were held by delegates from the computer and telecommunications, education, public service and retail industries. Education workers discussed the need to revive the IU 620 newsletter and improve the education workers web site, as well as reviewing a draft leaflet from Portland and hearing a report on the progress of negotiations at Carleton University in Ottawa. A common theme was the need to reach out more actively to non-teaching staff, who do not always think of themselves as education workers.

Computer workers discussed the need to reach out to immigrant workers on H1B visas and to provide support for the many unemployed workers in the field. The retail workers' caucus focussed on the recently acquired retailworker.org site, a widely used resource which they hope to develop to support organizing efforts. The Assembly voted \$500 to the project to upgrade equipment to meet the heavy traffic the site is drawing.

Laura Price was elected to chair a new

women's caucus established by the Assembly, which will work to increase women's participation throughout the union.

Assembly delegates also voted to send to membership referenda constitutional amendments which would require more petition signatures for members to initiate referenda, would change the name of the annual Assembly back to General Convention, and allow delegates to vote the paid-up membership of the branch(es) they represent (presently delegates can only vote those members from whom they carry signed instructions).

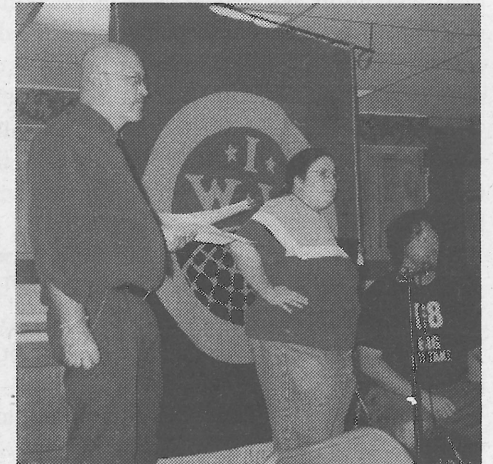
The second day also featured a discussion on organizing strategy. Several delegates stressed the need for a more strategic organizing approach and to build strong community support to support organizing drives.

In Pittsburgh, workers at a natural grocery are focussing on building a strong union presence in a shop where the IWW has had strong support for several months and has had some successes in turning back management attacks on working conditions.

The Philadelphia GMB recognized that too many of their campaigns were coming from "hot shops," and decided to develop a more strategic organizing plan. After a weekend retreat, they decided to launch an organizing campaign among workers in one of the city's busiest retail corridors. These are high turnover jobs, and the objective is less to organize individual shops than to build a critical mass capable of transforming working conditions throughout the corridor.

Portland public service delegates reported that the branch has revived, and is actively campaigning around budget cuts that threaten vital social services and the jobs of our members who provide them. Jordana Sardo stressed the need to reach out to and educate new members, and to build leadership on the shop floor.

This issue was also raised by other delegates. In a context where many unions function more as service organizations than as instruments for workers' self-activity, it is easy

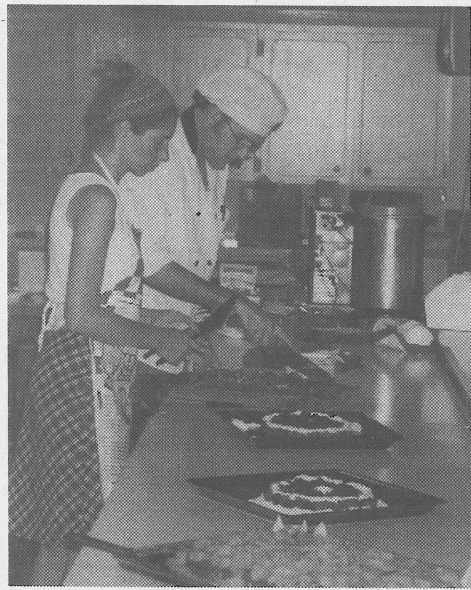


to slip into a pattern where a handful of activists carry out most of the work of the union – complicating future growth as activists become (unpaid) functionaries, undermining union democracy, and weakening our power on the job. Several delegates discussed their efforts to address this dilemma, which requires persistent attention.

Bruce Valde of the San Francisco Bay Area branch reported on that branch's recent contract win for Berkeley recycling workers, and on ongoing negotiations at two retail outlets organized earlier this year.

John Persak of the Seattle branch reported on a campaign where IWWs were able to build on a legacy of active dual-carders in a largely organized retail grocery store not only to build a more active rank and file but also to lay a foundation for organizing the remaining workers into an IWW-represented unit.

Following the adjournment and a rousing rendition of "Solidarity Forever," Portland Wobs presented their new member orientation, which they have been presenting on a monthly basis. Equipped with a bevy of flip charts, they walked us through a presentation that began with defining the nature of class society and exploitation, and concluded by explaining the advantages of the IWW's approach and explaining some of the ways to become active in the union.



Two of the Portland Wobs who kept delegates fed throughout the Assembly.

## Around Our Union

Chicago Wobblies organized the eighth annual Free Mumia Abu-Jamal/Stop Police Brutality contingent in the Bud Billiken parade, distributing thousands of leaflets about the case to the more than a million people who turn out to watch the parade each year.

Milwaukee Wobblies were assigned an inside table at the city's Laborfest this year, a position of greater acceptance that made it impossible to spin the wonderful "Wobbly wheel of union history" that was such a hit the year before. Nonetheless, lots of people stopped by the IWW table, and the Wobbly contingent had a good time marching (and biked) in the annual Labor Day parade.



## Squeegee workers fight back

While the British Columbia Liberals cut people off of welfare left, right and centre, they have done nothing to repair the 8 percent+ unemployment rate. Some people are forced to panhandle, beg or busk to make a living, while other homeless people work with a squeegee as a legitimate way to survive.

But the Vancouver Police Department has a policy of ticketing, jailing and stealing people's squeegees. The City of Vancouver is working on passing a law to prevent people from panning, busking or squeegeeing. Squeegee kids are given numerous \$86 tickets for 'jaywalking' at intersections, then jailed when unable to pay the fines. The squeegee youth can stomach no more and have unionized with the Vancouver IWW branch. As unionized workers we will struggle to have our rights respected.

We demand an end to the petty police harassment of the poor. We demand that the poor be given the right to make money on the street through panning, busking, squeegeeing and flea marketing.

The new Wobs organized an Oct. 10 mass squeegee action at a downtown intersection which has seen repeated police attacks.

# Connecting the imperial dots

BY PATRICK REINSBOROUGH

As thousands descended upon Cancun for actions against the WTO, 400 activists gathered in a park in Point Richmond, California, united by a common opposition to corporate globalization, war and the destruction that our addiction to oil wreaks on communities and ecosystems around the world.

At first glance the quiet, suburban park would seem a world away from the bomb craters of Iraq or the militarized streets of Cancun. But Point Richmond is home to ChevronTexaco's massive refinery where the first shipments of Iraqi oil – arranged by the U.S. occupation – are arriving for processing. Local residents, who have spent decades fighting Chevron's toxic terrorism against their community, had vowed to prevent "stolen Iraqi oil" from being refined in Richmond.

The action was coordinated by Direct Action to Stop the War – the community-based mobilization infamous for organizing the 20,000-person shutdown of San Francisco's financial district in response to the U.S. invasion of Iraq. DASW has consistently highlighted the links between corporate interests

and Bush's policies and organized two previous actions at ChevronTexaco headquarters.

The action began with a brief rally in which musicians and poets shared time with passionate speakers outlining ChevronTexaco's toxic legacy around the world from the Ecuadorian Amazon to Nigeria, from Iraq to Richmond. People from Richmond spoke out against the refinery and exposed war and WTO-style corporate globalization as two sides of the same deadly coin. Together we celebrated our globalization – the globalization of hope, resistance and the demand for justice. And then we marched, surging into the streets behind a giant banner that read "Globalize Justice Stop this War! Stop Oil Pollution! Stop Oil Addiction."

We chanted and sang along with the unstoppable Brass Liberation Orchestra, marching to the refinery gate. At the entrance, unfazed by several lines of riot police, nearly 30 people sat down to blockade the road and stop any trucks leaving the refinery. The line of resisters was a seamless mix of young and old, local residents and seasoned activists, people of conscience from priests to black-

clad anarchists, community organizers to soccer moms. With the setting sun turning the refinery's citadel of tanks, pipes and smokestacks into a fiery backdrop, life-long Richmond resident and West County Toxic Coalition Director Dr. Henry Clark gave a moving, defiant speech to the crowd. "The real terrorist in this community is ChevronTexaco!" boomed Dr. Clark. "ChevronTexaco has been poisoning us and lying about it for decades and we're not going to let them do the same thing in Iraq."

Demonstrators were nearly outnumbered by a massive police presence, many in full riot gear. The police sealed off all nearby freeway exits and removed all signs to the rally point, leaving many people unable to reach the demonstration. Who exactly the police "serve and protect" in Richmond could not have been made more clear.

The blockade held for over two hours. One of the high points was hearing the voices of organizers in Cancun. We were also overjoyed to receive reports of a solidarity action in Vancouver which shut down Chevron-

continued on page 9



During the General Assembly held here in Portland last month, I got to talk some with the intrepid editor of the *Industrial Worker*, Jon Bekken. When I asked what he thought of my column, he replied "I thought the last one rather uninspired." I had to agree, for the truth was I was rather uninspired. But much to my chagrin, September's "Praise Boss" drew the most rave letters of the column's entire run.

Perhaps I had hit upon something – inspired laziness...

As this issue deals with the Shorter Work Day I am reminded of what somebody – I think Fred Thompson, but maybe Marx or Franklin Rosemont or some thinker like them – said something like: "We want a society of inspired laziness." And it's true. The IWW fights for a new world where laziness isn't a sin, but a way of creating more time for the things that matter most in life: our family and friends, our communities, our cultures and the world around us. We want a world where people matter, not things.

In that spirit and because I'm past my deadline for this thing of a bit of writing and having worked a criminally long shift and now having to get my kids, I give you more inspired laziness. Bon appetit!

★ ★ ★

- 1) When you take a long time, you're slow. When your boss takes a long time, he's thorough.
- 2) When you don't do it, you're lazy. When your boss doesn't do it, he's too busy.
- 3) When you make a mistake, you're an idiot. When your boss makes a mistake, he's only human.
- 4) When doing something without being told, you're overstepping your authority. When your boss does the same thing, that's initiative.
- 5) When you take a stand, you're being pig-headed. When your boss does it, he's being firm.
- 6) When you overlooked a rule of etiquette, you're being rude. When your boss skips a few rules, he's being original.
- 7) When you please your boss, you're brown-nosing. When your boss pleases his boss, he's being cooperative.
- 8) When you're out of the office, you're wandering around. When your boss is out of the office, he's on business.
- 9) When you're on a day off sick, you're always sick. When your boss has a day off sick, he must be very ill.
- 10) When you apply for leave, you must be going for an interview. When your boss applies for leave, it's because he's overworked.

★ ★ ★

**Australian Workers in solidarity with the Boss:** In an unusual role reversal, the bosses of a Melbourne factory have gone on strike leaving the blue collar employees to work virtually unsupervised. And the workers want their bosses back.

About 35 managers, supervisors, technicians and administrative staff from glaze and powder coating manufacturer Ferro Corporation walked off the job over threats of redundancies.

The 40 forlorn blue collar workers at the factory, members of the Australian Workers' Union, then called a brief halt over the safety of continuing to work without the managers. They resumed work after WorkSafe inspectors called to the factory gave Ferro the all clear. "Our members just want their bosses to come back," AWU organizer Michael Borowick said.

The dispute at Ferro, which has boosted the membership of the Association of Professional Engineers, Scientists and Managers Australia, came after Ferro's U.S. parent company informed the Australian managers their employment conditions would change next year. Some managers received letters advising them they would be made redundant in January.

Ferro Corporation managing director David Moseley said he had never heard of managers going on strike before. Moseley declined to discuss the details of the dispute but assured customers their orders would be filled.

"It's a regrettable situation," he said.

★ ★ ★

In August the Pentagon scrapped plans for a stock market in which investors could wager on the possibility of future terrorist attacks. You know, we really shouldn't be wagering with people's lives. Unless those games involve a deck of cards and the lives of Iraqis.

★ ★ ★

**You Might Be Bourgeois If...** You think "proletariat" is a type of cheese. You've tried to argue that poverty could be abolished if people were just allowed to keep more of their minimum wage.

The only union you support is the baseball players, because darn! they're richer than you.

You think you might remember laughing once as a kid.

You once broke loose at a party and removed your neck tie.

You call mall rent-a-cops "jack-booted thugs."

You've ever said, "I can't wait to get into business school."

You answer to "The Man."

You don't think "The Simpsons" is all that funny, but that Flanders fellow makes a lot of sense.

When people say "Marx," you think "Groucho."

The Iraq war makes a lot of sense to you.

You've ever said "Clean air? Looks clean to me."

You've ever called education a luxury.

You came of age in the '60s and don't remember Bob Dylan.

You're afraid of the liberal media.

You ever told a child that Oscar the Grouch "lives in a trash can because he is lazy and doesn't want to contribute to society."

★ ★ ★

Last issue I started a contest to answer the question: "How many Wobblies does it take to screw in a light bulb?" I received around a dozen answers. I would like to announce that FW Dan Slater sent in the winning entry and wins the Portland IWW Hall Poster. So how many IWWs does it take? "Wobs don't have to screw in a light bulb because we are forming the structure of the new light bulb within the shell of the old."

★ ★ ★

FN Brill is on the way to get his kids right now, so you'll have to contact him c/o IWW, 616 E. Burnside, Portland OR 97214 USA-WMD or fnbrill@yahoo.com

## Ontario mushroom boycott begins

BY 355424

270 workers at a mushroom production facility in Kingsville, Ontario are calling on consumers to boycott fresh mushrooms from Rol-Land Farms to protest poverty-level wages and inadequate working conditions.

The Rol-Land Farms Consumer Boycott Campaign was officially launched on so-called Labour Day by the UFCW at parades in Toronto, London, Windsor, Kingston and other centres across Ontario September 1st.

The boycott targets bulk, pre-packed and pre-sliced fresh mushrooms shipped by Rol-Land under the brand names Essex Kent, Essex Continental and Unionville Farms.

The campaign goal is to pressure the factory farm to correct the appalling working conditions and poverty wages at the \$50 million a year facility.

"Rol-Land workers need consumers' support in their fight for justice, dignity and collective bargaining rights," says Stan Raper, coordinator of UFCW Agricultural Workers Campaign.

"The working conditions in the mushroom barns are very hazardous. It's dark. The air is rank. Many of the workers are forced to work non-stop 12-hour shifts with little or no time off to eat, rest or go to the bathroom," says Raper. "Rol-Land should be ashamed and so should the Ontario government."

The UFCW thus shows that they don't understand that capitalism must be abolished, not merely reformed. And the same point holds for the state.

Since 1995 the Ontario government has denied farm workers the right to collective bargaining, in spite of a 2001 landmark ruling by the Supreme Court of Canada which upheld a UFCW challenge that to deny such rights contravenes The Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

## Yale strike settlement abandons sister unions

As the *Industrial Worker* goes to press, members of Locals 34 and 35 of the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees International Union have returned to work at Yale University, abandoning sister unions representing hospital workers and teaching assistants. Negotiations have dragged on since the last contract expired in January 2002.

The three-week strike was marked by massive protests and more than 200 arrests, but also by scabbing by a fourth or more of HERE members. Thirteen workers hired to scab during the strike joined picket lines in the final days of the strike, and some reports suggest that fewer union members were crossing picket lines in the strike's final week.

HERE agreed to an eight-year contract including substantial pension increases, annual raises of 3 to 5 percent, and job security. In exchange, Yale won eight years of labor peace, in which it can continue its efforts to crush other campus workers' unions without fearing solidarity from the HERE-represented clerical, technical and maintenance workers. In lieu of industrial solidarity, HERE President John Wilhelm offered empty rhetoric: "Our union will devote all our attention and all our resources to make sure the hospital workers win the respect they deserve."

The settlement abandoned 140 SEIU-represented food service workers at Yale-New Haven Hospital, who joined HERE in striking August 27. The hospital workers voted to reject Yale's contract demands, but offered an unconditional return to work Sept. 19 after learning that the HERE locals were returning to work despite its pledges of solidarity.

HERE-represented teaching assistants, who have been embroiled in a decade-long organizing campaign despite blacklists, firings and other reprisals, were also left in the cold by the settlement. Last March, the teaching assistants joined the other HERE locals in a one-week strike which included demands that Yale agree to allow a union representation vote for its graduate employees.

The Canadian arm of the UFCW, like most Canadian unions, seriously believe that elections will somehow reform capitalism. But not us. The IWW knows that capitalism will never be reformed. You might see certain local changes, but the deadly effects of capitalism are global, not local.

Recently more than 70% of Rol-Land's workers signed cards appointing the UFCW to represent them as their bargaining agent. Now workers are waiting for an official tally of ballots they also cast in a recent participation vote conducted by the Ontario Labour Relations Board. The ballot box has been sealed pending an OLRB hearing.

"Now we need consumers to cast their support," says Raper, "by boycotting Rol-Land; asking their local stores to take the product off the shelves, and telling the Earnie Eves government that farm workers deserve rights too."

"The Canadian boycott of California grapes helped workers there a generation ago. Let's show the same solidarity with our farm workers here in Ontario."

## Quebec's war on workers

Quebec's five-month-old Liberal government has launched a full-scale attack on the province's labour movement, floating legislation that would allow unionized firms and government departments to subcontract work to non-union shops and force health care unions to merge. The government is also considering privatizing a wide range of public services, slashing child care subsidies, and cutting wages for public workers.

"He's attacking workers with the whip," said Claudette Carbonneau, head of the Confederation of National Trade Unions. "When you threaten workers, when you cut their salaries, their insurance, their working conditions, you're playing with their lives. They will react."

Meanwhile, Montreal authorities have reneged on tentative agreements with unions representing blue collar workers, and have ordered workers to stop protesting.

## A Labor Day prescription

The Fraser Institute, a Canadian conservative think tank, marked Labour Day by releasing a study urging the British Columbia government to cut the minimum wage, slash public sector employment, and prohibit union-shop agreements. To be competitive, the Institute concluded, B.C. should cut its unionization rate in half, from 35.4 to 14.6 percent.

This, the thinkers say, will improve the business climate and the economy. Few will be surprised to learn that wage slaves are not among the Institute's financiers.

## Your union or your job

Across British Columbia, hundreds of workers at long-term care facilities have quit their unions or accepted concessions as employers take advantage of new labor legislation allowing them to walk away from union agreements and contract out union jobs. Thousands of health care workers in housekeeping, laundry, maintenance and food services departments have already lost their jobs.

Desperate workers have accepted wage cuts of as much as \$2.50 per hour and given up holidays and benefits. Others have given up union representation and thrown themselves on the mercy of their employers. The HEU estimates that it will lose 10,000 of its 45,000 members in acute and long-term care facilities as employers take advantage of the opportunity to "de-unionize" the health-care sector.

## 593 punished for unionizing

The Korean government has disciplined 593 public workers for their roles in engineering illegal strikes and rallies to win recognition of their union. Fifteen workers were fired outright, and several others demoted.

The "reform" government claims it wants to overturn laws prohibiting unions for public sector workers. But workers have tired of waiting for official permission.

# MORE TIME FOR LIFE!

SPECIAL SHORTER HOURS SUPPLEMENT TO THE INDUSTRIAL WORKER



## October 24 is Take Back Your Time Day Less Time for Work, More Time for Life!

### We Lead the World

According to a recent report by the International Labor Organization, U.S. workers lead the industrialized world in the number of hours worked each year – adding 36 hours to our work year in the 1990s.

While American workers are piling on overtime (much of it mandatory) and taking on two or three jobs in order to cope with low wages, workers around the world have been fighting for, and winning, short work weeks and longer vacations. As a result, U.S. workers now put in 499 hours (about 12 1/2 weeks) more a year on the job than German workers.

### Working Ourselves Out of Our Jobs

The ILO report also ranked the U.S. #1 in productivity. That means we're working harder, and producing more per hour, than workers anywhere else in the world. And because we're working so long and so hard, we're working ourselves right out of our jobs.

Industrial productivity (the amount of goods or services we produce each hour) doubles every 25 years or so. But are we living better lives? Our pay (adjusted for inflation) doesn't go up (indeed, it's been drifting downward for decades), our work doesn't get easier, and our hours don't go down. So where does all our productivity go? It makes it possible for the boss to throw the worker next to us onto the streets, as each of us now does the work it used to take two workers to do.

### Winning Shorter Hours Around the World

Over a hundred years ago, U.S. workers fought for (and eventually won) the 8-hour day. Today, many of us find ourselves putting in 10- and 12-hour work days – working longer, and harder, than we did 100 years ago. All this overtime leads to increased stress and on-the-job accidents, and keeps us from our families. Meanwhile, millions of workers are jobless, and millions more working dead-end part-time jobs.

In France, Germany, South Korea – all over the world – workers are demanding shorter work weeks and longer vacations. Rather than join the employers' race to the bottom, it's time for us to link up with our fellow workers around the world to reduce working hours and increase employment.

### Create Jobs with Good Pay & Benefits

A shorter work week with no cut in pay (and no speed-up) would force the employers to hire more workers, reducing unemployment and reversing the downward pressure on our wages. It would make it possible for millions of workers to escape the trap of piling up low-paid, no-benefit part-time jobs in order merely to survive. It would enable the jobless to escape poverty, and give our youth a future to look forward to – not to dread.

### Our Time is Our Lives

Every hour we spend on the job doing the bosses' bidding is an hour we can not spend doing the things that make life worth living – raising our children, hanging out with our friends, gardening, bowling, fishing, relaxing ...

Shorter hours are possible – and necessary. But in order to win them, we will need to build a broad-based movement. We need to organize, to educate within our communities, to ensure that the issue can not be ignored. We invite you to join us in this effort.

### Wildcat strike against 16.5 hour days

Workers on a floating fish processing factory in the Bering Sea wildcatted in February when bosses tried to lengthen their 16-hour work day by another half-hour.

"You just didn't have time to rest," said Luis Verdusco, a 10-year veteran of the Ocean Phoenix. "I was sleeping only four or five hours a day, and it just wasn't enough."

Workers had sent two letters protesting the longer hours, saying they would work the extra time only if management joined them on the line. The skipper agreed to meet to discuss the issue, but balked when dozens of workers turned out. He ordered everyone to immediately return to work or be fired.

Twenty-five workers refused to return to work until their grievance was addressed. They were fired that night and put off the ship in Alaska. Their return fare to Washington state was deducted from their final paychecks.

Fish factory ships routinely work 16-hour days; workers said they needed the half hour to eat and sleep. "I thought I could finish the shift, but it was just so much," Miguel Martinez told the *Seattle Times*. "Every time I went to bed, my bones were so achy from throwing fish all day."

The Ocean Phoenix cut crews on some production lines this year in a cost-cutting move, while switching to hand packing on another line in an effort to improve quality and sell to the more lucrative sushi market.

The workers have been blacklisted from the fleet, and have sued for back wages and unlawful termination. The NLRB is investigating unfair labor practice charges over the firings.

The company claims the wildcat strike was a mutiny and is counter-suing the 25 workers for damages from lost production.

## Work Without End?

The American labor movement was built on the struggle for shorter hours. The fledgling American Federation of Labor called for a general strike for the 8-hour day on May 1, 1886. Hundreds of thousands of workers downed tools in cities across the country, and joined massive parades demanding "8 hours for work, 8 hours for sleep, 8 hours for what we will."

The 8-hour day gradually became the norm. Timber workers organized into the Industrial Workers of the World won the 8-hour day by delegating a member to blow a whistle and walking off the job once they had put in their hours. If the boss fired the crew, they walked down the road to the next job – where they replaced a crew which had just done the same.

Auto manufacturers instituted the 8-hour day in an attempt to block unionization of their plants. Rubber workers won first the 8-hour and then, in the 1930s, the 6-hour day through sit-downs and strikes.

If you look back at the songs and pamphlets generated during this long campaign, it is clear that workers were fighting not to raise our wages through overtime premiums, but rather to take control of a greater portion of our lives – our time – and also to help our unemployed fellow workers.

Today's business unions have lost sight of both goals. While they mounted a half-hearted, tepid response to attacks on the 8-hour day, it has been decades since we have seen any effort to win shorter hours. While workers in the rest of the industrialized world have been fighting for and winning longer vacations and shorter work weeks, work hours in the United States have been growing steadily longer – to the point where we now work the longest hours in the world. This is not inevitable. South Korean workers used to put in much longer hours, but they won longer vacations and shorter work weeks through a series of militant strikes and plant

occupations (and they're still fighting to win back more of their time).

The last legislative victory for shorter hours in the United States came in May 2000, when Maine passed a bill prohibiting employers from forcing workers to put in more than 80 hours of mandatory overtime in any two-week period (agricultural and utility workers are excluded). Maine is the only state with a legal limit on overtime.

While it may be legal to require workers to put in as much as 120 hours of work in a week (in Maine; elsewhere bosses legally demand even more), in practice, few workers could survive such a grueling schedule for even a single week.

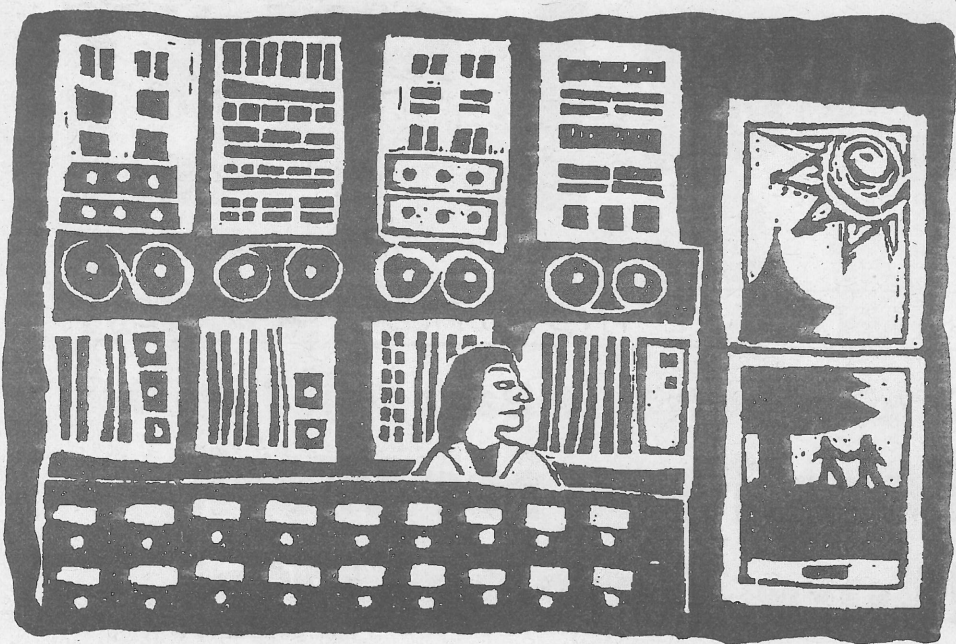
But millions of workers find themselves forced to put in 10- and 12-hour days on a regular basis, with serious consequences for their physical and mental health, their family life, and their ability to pursue their own interests. Millions more get little if any vacation time (and many workers who are technically entitled to vacations report that the work is so backed up that they find it impossible to schedule time off).

Study after study has found that overwork is literally killing us. Long work hours lead to increased stress, heart disease, fatigue, and chronic illness. The Japanese have a word for death by overwork, *Karoshi*, and estimate that it kills 10,000 workers a year. Since U.S. workers put in an average of 100 more hours a year on the job than the Japanese, it stands to reason that a lot more of us are dying from overwork.

There is no reason we should be putting in these long hours. More than 15 million U.S. workers are unemployed, and the bosses keep handing out the pink slips. As our fellow workers are laid-off, the survivors are forced to pick up their work – working faster, harder, and longer. Increasingly, we're not even paid for those hours. As a result, worker productivity (the amount we produce in each hour

*continued on next page*

*While workers in the rest of the industrialized world have been fighting for and winning longer vacations and shorter work weeks, work hours in the United States have been growing steadily longer – to the point where we now work the longest hours in the world.*



## An hour off

For thirty years, Johnson had arrived at work at 9 a.m. on the dot. He had never missed a day and was never late. Consequently, when on one particular day 9 a.m. passed without Johnson's arrival, it caused a sensation. All work ceased, and the boss himself, looking at his watch and muttering, came out into the corridor. Finally, precisely at ten, Johnson showed up, clothes dusty and torn, his face scratched and bruised, his glasses bent. He limped painfully to the time clock, punched in, and said, aware that all eyes were upon him, "I tripped and rolled down two flights of stairs in the subway. I nearly killed myself."

And the boss said, "And to roll down two flights of stairs took you a whole hour?"

## Work Without End?

*Continued from front page*

of work) is skyrocketing – making it possible to get out the same production with fewer and fewer workers. In the second quarter of 2003, business output actually increased even as the total number of work hours went down. We are quite literally working ourselves out of our jobs.

Simply enforcing the 40-hour week could create more than 7 million full-time jobs, cutting the unemployment rate in half. Following the example of our European fellow workers and moving to a 35-hour week with modest vacations could eliminate unemployment altogether.

### The "modern" 12-hour day

Most workers tell pollsters that they are overworked, and desperately need time off. Entire industries have arisen to save hard-pressed workers some time by walking the dog or making lunch for the kids. But the business unions are, for the most part, oblivious to this time crisis. (A notable exception: nurses' unions, which have waged several high-profile strikes in recent years against mandatory overtime.)

The Bush administration is in the process of issuing regulations that would strip millions of workers of their overtime protection. Although U.S. law permits bosses to work us as long as they want, it attempts to encourage a 40-hour week by requiring time-and-a-half pay for overtime. However, millions of workers are exempted from the Fair Labor Standards Act, including farm and domestic workers, managers, and "professionals." Such employees can be forced to work unlimited overtime without any compensation.

The Labor Department is finalizing new regulations "interpreting" the law to dramatically expand who is considered a "professional" to include pretty much any worker who holds a "position of responsibility" or has specialized skills learned through on-the-job training or at a college or trade school. (Presently only workers whose jobs are predominantly creative or intellectual and require independent judgment are exempt, although employers routinely misclassify workers in order to avoid paying overtime. Computer programmers are also exempted under spe-

cial legislation. Not surprisingly, workers who do not have to be paid overtime work much longer hours.)

The Bush administration says the new regulations would "modernize" the rules and make it easier for employers to determine whether workers are entitled to overtime pay. A corporate-sponsored research group recently estimated that employers are cheating U.S. workers of \$19 billion a year in unpaid overtime, primarily to workers who would be exempt under the proposed regulations. Over time, as technology permeates workplaces and employers continue to demand increased education and training, these regulations would "modernize" all but the lowest-paid workers out of FLSA coverage, concretizing in law the 50- and 60-hour weeks that have become increasingly normal.

Tens of thousands of workers wrote the Labor Department protesting the proposed regulations, passionate in their demands that they be protected from their bosses' insatiable appetite for overtime. A recent survey found that 74 percent of Americans oppose the new rules.

Rather than respond to this attack with strikes or massive demonstrations, the AFL-CIO has confined itself to encouraging workers to email the Labor Department and Congress, and lobbying the Republican-dominated Congress to pass legislation blocking the proposal. (Not that the Democrats are much better; when the House rejected the AFL-backed measure by a three-vote margin, Dick Gephardt didn't vote because he was in Iowa garnering union endorsements for his presidential bid. Six other Democrats also went AWOL, while several others voted with the Bush administration.)

### Time or Money?

But the AFL-CIO's "new voice" is telling bosses they can work us as long as they want – as long as they pay a little bit more. While tossing off occasional offhand remarks about how bosses are hiring fewer workers and working them longer, the main theme of the AFL's campaign has been to defend overtime pay. "Cut overtime pay? No way!" the AFL web site declares, urging workers to tell the

## TOP TEN SIGNS THAT YOU'RE WORKING TOO MUCH

- 1) God comes down from heaven to remind you that even he took the seventh day off.
- 2) You catch yourself saying, "I only worked a half-day today, twelve hours!"
- 3) Everyone from day, swing, and graveyard thinks you work their shift.
- 4) Domino's has limited you to 40 pizzas a month because they are genuinely concerned about your health.
- 5) Your spouse stops in to update the photos of your kids.
- 6) Your doctor reminds you to get 8 hours sleep every day. You want to know if that includes time spent napping on the freeway.
- 7) You catch yourself dialing "9" before making calls on your home phone.
- 8) Your kids start calling you "Auntie Mommy."
- 9) You make coffee nervous.
- 10) The bags under your eyes have bags under their eyes.

Bush administration that "working families count on overtime pay."

Of course, after decades of eroding wages, many workers are desperate to get by and have come to rely on their overtime pay for survival. But this is a problem that needs to be confronted, not a reason to maintain the epidemic of (mostly mandatory) overtime that consumes more and more of our lives.

Workers did not fight for – and sometimes die for – shorter hours to get a few dollars of blood money in our paychecks. No! We fought for shorter hours to put an end to this rotten situation where millions go jobless, while others slave for endless hours, and to reclaim that most precious of commodities: our lives. Our time is our life, and every hour we hand over to the bosses is another hour lost.

## Turning overtime laws on their head

*Following are excerpts from formal objections filed by Industrial Worker editor Jon Bekken with the Labor Department, protesting its plan to gut overtime protections:*

The proposed regulations would ultimately eliminate overtime protection for millions of workers, who would be reclassified as professional or administrative employees. ... Under the proposed rules workers who hold a "position of responsibility" or have learned specialized job skills through on-the-job training or a trade school would be exempt from overtime protection.

The indicated standard of a two-year college degree or its equivalent to establish exempt status as a professional would have sweeping consequences. Currently about half of all high school graduates enroll in college for at least a brief period of time. Many employers demand college degrees for jobs in customer service, retail or telemarketing.

Far from "modernizing the regulations," the proposals ignore the changed nature of the employment market (which requires higher levels of education in order to perform jobs formerly considered unskilled, the actual duties of which have not substantively changed) in order to "exempt more classifications of workers from overtime pay." In doing so, the proposed regulations would turn the overtime laws on their head – creating a presumption that workers are exempt from overtime protection where the old standards assumed they were covered. ...

Employers currently shortchange employees by \$19 billion a year in overtime pay. Lawsuits against Wal-Mart and other employers have resulted in judgments for millions of dollars. Such lawsuits are successfully challenging the widespread misclassification of employees as exempt. The Department proposes to address these complaints not by stepping up enforcement to confront this massive violation of the law, or even with an educational campaign to assist employers in meeting their legal obligations, but rather by in effect saying that since employers seem determined to flout the law, the Department will abolish protections for millions of workers. This is unacceptable as a matter of social policy, contrary to the public interest, and not consistent with the laws the agency is charged with enforcing.

The Department estimates that employers would pay a modest \$334 to \$895 million a year in increased wages and overtime payments under the proposed regulations, but would save up to \$1.9 billion a year in savings from workers who would no longer have to be paid for their overtime. (Although the Department's analysis treats the former as a cost and the latter as a benefit, it is the opposite to the workers affected.) This seriously understates the benefit to employers, as it assumes that employers will not take advantage of their new right to require unpaid overtime to lay off current workers and require the survivors to pick up the work. Indeed, employers are presently doing just that. In the information sector, where computer programmers and support staff are considered exempt, most analysts agree that one in five trained professionals is presently either unemployed or doing lower-paid work outside the sector. However, employees in this field typically are required to put in 60 hours a week or more – sometimes much more – in order to hold their jobs.

The Department would extend the disastrous consequences of this practice far beyond the information sector. Employers would have enormous incentives to convert existing hourly

*continued on page 8*

## Senate rejects overtime rules

The U.S. Senate voted Sept. 10 to block the Labor Department's attempt to yank overtime protection from millions of workers. The measure (an amendment to the Labor Dept. appropriation) now goes to the House, which earlier rejected the proposal. Bush has vowed to veto the measure if it passes both houses.

"The Harkin amendment is the right measure for America's workers because it stops the Bush administration from taking away workers' right to overtime pay," said AFL-CIO President John J. Sweeney. The AFL's inability to see this as a fight over workers' time – instead seeing overtime simply as an opportunity to increase workers' income – is a sign of how much the business unions have degenerated in the last 100 years.

IF YOU WANT TO KILL TIME, TRY WORKING IT TO DEATH.

## Take Back Your Time day

October 24 marks the day when U.S. workers will have put in as many hours on the job as the average European. But instead of kicking back to take a well-deserved rest, we'll put in another nine weeks on the job – enriching our bosses at the expense of our bodies, our minds, our families, and our communities.

Our time is our life, and it's time to take it back. A diverse coalition is organizing events around the country to mark the day, in hopes of putting shorter hours back on the public agenda. There will be teach-ins, festivals, workplace speak-outs, demonstrations, and many other events.

The IWW has endorsed Take Back Your Time day as an opportunity to raise the need to cut working hours with our fellow workers on the job and in our communities.

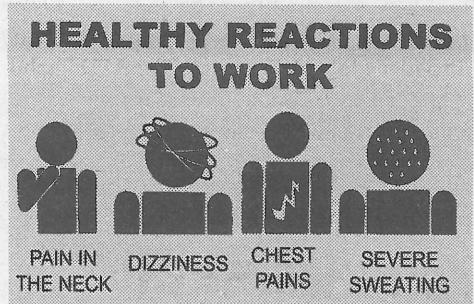
Information on local Take Back Your Time day events can be found at [www.timeday.org](http://www.timeday.org); there's still time to organize your own event in your workplace or neighborhood.

## Time off

The average U.S. worker gets just 10 days a year of vacation time after three years on the job, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics – and growing numbers report that their work load is so overwhelming that they are unable to take more than a day or two of vacation at a time. Even then, many workers are forced to check in by email or cell phone.

These are among the shortest vacations in the world. Chinese workers average 15 days of paid vacation a year, and European workers get 25 to 30 days (up to 35 in Sweden).

As a result, we don't get the time we need to decompress, and recover from the stress of wage slavery.



## War on long hours culture

Britain's Trades Union Congress is launching an "It's about time" campaign, asking people to report violations of hours laws to a new telephone hot line or a website at [www.worksmart.org.uk](http://www.worksmart.org.uk).

A TUC poll shows that one in four workers who signed an opt-out from working time regulations were given no choice. Two out of three people who work more than 48 hours a week were not asked to sign an opt out. Most said they would like to work fewer hours.

The UK is the only country that allows workers to opt out of the Europe-wide 48 hour limit on average working time.

"The long hours disease grips too many workplaces," TUC General Secretary Brendan Barber said. "People are not making a free choice because they love their jobs so much, as employer lobbyists say. It makes as much sense to talk about freedom to work very long hours as it does to talk about freedom to work for less than the minimum wage or to work in a dangerous workplace."

Four million UK workers work more than 48 hours a week on average – 700,000 more than in 1992 when there was no long hours protection. The largest increases have been forced on white collar workers, who generally lack union protection. British employees work the longest hours in Europe. The average for full timers in the UK is 43.5. In France it's 38.2 and in Germany 39.9.

The 2003 Stressed Out survey by the Samaritans, the UK emotional support charity, found: "People's jobs are the single biggest cause of stress... with over a third (36 percent) of Britons citing it as one of their biggest stressors."

### PREAMBLE to the CONSTITUTION of the THE INDUSTRIAL WORKERS OF THE WORLD

The working class and the employing class have nothing in common. There can be no peace so long as hunger and want are found among millions of working people and the few, who make up the employing class, have all the good things of life.

Between these two classes a struggle must go on until the workers of the world organize as a class, take possession of the 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 interest of the working class upheld only by an organization formed in such a way that all its members in any one industry, or 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 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.

### IWW General Headquarters

PO Box 13476  
Philadelphia, PA 19101  
215-222-1905 • [ghq@iww.org](mailto:ghq@iww.org)

### Our Newspaper

*The Industrial Worker*: the grassroots voice of the revolutionary labor movement, published since 1909. News of the struggles of working people written by those who are fighting on the front lines. 11 issues per year, \$15.00

### Organizer Training

The IWW believes that every member is an organizer, and that worker self-organizing is the best way to cultivate a strong working class movement. Our trainings use a variety of techniques to teach workers how to start a campaign and act union on the job.

### IWW Literature Department

The IWW's Literature Department publishes & stocks hundreds of labor books, CDs, shirts, buttons, and other goodies! Write for a catalog. Bookmark your web browser on our merchandise page at [www.iww.org/store](http://www.iww.org/store).

Available in mid-October: the 2004 edition of our annual labor history calendar: \$10.

The IWW is a union for all workers, dedicated to organizing on the job, in our industries and in our communities. We organize to win better conditions today and to build a world without bosses, a world in which production and distribution are organized by workers to meet the needs of the entire population, not just a handful of exploiters.

We organize industrially – that is to say, we organize all workers on the job into one union, rather than dividing workers by trade, so that we pool our strength to fight the bosses together. Since the IWW was founded in 1905, we have recognized the need for a truly international workers' movement in order to confront the global power of the bosses.

We invite you to become a member whether or not the IWW has representation rights in your workplace. We organize the worker, not just the job, recognizing that genuine unionism is not about government certification or employer recognition but about workers coming together to address common concerns. Sometimes this means striking or signing a contract. Sometimes it means refusing to work with an unsafe machine or following the bosses' orders so literally that nothing gets done. Sometimes it means agitating around particular grievances in a specific workplace or across an industry.

Because the IWW is a democratic, member-run union, decisions about what issues to address and what tactics are pursued are made by the workers directly involved. IWW members can count on the solidarity of their union.

**TO JOIN:** Mail this form with a check or money order for initiation and your first month's dues to: IWW, Post Office Box 13476, Philadelphia, PA 19101.

Initiation is the same as one month's dues. Our dues are calculated according to your income. If your monthly income is under \$1,000, dues are \$6 a month. If your monthly income is between \$1,000 - \$2,000, dues are \$12 a month. If your monthly income is over \$2,000 a month, dues are \$18 a month.

- I affirm that I am a worker, and that I am not an employer
- I agree to abide by the IWW constitution
- I will study its principles and make myself acquainted with its purposes.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount Enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_

Membership includes a subscription to the *Industrial Worker*.

## Dropping dead from overwork

For millions of workers, their jobs have become too much to bear. A recent study found that people's jobs are the single biggest cause of stress, straining hearts and minds to the breaking point.

Japan and China each now have a word for death by overwork – *karoshi* and *guolaosi* – and victims' families are eligible for workers compensation payouts. Other countries don't recognize the problem, but that hardly means workers aren't dying.

Long working hours lead to dangerous fatigue, resulting in industrial and traffic accidents. High stress can lead to heart trouble, high blood pressure, depression, and suicide. And British research indicates that workers who put in long hours doing meaningless work are more likely to die young.

Overtime: It's not just a bad idea; it could kill you. [www.hazards.org/workedtodeath](http://www.hazards.org/workedtodeath)



## RESOURCES

[www.iww.org/4-Hours](http://www.iww.org/4-Hours)

The IWW's shorter hours website

[www.timeday.org](http://www.timeday.org)

Site for Take Back Your Time day, October 24, including local contacts, a developing schedule of events around the country, and dozens of downloadable posters and other images.

[www.hazards.org/workedtodeath/](http://www.hazards.org/workedtodeath/)

From England, a special issue of *Hazards* magazine explores the growing danger of overwork.

## Selected Titles from the IWW's Literature Dept.

Order from

IWW Literature Department,  
PO Box 42777, Philadelphia, PA 19101  
Please include \$2 for postage.  
or order online: [www.iww.org/store](http://www.iww.org/store)

**Take Back Your Time: Fighting Overwork & Time Poverty in America.** edited by John de Graaf. \$15.00

Short essays document the ever-lengthening work week and explore nearly every facet of overwork, from the impact on family and community life to the damage to our environment and our health.

**Arguments for a 4-Hour Day.** by Jon Bekken. \$2.50

Seventy years ago, a 4-hour work day seemed inevitable; today millions of workers again put in 10- and 12-hour days on the job. This pamphlet shows that the 4-hour day is both practical and necessary.

**Whatever Happened to the 8-Hour Day?** by Arthur J. Miller. \$2.50

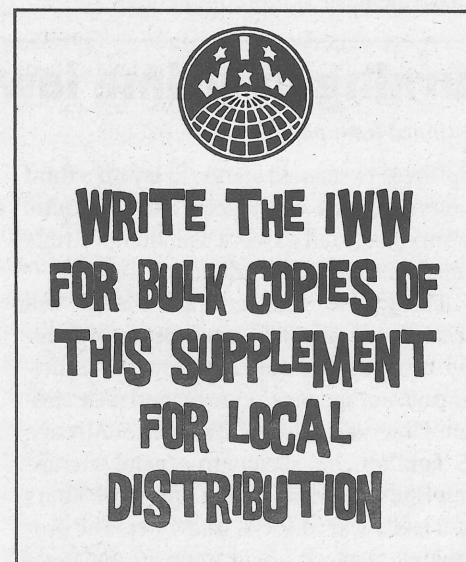
For growing numbers of workers, the 8-hour day is but a faint memory. Miller's pamphlet decries the soul-crushing fatigue of overwork, drawing on his experience working 14 hours a day, seven days a week, in a shipyard, and eloquently calls for resuming the fight for shorter hours.

**Time Out! The Case for a Shorter Work Week.** by Kim Moody and Simone Sagovac. \$5.00

Ties lousy jobs and unemployment to the growth of overtime, subcontracting and contingent work.

**4-Hour Day Button** \$1.00

Full color version of classic IWW graphic.





## Asleep at the wheel?

**Overwork is an accident waiting to happen.**  
Thousands of fatal crashes each year are caused by drivers dead tired from long hours on the job. Doctors say more than half of all Americans get too little sleep, and long working hours are often the cause.

[www.timeaday.org](http://www.timeaday.org)

## Useful & Meaningful Work

Once we get clear that economic life should be about making a living for everyone rather than making a killing for lucky winners, we begin to see how much of the world's labor, energy, and material resources are being expropriated by the suicide economy for uses that are profitable for corporations, but harmful to life.

This suggests a startling possibility. We could, if we chose, redirect the life energy reclaimed from harmful work to beneficial work. At the same time, everyone's working hours could be reduced to share both leisure and paid employment equitably. It's all a question of how we choose, individually and collectively, to allocate our life energies.

We could all have more time for recreation, quiet solitude, community service, po-

litical involvement, family life, and the disciplines and hobbies that keep us physically, mentally, psychologically and spiritually healthy. Our paid work would be more fulfilling. Our lives, communities, and natural environment would be healthier.

A world no longer divided between the obscenely rich and desperately poor would know more peace and less violence, more love and less hate, more hope and less fear. The earth could heal and provide a home for our children for generations to come. And we would have more free time.

Excerpted from "What's an Economy For?" by David Korten. *Take Back Your Time: Fighting Overwork and Time Poverty in America*, edited by John de Graaf and available from the IWW.

## Timely Quotes from T-Bone Slim, IWW Columnist

"We hear much nowadays about unemployment and right to work.

"Right to work means right to be exploited by an employer, and unemployment means opportunity means right to starve without one, fall heir to illness or strike your colors and accept of relief standards. Both situations are odious in the extreme and make for like situations in the future.

"What the workers want is not the 'right to work' or denial thereof. They want the right to live in every fullness of life, sip of its nectars and enjoy of its perfections, and let no man purge them of the wonders they produce."

"Don't watch the clock – it's three minutes fast mornings and seven minutes slow evenings."

"The shorter workday requires no extended remarks: Just go out later and come in earlier – no labor board or other lumber is required."

"Time comes in every man's life when he feels he has been skinned enough. So what this country really needs is an unemployment office where he can put in an application for unemployment, or skinproof idleness."

## Turning overtime laws on their head...

*continued from page 6*

employees to salaried status, to lay off a third or more of their employees, and to require the surviving staff to work as much overtime as it takes to get the work done. ...

The department asserts that "the rule will not adversely affect the well-being of families," evidently assuming that it requires neither time nor money to care for and raise children. However, this is clearly false. Already, U.S. families, and society in general, are under severe stress as a result of long work hours and a badly frayed social safety net. The proposed regulations would dramatically exac-

erbate the time shortage that plagues the United States, with widely recognized consequences for family well-being, individual health, community involvement, social cohesion and democratic participation. ...

U.S. workers already work longer hours each year than do employees in most industrialized countries. The average Western European worker puts in a full nine weeks less per year on the job, and the general trend around the world continues to be to press for work-time reduction. The U.S. is virtually alone in bucking this trend, with a slow but ominous trend toward increased work hours

# DIRECT ACTION FOR SHORTER HOURS

Are you working overtime, while the boss recently laid-off your coworkers? Remember that you're just one person – there's no way you can do the work of two or three people. (Indeed, what with all the stress and grief of the situation, you may be hard-pressed to get as much work done as you used to.) Don't cut corners or do shoddy work – you should take pride in your work, and besides you could be fired if quality goes down. If the boss complains, suggest he bring back the folks who used to do the work.

The issue of unemployment and long working hours could be brought into sharper focus by unemployed workers picketing jobs where workers are regularly forced to put in overtime. (Of course, you'd want to talk to workers on the job first, to avoid any misunderstandings.) Maybe the workers inside could join them on their lunch breaks.

Some unions refuse to work overtime as long as there are unemployed members. In the past, many demanded the job go on a 30-hour basis until everyone was working.

**The Disappeared:** Children could picket outside the office or factory or union hall, carrying large pictures of their parents and asking if anyone's seen them.

**Take Breaks:** Some state laws and most union contracts provide for meal and other breaks. Take them – you're entitled to them, and they're essential for mental health. If the work doesn't get done, drop it on the boss's desk and suggest he bring in some extra help.

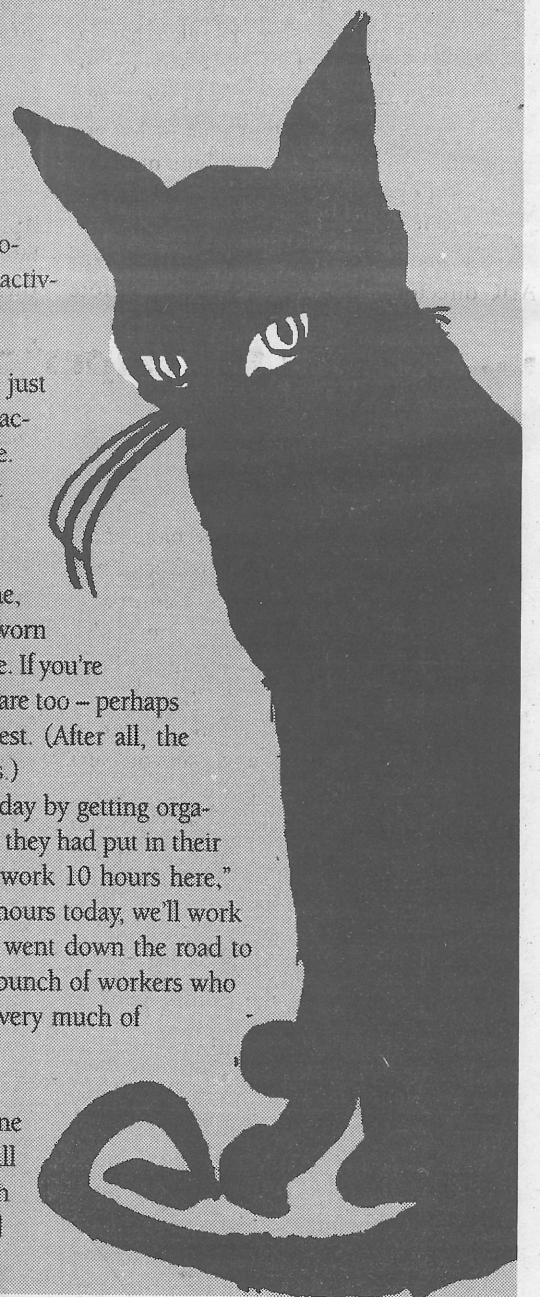
**Timesheets:** Many workers aren't asked to clock in any more. Is this because the boss trusts us? Or because he doesn't want a record of how many hours we actually work? Organize your co-workers to clock the time they put in on the job each week (make sure to count time at home checking email and using the cell phone on the road). Then organize a meeting to discuss what you're learned, and decide on a plan of action to do something about it.

**Claim your overtime:** Even if the boss says you're not entitled to overtime, that's no reason not to document the time you're putting in and demand you're paid for it. If you organize your fellow workers to do this together, it's legally protected concerted activity (and more likely to succeed).

**Don't work tired.** Long hours don't just waste your time, they result in serious accidents. It's an occupational safety issue. You have the right to refuse work that you reasonably believe to be unsafe.

**Go home:** When you've put in your time, it's time to go home. If you're just plain worn out, you need to go home and recuperate. If you're worn out, chances are your coworkers are too – perhaps you should all go home "early" and rest. (After all, the boss takes off for golf and long lunches.) IWW timber workers won the 8-hour day by getting organized, and then blowing a whistle once they had put in their eight hours. When the boss said "We work 10 hours here," they replied: "That's ok. We worked 8 hours today, we'll work two tomorrow." If he fired them, they went down the road to the next camp, where they replaced a bunch of workers who had just done the same. It didn't take very much of this to settle the question.

**Organize:** If you go into the office alone and demand the 4-hour day, the boss will laugh. If you get together with a bunch of your fellow workers and demand shorter hours, he'll have to listen.



over recent decades. The Fair Labor Standards Act was adopted in an attempt to establish shorter working hours as national policy, and to compel employers to respect that policy. The Act has fallen short of those goals in many ways, in part as a result of lax enforcement, but that is no reason to abandon them altogether. Making it easier and less expensive for employers to compel their employees to work unlimited and uncompensated overtime is bad social policy. It will undermine individual and public health. It will lead to increased fatigue and many more injuries and deaths in workplaces and on the roadways. It will exacerbate endemic unemployment rates that already see more than one in ten U.S. workers jobless,

underemployed, or forced from the labor market altogether. It will rob millions of workers of the time they so desperately need to live their lives, and raise their families, and participate in their communities.

The proposed regulations are inconsistent with the intent and the letter of the Fair Labor Standards Act. They are bad social policy. They will exacerbate the current economic difficulties that have hit workers particularly hard. The benefits of these regulations will accrue only to unscrupulous employers; the costs would be born by society as a whole. These regulations can not be salvaged by tinkering at the edges, or by clarifying a few definitions. They must be rejected in their entirety.



# ACORN fires workers in quickie strike

BY MATT CLEMENT, HOUSTON

One day after International Labor Day, on May 2, I was terminated by ACORN Housing Corporation. This happened after nearly two years of dedication to an organization that provides homeowner counseling for low- to moderate-income households. Many workers in the office had joined the IWW but had not yet sought union recognition in view of ACORN's history of firing unionists.

I began working at AHC's Houston office in January 2001. The office was located in a structure for which ACORN never obtained a Certificate of Occupancy, the license required by the city that shows the property meets all of the building codes for a business. Since ACORN never obtained a certificate, its activities on the property were illegal and under constant threat of closure by the city.

The city threatened to shut off the electricity many times, ordered the office to be vacated for violation of city codes a couple of times, and had ticketed my co-workers for working for a company which refused to comply with the city ordinance. Incidents like these began before I began working for AHC and continued until late May when the city permanently ordered "ACORN operations" (AHC's housing counseling component, community organizing in ACORN, and labor organizing in SEIU Local 100) to leave the property and to find new office space if they wanted to continue operating.

This action came as no surprise, considering that not only had the city been threatening eviction for some time but also that the legal status of the building was a recurring topic of discussion among my co-workers and ACORN management. Many emails demonstrate management's acknowledgment of the problem, but also demonstrate a reluctance to resolve it.

On March 28, 2002, Bruce Dorpalen, AHC director of mortgage counseling, wrote

to, among others, ACORN founder Wade Rathke, "This [tickets being issued for not having the CO] has been dragging on for a year now. But none of us can afford to have the office shut down by the city. Someone needs to be managing the City and getting the dogs called off." Rathke responded, "I couldn't tell if this went to Orell [Fitzsimmons, Texas director of Service Employees International Union], but he's all over this, visits with me regularly about it, has taken bids from 3 companies already, so if there's a question about who is on top of this, it's Orell."

Here Bruce is suggesting that the situation be taken care of. Wade says that Orell (an SEIU Local 100 director and, basically, the property manager of Houston's ACORN operations) should be receiving these emails. Problem addressed, responsibility assigned.

Another example: On April 9, 2003, I wrote Rathke and Fitzsimmons: "This [the city's threats and temporary closure of the office] is not a surprise, even though there is no zoning, the City of Houston requires you to have a Certificate of Occupancy to operate a business." Rathke responded, "Please talk to Orell. He's handling this." Problem reiterated; Wade did not assume responsibility; Orell was responsible.

These and other emails show that ACORN (AHC, ACORN, SEIU Local 100) management understood the problem and Orell Fitzsimmons was "handling this." Orell had three choices: 1) make repairs to the structure to bring it up to code, 2) find a new office space before "eviction," or 3) let the City of Houston shut off the electricity and force ACORN to find new office space. Orell chose the last of the three – do nothing and wait until the city kicked ACORN out.

AHC employees in Houston walked out April 25. That day, a city inspector stopped by the office and threatened anyone working there with a \$2,000 ticket if they were found

on the property.

While the inspector was in the office, my co-workers and I phoned the first supervisor we could reach, Bruce Dorpalen, to inform him of the situation. He said he would call back when he had more information. We discussed the situation and decided to walk out. We called Bruce back. When we told him the city was threatening workers with a \$2,000 fine, he replied that other ACORN employees had gotten tickets before. After that conversation, we got ready to leave.

My co-worker changed the main greeting on the phone voicemail to inform callers that the office was closed and instruct them to phone our immediate supervisor Sharon Trotter for additional information. The same co-worker put a sign on the door with the same information. We then walked out.

On April 28 we returned to work, considering that many people who wanted to purchase a home with an affordable mortgage relied on us. That day, Sharon Trotter told us to change the message back because her office was receiving too many phone calls from people calling the Houston office. I changed the message, informing clients that the office would be on our normal schedule.

The next day Sharon flew from Albuquerque to Houston. My schedule was 6:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Monday, Wednesday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Sharon emailed me around 2:00 pm on Monday saying that if I did not change the message on the voice mail before 4:00 I would be terminated. I did not receive the email until Wednesday morning. Even so, the message had already been changed.

On Wednesday, April 30, Sharon claimed I was withholding emails from my co-workers. She had talked with them on my day off and found out that there were emails they had never seen. I sat at the desk with the only computer with access to the Internet. I never intentionally withheld emails, but we received nearly forty emails a day and did not have time to discuss all of them (nor were all the emails important). We were doing a great job in the Houston office; in fact management had repeatedly praised our production.

On May 2, Sharon told me I was terminated for not fulfilling my supervisory duties. When I replied that I was not a supervisor, and had proof of that, she said that she did not need to see it. She neither mentioned the "changing the phone message" nor the "withholding of emails" as reasons for my termination. When my co-workers asked why I was terminated, she told them that she did not need to explain.

I filed a charge with the National Labor Relations Board for violation of the right to organize a union and violation of protected concerted activity. I also filed for unemployment. AHC appealed the Texas Workforce Commission decision approving my unemployment claim. In the initial investigation by the TWC, Sharon stated, "Even after being warned, applicant [me] continued to cause disruption in the office and other offices." The

TWC determined that I was not fired for misconduct. AHC appealed this decision.

At the July 2 appeal hearing, ACORN claimed that I was "terminated for insubordination by ... not giving computer access codes to the fellow employees and for not changing the voice mail to the requested message." The TWC determined "that the employer failed to meet its burden of persuasion and did not establish that the claimant was discharged for misconduct connected with the work."

Ultimately, AHC decided to settle the NLRB case. The conditions of the settlement included: 1) \$1,500 compensation, 2) changing the status of my termination from "misconduct" to "resignation," 3) AHC would no longer appeal my unemployment claim, and 4) AHC must post a notice in the office stating that they violated the National Labor Relations Act. I accepted the settlement.

ACORN organizations verbalize values that contradict its actions. ACORN has been a central figure in fighting for some communities who face serious injustices in America. However, the dishonesty with which ACORN behaved and continues to behave must be challenged.

While management remains in place, ACORN relies on high labor turnover to get the work done. This turnover reinforces ACORN's hierarchical structure. Do we feel comfortable with the way in which social justice organizations have institutionalized hierarchical decision-making processes that in my case relied on fabricating details? Why couldn't ACORN simply look for another location before it was forced out by the city? Why was Orell Fitzsimmons not fired for failing to fulfill supervisory duties? Why was I?

These are questions that have answers. However, asking these questions and seeking the answers is often a social taboo when it comes to non-profit organizations. Since such groups are dedicated to fighting for community rights, we are reluctant to ensure that the end product does not justify unjust means. Many think that it is okay for a social justice organization to underpay or mistreat its workers because its goals are so important. Sure, this is calculus, but it is still a formula with a solution: The organization must confront its misdeeds and never act in such a manner again. If the organization gives reasons for its misdeeds, those reasons must make sense.

ACORN had the resources to move into another property. They had equity in the old property, which they bought in 1991 and was located in a part of town where property values have doubled over the past five years. Money was never an issue. AHC's settlement implies its acceptance of culpability. We were good workers; production was never an issue. My supervisors had never given me any warnings about misbehavior in the past. But we walked out on April 25 and I got fired one week later. Incidentally, after I got fired, one co-worker quit, another went on strike for a couple of days, and another got fired in late July. After they fired him, he was informed that AHC will recognize his termination as a "resignation" and will not dispute any unemployment claims.

## Connecting the imperial dots...

*continued from page 3*

Texaco's office there, showing that global destruction can be met with global resistance!

Around 8:30 p.m., after shutting down distribution for the evening, the blockaders decided our goals for the day had been met and marched out victoriously as a group.

The action comes at a critical time. Millions of Americans are questioning the Bush administration's motivations for the invasion and ongoing occupation. More and more people are hearing us when we say you can't understand U.S. foreign policy without using the words "oil" and "empire." While U.S. and Iraqi casualties mount and the occupation's billion dollar a week price tag threatens cross-sector budget cuts, ChevronTexaco has quadrupled their profits over the last three-month period, making \$1.6 billion as a result of war-inflated oil prices.

Increasingly people understand that WTO-style corporate globalization and the U.S. invasion of Iraq are both part of the same efforts to restructure economies around the world to benefit corporations at the expense of workers, the environment and democracy.

### Privatizing Austrian steel

Unions protested the privatization of Austria's Voestalpine steel works Sept. 4, as the government voted to sell off the third of the company still in state hands. The works are being sold as part of efforts to comply with European Union directives calling for privatizing key sectors including water, education and postal services. The province of Upper Austria is purchasing shares in an attempt to keep a controlling interest in Austrian hands.

### Sickout protests privatization

Hundreds of flight attendants defied a court order banning a strike against privatization of Greece's Olympic Airways, calling in sick Sept. 3. Other attendants refused to work on their day off.

As Zapatista sub-commandante Marcos said in his message to the assembly in Cancun, we all are united in a "movement against the globalization of death" because "this is a war. A war on humanity. The globalization of those who are above is nothing more than a global machine that feeds on blood and defecates dollars..."

"The entire world is in dispute between two projects of globalization. Globalization from above, which globalizes conformity, cynicism, stupidity, war, destruction, death and forgetting, and globalization from below, which globalizes rebellion, hope, creativity, intelligence, imagination, life, memory and the construction of a world with room for many worlds."

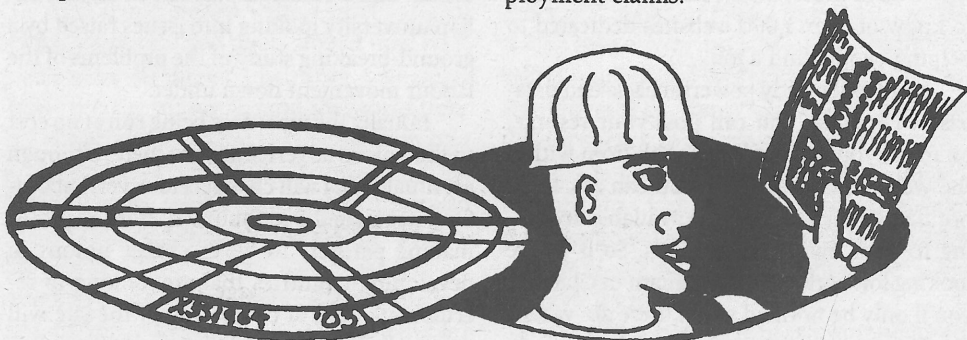
The global battle lines are drawn between those who stand for life, justice and the future versus those who exploit and destroy for personal profit. The clash of world views may be loudest right now in Cancun but ultimately it is echoing through all our communities. It is up to each of us must to choose between the death of silent conformity or the life of joyful resistance.

### 100,000 teachers walk out across Australia

More than 100,000 school teachers struck Sept. 17 in New South Wales, Victoria and Western Australia, challenging efforts by state Labor governments to balance their budgets on teachers' backs. Hundreds of schools were closed by the one-day strike.

State treasurers agreed at June 12 to cap wage rises at the inflation rate. Teachers are trying to recover some of the ground lost over the past several years, pointing to worsening teacher shortages as evidence that conditions need to be substantially improved.

While the Labor administrations have thus far resisted calls to outlaw strike action, they have refused to budge from their sub-standard pay offer.



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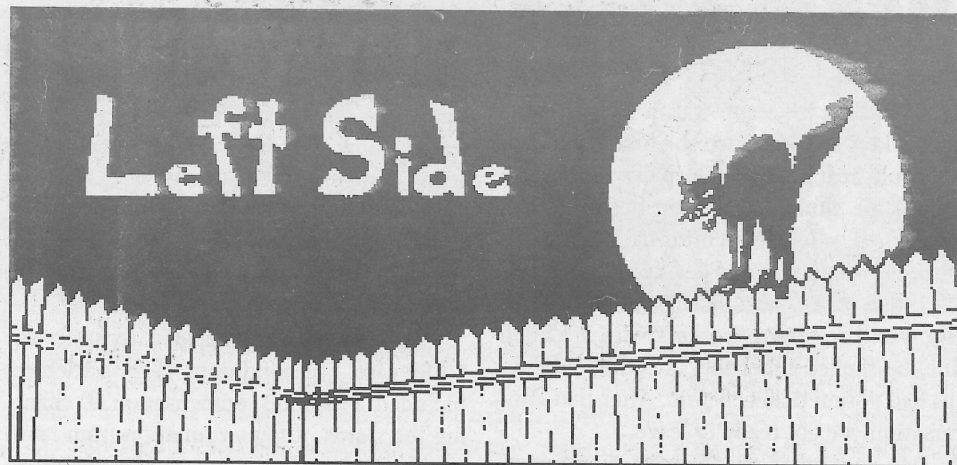
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You may or may not have missed your scribe these past couple of issues as he spent a number of weeks in the hospital, but he is now out and having successfully passed his 85th birthday is back at it again. So it looks like you dear readers are stuck with me for a while.

One of the latest scandals here in the Big Windy was another shoot-out that makes this city on the make its reputation. Some brooding chap who had been fired six months earlier paid a visit to his erstwhile place of employment with an angel-maker, and killed six of the occupants – including three managerial staff – before he was shot by the police. It is not the first time something like this happened in this fair city, and given our present economy and the desperation of those who are left holding the bag it probably won't be the last.

This shooting has occupied the toob for several days. Their august presences, the mayor and the chief of police, told the media they wanted to know how this chap got hold of a gun, since he had already had run-ins with the law. They lamented that the wrong kind of persons carry guns.

Yours truly maintains that anybody who carries a gun is the wrong kind of person, and reiterates that the only kind of gun control that can work is to stop making the damn things. It is our class that works in the plants where these implements are manufactured. An organized working class can shut down these munitions factories. Our class is the principal recipient of the bullets, be it from some disgruntled fellow workers, some uneducated fellow draftee, or the forces of law and order themselves, protecting the interests of the master class.

Consider the potentialities: a world without armies or police forces! That is indeed a world to gain.

— C.C. Redcloud



## Looking for jobs online

Back during the dot.com boom, people thought that the Internet would be good for everything. You could sell books on it, that was obvious. But you could also sell pet food, and groceries, and fashionable clothing. And soon all the travel agencies and banks would close their branches because everyone would be buying their airline tickets online and doing their banking online. And no one would buy newspapers anymore because everyone was going to read their news online. And so forth and so on, breathlessly.

And then the bubble burst, and what remained? There were a few things that you actually could do better on the net than off, and one those turned out to be job hunting.

A handful of very big companies have set up some very big websites to do online recruitment and these have turned out to be a very lucrative business. One of the giants, monster.com, claims to have 800,000 jobs on offer. Yahoo's HotJobs site is not far behind.

The business has gotten so large that there are even magazines dedicated to the "industry." One of these, *Online Recruitment*, claims to know of over 3,000 websites dedicated to helping people find a job.

Many offer fairly powerful back-end databases. On some you can post your resume, on many you can apply for a job from within the website, on nearly all you can ask to be notified when jobs become available according to your own specifications. So if you're looking for work as an accountant in Chicago, you'll only be notified when there are vacancies for accountants in the windy city.

Unions have been relatively slow to pick up on this. Some union websites do list vacancies, though not all. And anyway, if you're thinking of working for a trade union, what are you going to do – visit every single union website to see what's available?

Some countries have websites offering union jobs; for example, unionjobs.com in the USA. But there is nothing comparable in Canada, or the U.K., or Australia. And anyway, union jobs are portable jobs. I know British citizens working for unions in South Africa and Australia, an American working for

a union in Ireland, an Israeli working for a union in Britain, and people from everywhere working for the international institutions of the labour movement in Brussels and Geneva.

Globalization means that unions should recruit internationally. In most unions, it would be a breath of fresh air to have someone around who was raised in a different labour movement. Might even shake things up a bit.

Anyway, that's the thinking behind LabourStartJobs, a project just launched by the online global news service LabourStart and a British-based company known as The Internet Corporation. The latter has extensive experience building jobs boards for British and international firms, and got its feet wet in the union movement with the <http://unifi4jobs.co.uk/> website, a joint initiative with the finance workers union UNIFI.

The new website, located at [www.labourstartjobs.org](http://www.labourstartjobs.org), allows workers looking for work in unions to register themselves and receive emails when a job they might be interested in pops up. One can apply for jobs through the site. Employers (in this case, trade unions) register to use the site and list details about the jobs available.

In the site's first few days online, unions in the US, Australia and Britain began posting the first jobs. These included some fairly interesting ones, such as a research officer specializing in lifelong learning for a British union, a program/outreach director for a US union, and a research position at an Australian university looking into issues raised by a ground-breaking study of the problems of the labour movement down under.

Initially the website is being run at no cost to the unions advertising jobs there, although eventually that will change. However, LabourStart negotiated a commitment from its profit-making partners to never charge unions in developing countries that are looking to recruit staff. And of course use of the site will remain free to those looking for union jobs.

I think this is an exciting new project, one with huge potential to change the way we in the trade union movement look for work and the way our unions recruit staff. There will be loads of unintended consequences. For example, do you know how much a union organizer gets paid in Britain or Australia? Well, you will. We might even see some interesting cross-fertilization as unions weigh the possible recruitment of organizers and researchers and other staff from places outside of their usual framework. Who knows what could happen?

## Review: Class war in America

*Class War in America*, by Charles M. Kelly. Fithian Press, 2000, 237 pages, paper.

BY JOHN GORMAN

The subtitle of this book, "How Economic and Political Conservatives are Exploiting Low- and Middle-Income Americans," reveals both the direction and the limitations of Kelly's thinking. Anyone who still imagines that the current deterioration in the income and status of most Americans is the will of a malevolent Fate or the working out of the "invisible hand" of the marketplace need only read a few chapters to understand that what we see around us is no accident, but the result of a carefully planned strategy to reestablish the class divisions of the Nineteenth Century and carry us back to the "good old days" when America was a playground for rich white men who could do just about anything they pleased and be accountable to no one.

In establishing this thesis, Kelly makes a point of referring almost exclusively to publications like the *Wall Street Journal* and *Business Week*. He relies heavily on the writings of "conservative" economists, scholars and editors to prove that "conservatives, as a matter of policy and strategy, are waging financial warfare against working-class Americans." What he unfortunately does not perceive is that most of his sources are not "conservatives" at all, but out-and-out reactionaries hiding behind this title and besmirching the good name of true conservatives interested in preserving our rights and liberties, both political and economic. To the extent that he does not recognize this distinction, Kelly has himself fallen victim to the con job perpetrated by corporate America on the rest of us.

That said, there is still much to be learned from this book. Prior to opening its pages, I had no grasp of the relationship between the prime rate and unemployment. Nor did I understand the role of this charge in helping to control the price of labor. I had also not recognized the hypocrisy entailed in claiming that inflation is caused by rising wages, rather than corporate greed. Almost as troubling as this discovery was the realization of the media's almost automatic acceptance of this doctrine and of greed as a virtue for our time. Clearly, the so-called "liberal" media are out to lunch on these issues, or, worse yet, stuffing themselves at the company picnic.

While Kelly's portrait of the happy days when "a typical working-class American working only 40 hours a week could support a family of four" is for most us a distant memory, and his notion that "the U.S. (was) traditionally a leader in the moral treatment of workers" seems almost ludicrous, he is successful in capturing the atmosphere that prevailed in this country when "American capitalism was beginning to have a sense of responsibility" and offered workers a chance to share in the coming prosperity.



## 'Man in Black' dies

BY LAURA PRICE

The original "Man in Black," Johnny Cash, died at age 71 in a hospital in Nashville Sept. 12th. Johnny

had a long and successful career as a singer and songwriter. Much of his popularity came from his ability to speak and sing to the common working person.

Cash was known for his advocacy of Native American rights and he was very generous with his prison concerts. Commenting on a San Quentin Prison show from 1959, Merle Haggard had this to say about Johnny Cash: "Prison is a good place to find out the truth, because them convicts won't lie, they ain't got no reason to give you any clout that you don't deserve. And we saw the truth that day."

His accomplishments included over 1,500 recorded songs, 45 albums and 11 Grammys. Cash was so popular that in the late 1960s

Whether capitalism ever had such plans is uncertain at best, but it is clear, as Kelly observes, that the Reagan '80s brought that era to an end as the earnings of the bottom fifth of the work force plunged by 37 percent and the country began marching backward into the '30s. (In this connection, we might see the recent growth of the IWW as a logical consequence of this "back to the past" movement, since it is one of the few organizations with a realistic analysis of what is happening, and what the working class can do about it.)

Kelly's study of how reactionary politicians, especially "bourbon Democrats," exploited Southern white resentment over Civil Rights makes interesting reading, and his identification of President Clinton as a "new Republican" is convincing. I suspect, however, that more profound causes are needed to explain the reactionaries' success in persuading so many working Americans to vote against the own interests, not once, but over and over. e.g. It would also be worthwhile to contemplate the venality and incompetence of so many liberal (mis)leaders.

Although this book was completed before the current Enron, Tyco, World Com, etc. scandals broke, the chapter on privatization serves as an excellent primer on the workings of unbridled capitalism and the escalation of such machinations as each coup went uncontested and unpunished by the market or the authorities or anyone else. As Kelly shows, the actions of the current crop of corporate bandits were a while in coming and hardly unpredictable to anyone who understood the mindset of these captains of business and industry and knew what they had already gotten away with.

If there is any major disappointment in the rest of Kelly's book, it comes in the last chapter. He has described the catastrophe confronting the American working class accurately. When it comes time to suggest what to do about it, however, Kelly is nearly silent. Beyond advising against joining some extremist group or voting for Republicans and urging readers to be on the lookout for "Progressive Populists" whom they can support, the author has very little to say. Although he has identified "employee collective bargaining" as the only antidote to the "values of corporate greed and materialism," he never suggests that anyone join a union – still less actually attempt to organize one. Neither does he urge union members to do whatever they can to help make their unions more democratic and responsive to the membership. As we might expect, Kelly's lexicon contains no mention of the Industrial Workers of the World.

In short, readers who want a convincing analysis of how we got where we are will find Kelly's work helpful. Anyone wanting to know where to go from here will be disappointed.

his album sales topped those of the Beatles.

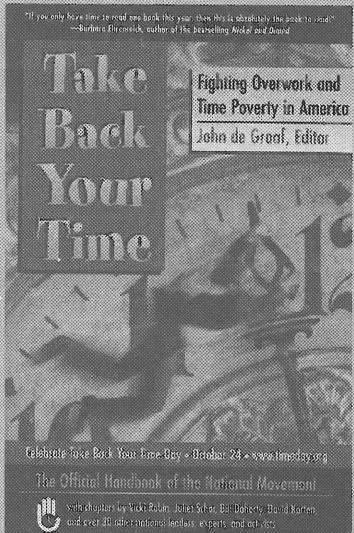
Cash helped the Nashville country scene open up to a rougher, rock and roll and "outlaw" style. In recent years he expanded his own sound by recording cutting-edge songs by Soundgarden, Beck, and Nine Inch Nails, including his current cover of "Hurt."

My favorite Cash recording is "Ring of Fire," which he didn't actually write – but I love the energy he uses to sing it. I'll close with an excerpt from his "Man in Black." It's clear from this song why millions of fans resonated with his compassionate words:

"I wear the black for the poor and the beaten down, Livin' in the hopeless, hungry side of town, I wear it for the prisoner who has long paid for his crime, But is there because he's a victim of the times. ...

"Well, there's things that never will be right I know, And things need changin' everywhere you go, But 'til we start to make a move to make a few things right, You'll never see me wear a suit of white."

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John de Graaf, editor

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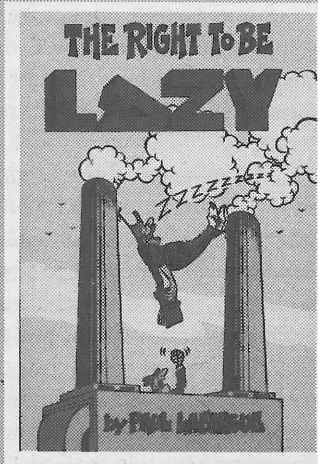
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by Paul Lafargue

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See review, page 10 **231 pages, \$14.00**

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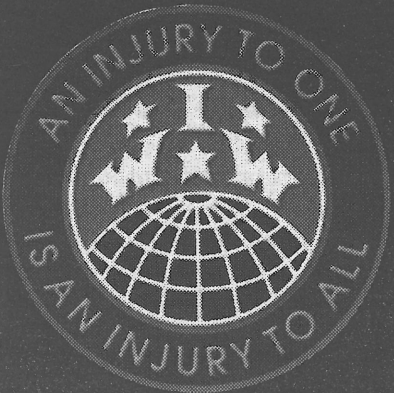
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## Amtrak workers plan national strike

Six Amtrak unions plan a one-day strike Oct. 3 to protest Congress's chronic underfunding of the passenger rail system. Amtrak is seeking an injunction to stop the walk-out, unions say the law protects their right to conduct a political strike.

"The employees are fed up with keeping the system running with duct tape and baling wire," said Charles Money Penny, director of the railroad division of the Transport Workers Union of America.

Amtrak appropriations have long fallen short of what is needed to maintain tracks and other infrastructure. The House appropriation for the next fiscal year that is half what Amtrak says it needs to maintain operations.

## Runaway trains

A series of accidents and near misses involving Union Pacific trains across the Southwest illustrate the dangers of remote control operations and speed-up.

In Salt Lake City a remote-controlled UP locomotive pushed rail cars in the way of trains hauling hazardous materials Sept. 15, causing several cars to derail. California officials are demanding more attention to safety after several incidents with runaway trains.

"We do not appreciate trains in our rivers, our backyards or running uncontrolled through our neighborhoods, our intersections and past our schools," complained Richard Clark, director of rail safety for California's Public Utilities Commission.

A UP train broke loose at a rail yard in Southern California June 20, travelling 30 miles before derailling in a residential neighborhood and crushing several homes. Since then UP trains have been involved in five more serious incidents in the state, ramming into an Amtrak train in Sacramento, derailling into a river in Dunsmuir, and derailling in Riverside County. On Sept. 10 an eight-car UP train broke loose from a rail yard, sliding toward a Los Angeles commuter train. A rail worker scrambled aboard and applied hand brakes to each car to stop the train. Two days later a UP train ran a stop signal, stopping just 600 yards from a commuter train.

Union Pacific blames operator error in each case, and says its equipment is safe. But workers say that UP is running trains in ways that are intrinsically dangerous, often without crews on board to deal with emergencies.

## Vanishing jobs, rising poverty

Although the unemployment rate edged down to 6.1 percent for August - as many workers exhausted their jobless benefits and temporarily gave up looking for work - companies slashed another 93,000 jobs. It was the seventh consecutive month of cuts in payrolls, led by lay-offs in manufacturing.

The number of Americans living in poverty increased by 1.7 million last year, and median income fell by 1.1 percent. It was the second year in a row that median income (half earn more, half less) fell, even as managers and others at the top of the pay scale have seen substantial pay hikes.

One in eight people (34.6 million) now live in poverty, according to the U.S. Census. Many believe the poverty rate substantially underestimates the real cost of living.

However, gross domestic product and corporate profits continue to grow. Poverty rates grew most sharply in the Midwest and among African-Americans.

## Govt. pension fund broke

The U.S. government's Pension Benefit Guarantee Corp., which guarantees the pensions of companies that go bankrupt, says its deficit has grown to \$5.7 billion as of July 31, up from \$5.4 billion in March. The PBGC had \$17 billion on hand at the start of the year.

The agency says the total amount of pension underfunding grew to \$400 billion as of the end of last year, up from about \$150 billion at the end of 2001.



## Garment workers demand health care

BY AMIRUL HAQUE AMIN, NGWF

Bangladesh's National Garment Workers Federation mobilized in June to demand that the government budget address workers' urgent needs. The NGWF points out that garment workers generate 76 percent of the country's foreign currency, but receive the lowest wages and worst working conditions in return – less even than is required by Bangladesh labor laws.

On June 9, the NGWF demanded that the government budget include funds to appoint doctors in each garment factory, health care clinics for garment workers, transportation facilities, etc. Hundreds of garment workers joined demonstrations in the capital Dhaka and other cities in support of the demands, which were ignored by the government. Nonetheless, the campaign had a positive response from the garment workers and the whole society.

## Pakistan regime attacks workers' rights

BY PETER S. MOORE

A Pakistani union federation is calling for renewed militancy to reclaim workers' rights lost on October 29, 2002, when the military junta decreed a new labour code.

The decree was generally ignored because it was released just nine days after Pakistan's first election since General Pervez Musharraf overthrew the Pakistani government in October 1999. The previous government had tried to fire Musharraf. He justified the coup as the only way to save Pakistan from corruption and economic and political collapse.

The labour decree strips workers of their hard-won rights, Gulzar Ahmad Chaudhry, general secretary of the All Pakistan Trade Union Federation, told the Lahore-based *Working Women Organization* magazine. The decree refers only to "men" or "workmen"; women are not mentioned at all as workers.

"The present government is going far ahead of its predecessor ... in its enmity to workers, and to finish the workers' movements all those laws have been changed which the Pakistani workers acquired after a long struggle and immense sacrifices," said Chaudhry.

The decree regulates almost every aspect of a union. Membership in more than one union (dual cards) is prohibited. Every new bargaining unit must affiliate within two months to a national labour federation. Union officials' terms are extended from two to three years. Union officials convicted under the penal code must quit. Unions with more than 5,000 members must use the auditor assigned by the government registrar which regulates the formation of unions. Workplaces with 50 workers must elect a union steward to "act as a link between the workers and the employer."

The decree also reduces worker participation and voice in the workplace, removing worker representatives on the employer's Board of Trustees. On the Joint Works Council, worker representation is reduced from fifty to forty per cent, handing control to the employer. The Council's dispute resolution mechanism was also gutted.

The decree also raises the stake for workers who take direct action to resolve disputes. Illegal strikes or slow-downs are grounds for decertifying a union. The section detailing unfair labour practices was struck. Only the officials of a trade union have the right to not be fired, harassed, removed, transferred or "retrenched" during organizing drives. The registrar, however, can grant the employer the right to fire union officials during an organizing drive. If the employer locks out or threatens its workers, the workers cannot get

a stay order from the now-toothless National Industrial Relations Commission. Workers transferred, fired or suspended from work at any time other than a legitimate industrial dispute are not eligible for relief funds. Workers who are fired can only apply for 12-30 months of compensation, rather than get reinstatement.

The decree, much like its 1969 predecessor, prohibits workers in the defence and related industries, armed forces, security printing, national mint, public service (including the state-run media), healthcare, mental institutions, old-age pension agencies, workers' welfare distributors, oil, gas, seaport or airport industries from organizing unions.

The All Pakistan Trade Union Federation denounced Musharraf for decreeing a labour policy that "makes policy for the benefits of its own class, capitalist."

"Today, when the trade union movement is extremely weak, it ought to be our first responsibility that not only we strengthen and organize the workers' movement, but also endeavor to end the despondency of the worker class. This despondency and dejection will end only when union leaders have firm determination that circumstances can be changed by courage and struggle."

## RMT rail union tired of Labour Party 'mugging'

RMT general secretary Bob Crow says he has more respect for a mugger in the street than for Prime Minister Blair, adding, "I am not going to pay for my own assassin."

The RMT is the descendant of the union that launched Labour in 1899, but says it will no longer fund a party which is "putting the boot" into workers.

Crow condemned the government's failure to reverse Tory anti-union legislation, and its continuing of Tory privatization policies.

## Unions demand AIDS drugs

South Africa's umbrella union federation COSATU is stepping up pressure on the government to make AIDS drugs available in public hospitals immediately, saying a planned delay of six months would kill thousands.

South Africa has the biggest HIV and AIDS caseload in the world, with 5.3 million of its 44 million people infected.

COSATU's recent congress also demanded the government reverse its policy of privatizing state assets, noting that privatization threatens thousands of jobs in a country where unemployment already stands at around 30 percent.

## New attacks on Coca Cola unionists

BY COLOMBIA SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN

On Sept. 9 Coca Cola FEMSA (Coke's primary bottler in Latin America) announced plans to close nine bottling plants in Colombia, which would leave 2,500 workers without jobs. Managers are pressuring workers to resign from their contracts in exchange for a lump-sum payment. Workers were told that if they didn't "resign," they would be dismissed.

This demand came two weeks after paramilitary gunmen shot at the car of Juan Carlos Galvis, vice president of SINALTRAINAL (the Coke workers' union) in Barrancabermeja. His bodyguards returned fire and the gunmen fled.

On Sept. 10 four hooded men stopped David Jose Carranza Calle, the 15-year-old son of national Sinaltrainal leader and Coca Cola worker Limberto Carranza, forced him off his bicycle, and bundled him into a white truck. They tortured him for several hours. At the same time, Limberto Carranza received a phone call at his house, saying "son of a bitch trade unionist, we're going to get you, and if we don't get you, we'll blow up your house."

These attacks are part of Coca Cola's strategy of cost reduction, subcontracting, union busting and non-recognition of collective agreements in order to concentrate production in a few highly automated mega-plants with fewer workers.

It is necessary to support the international campaign against Coca Cola to ensure that the company does not succeed in bringing its products from other towns or possibly other countries, increasing profits and throwing thousands of families onto the streets. Sinaltrainal and the workers are urging workers around the world to boycott Coca Cola until the company ends its assault on workers and reaches a new agreement with the union.

Attacks on other unionists also continue. Three members of the Colombian agricultural workers union FENSUAGRO were kidnapped Sept. 2 by paramilitaries, and found a few days later in a mass grave at the La Montana ranch. The three had been cut to pieces with chainsaws. Colombian authorities have refused to investigate the murders.

## Polish miners protest shutdowns

Some 10,000 miners from Silesia protested mine closings Sept. 11th. Last year the government backed off from threats to dismiss 30,000 miners under threat of a general strike.

Miners targeted the headquarters of the ruling SLD party and the Economic Ministry, where they clashed with police. Dozens of windows were broken and several people on both sides injured as police used water cannons, chemical weapons and rubber bullets.

The government is trying to whip up hysteria against the miners, but with limited success. Famous film and theatre director Kazimierz Kutz told the *Gazeta Wyborcza* (the leading national newspaper): "These people are defending themselves against degradation, inhuman treatment. I can't listen to this whimper, how many windows were smashed in the Ministry! ... For the government there's no

place for a man dying of hunger. And if they try to do the same as Margaret Thatcher did with the miners they will regret it."

## Uniontex strike ends

During the whole of June an occupation took place at the Uniontex SA textile factory in Lodz. The action was an attempt to collect unpaid wages and save the plant, endangered by persistent mismanagement. From the beginning of the occupation the bosses threatened workers with immediate liquidation.

Under threat of mass dismissals, and unable to mobilize broader support, the strike committee signed an agreement June 27 which met none of the workers' demands. Now police are threatening to prosecute a union official on charges of threatening to cart the company president out on a wheelbarrow (a traditional means of worker protest).

## Cuban workers fight for indy unions

COMPILED AND TRANSLATED  
BY LUIS PRATT

Prison sentences against two independent syndicalists have been confirmed by Cuba's Supreme Popular Tribunal. According to the judges, it was proved that they worked "in favor of a foreign superpower in activities to deliberately change the economic, political and social regime of Cuba."

Carmelo Diaz Fernandez, 66, independent journalist and Centro Nacional de Capacitación Sindical y Laboral (National Center for Labor and Syndical Advancement) member, serves his 16-year sentence at Guanajay prison. Pedro Pablo Alvarez Ramos, general secretary of the Consejo Unitario de Trabajadores Cubanos (Unitary Council of Cuban Workers), serves his 25 years at Canaleta prison. Besides working for the defense of workers and human rights, the activists denounced violations of International Labor Organization accords by Cuban authorities.

## Life worth more than money

Julio Diaz Ferreiro was fired May 9 by the baked goods factory Gerardo Abreu Fontan, formerly La Estrella. Diaz Ferreiro, head of electricity and maintenance, was accused of being disrespectful to his superiors and endangering production.

"I was asked to do work on a three-phase line," said Ferreiro. "Since we didn't have the protective gloves and insulators and the work had to be done 'hot' – without turning off electrical power – I told the chief of production that it could not be done. He then told me to invent... I told him: 'Do it yourself if you know how and can do it. My life is worth more than your commercial interests.'"

When he went to the state-controlled union, the secretary of social and labor affairs told him he could not intercede. "Your job is one of extreme trustability," he told Ferreiro,

"and that the administration reserves the right to terminate you whenever they deem it convenient. Don't stir things up too much, or you might be subject to political treatment with this wanting to be free and form independent unions and it will be worse for you."

Ferreiro, 59, worked at this job for 40 years. If the termination is confirmed on appeal, he will join the growing list of unemployed workers on the island without the right to receive retirement benefits.

## Working after hours for free

Meter readers and collectors at the mixed enterprise Aguas de La Habana in the capital district must also service the residential district Casino Deportivo, 10 kilometers away, after working their shifts. The workers are covering positions vacated due to low salaries of 205 pesos per month (US\$8.25), from which are deducted union dues, fees for the maintenance of territorial troops, and one peso per day for lunch. Workers also work Saturdays and Sundays to keep up.

## Nickel workers shortchanged

Mechanics, plumbers, electricians, carpenters and masons at the nickel factory Rene Ramos Latour (formerly United Fruit) in Nicaro do not get paid incentives in U.S. dollars because, management says, they're not productive. Dollars are now central to Cuba's economy, and many goods can not be bought with pesos. Workers in the production department receive part of their salaries in dollars.

Conditions in the 60-year-old enterprise are deficient. Workers are not given clothing adequate for the job nor transportation to and from work, due to the lack of fuel. They also lack safety equipment, so there have been many workplace accidents. The cafeteria only serves rice, beans and boiled plantains, never offering animal protein.