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Ludlow Monument beheaded

BY GARY COX

As I sat at the base of our desecrated monument in Ludlow, it was quiet and peaceful. Only the birds were chirping in the cottonwoods above me. These trees must have been planted to shade this beautiful sculpture of a miner, his wife and their small frightened child. Trees are as scarce as moisture on the high semi-desert of Eastern Colorado. There was a slight breeze bringing me the smell of tiny flowers and sage competing for the water from a precious rain the night before. I had arrived early to meet Mike Romero, president of Local 9856, United Mine Workers of America, to view the recent damage to the sculpture and to get the union's view of who may have vandalized this site.

My thoughts were of the two women and 11 children who had suffocated in the "black hole" there next to me, trying to escape their burning tents and militia machine gun fire; and of Louie Tikas who had been shot three times in the back by the Colorado state militia only a few feet from where I sat.

If the Twin Towers in New York City symbolize wealth and power, this monument symbolizes the courage and solidarity of working people to resist exploitation and to struggle for civil liberty, for freedom, and for dignity. The husband and wife team represented on the monument probably knew from experience that wealthy lawyers masquerading as their representatives in Washington, D.C., would never deliver on the Constitution and Bill of Rights for mere miners in Colorado when it was Rockefeller who was violating those rights. They knew also that Governor Elias Ammons would not enforce the state 8 hour day law for the same reason. A politician does not bite the hand that supplies his campaign funds and flowery press. Laws are selectively enforced.

The miners' families learned the hard way that freedom, civil rights and justice must be won by working people through struggle, tenacity and courage, and then maintained by constant vigilance. Nothing has ever been "given" to the powerless. Freedom never comes to the timid nor to those too comfortable to sacrifice. These thoughts drifted up to me from the "black hole," along with the words of Woody Guthrie in the famous song he wrote after he had visited this site: "God bless *continued on page 10*



Statues of a striking coal miner and his wife at the Ludlow Monument were beheaded in early May.

Ontario workers need a raise

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Economy in ruins

15 million U.S. workers unemployed, while overtime hits epidemic levels

Although most economists agree that the U.S. economy is recovering, hundreds of thousands of workers continue to lose their jobs every week. The Labor Department reports that another 442,000 workers filed claims for unemployment benefits in the work week ending May 31.

The unemployment rate hit 6.1 percent in May, the highest level since July 1994. Nine million U.S. workers are officially unemployed – 1.9 million of them for more than six months.

Another 4.8 million are working part-time because they can't find full-time jobs, while at least 1.4 million U.S. workers have become too discouraged to continue job-hunting – for a total of at least 15 million unemployed.

Nearly half of these jobless workers have exhausted their unemployment benefits, and are left with no source of support but emergency food programs, homeless shelters, soup kitchens and the gutted welfare system.

Median household income (before inflation) is also falling, meaning that most U.S. workers who still have jobs are poorer than they were a few years ago despite the relatively high salaries to a small group of managerial and professional employees that make it appear that the "average" American worker is fairly well off. Nearly one in eight – about 33 million people – is now officially classified as poor, although the poverty line (\$18,104 a year for a family of four) has been set artificially low. In many cities, a family would be hard-pressed to cover housing costs on such an income – let alone feed and clothe themselves.

While the Economic Policy Institute reports that the rate of job losses is slowing, more than 3 million private sector jobs have disappeared since February 2001, almost all of them in manufacturing. The number of manufacturing jobs now stands at its lowest since October 1958.

Public-sector employment is also declining, despite the dire need for social service programs for the skyrocketing numbers of newly jobless and impoverished workers.

In Oregon, teachers recently agreed to work two weeks for free and cut their wages in order to avoid lay-offs and protect health benefits. New York City workers face lay-offs of up to 15,000 workers. Thousands of city and state workers have received lay-off notices across Massachusetts.

After decades of tax cuts for corporations and the rich, many cities and states face deep budget crises. Politicians argue that education, health care and welfare services – and the workers who deliver them – are too expensive. Instead, they are slashing social programs, cutting wages, laying off workers, lengthening working hours, and cutting taxes even more.

Newspapers are filled with reports of support groups being formed to help jobless workers – many of whom were recently pulling down substantial incomes – cope with the crisis. Workers have been forced to sell houses, raid pension accounts, and drop day care for their children. And hordes of job sharks are circling increasingly desperate job seekers, offering a wide variety of workshops, interview coaching, motivational talks and

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Bosses kill 213 unionists in 2002

At least 213 unionists were murdered or disappeared because of their union activities last year, according to the annual ICFTU *Survey on Trade Union Rights Violations*. All but seven of those killings took place in Latin America, although massive and systematic violations of workers' rights were found in 133 countries around the world, pointing to the devastating effects of corporate globalization on workers' rights. The report lists almost 1,000 union activists attacked and beaten, 2,562 detentions, 89 prison sentences, 30,000 trade unionists fired from their jobs, and some 20,000 victims of harassment.

On January 8, 2002, Carlos Alberto Bastidas Coral of the Colombian Teacher's Union SIMANA-CUT was assassinated in Nariño province, becoming the first confirmed case among 184 unionists murdered in Colombia that year. Colombia remains the most dangerous place on earth for union activity. The ICFTU survey also documents 27 attempted assassinations, 189 death threats against union officials and members, 9 "disappearances," 139 arbitrary arrests and 27 abductions. Scores of unionists were forced to flee into exile.

At least 16 members of rural workers' organizations in Brazil were murdered, and another 73 received death threats. In February, a man in police uniform entered the headquarters of the Brazilian union centre

CUT at night, followed by an armed gang which ransacked the premises.

In Mexico, members of the pilots' union ASPA in Mexico City and Tijuana were brutally assaulted by thugs linked to the AVIACSA company as they voted on a collective agreement. Also in Mexico, the Maquiladoras (export processing zone) Association of Ciudad Juarez announced it had compiled lists of workers who had made claims for better wages and conditions, so that they could be kept from getting jobs in future. Even though the such blacklists are illegal, the government did nothing.

Workers in the Thai clothing company Gina Form, producing well-known underwear brands for export to global markets, were victims of continuous harassment and intimidation, dismissal and beatings. They were forced to sign a blank paper which management filled in with a letter accepting reduced rights and conditions. In Egypt, a chemical factory worker reports that many employers force workers to sign resignation letters when they accept jobs.

Export processing zones in many countries have become a symbol of the current free-market model of globalization, where "free market" means "free" of union rights. Millions of workers, the large majority of them women, work for miserable salaries in deplorable health and safety conditions, sometimes at the cost of their lives. Possibly the most striking such example is *continued on page 6*

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Bush: A closet socialist?

I was half listening to broadcast by our commanding thief the other afternoon when I sat up straight and paid attention to what he was saying. "The oil in Iraq belongs to the people of Iraq, not to a small handful of criminals." Really George? You really mean it? I wonder if Exxon/Mobil was listening.

"Don't fight for Saddam Hussein. We've come to bring you freedom and democracy." Is he serious? Maybe he wants

to experiment with democracy, freedom and socialism in the Middle East to see if it could work in the USA. Where the heck is Joe McCarthy when we really need him?

Gary Cox

Readers' Soapbox

Open letter of support for Stefan Pilipa, Gaetan Heroux and John Clarke to the Attorney General of Ontario

Minister Sterling,

The ordinary prefix to your title, i.e., "Honourable" has been deliberately omitted by me. Wonder why? It's precisely because your previous conduct in this particular case of Clarke, Heroux and Pilipa has been so outstandingly dishonourable that I'd puke my guts out if I called you "Honourable."

I'll try to appeal not to the so-called goodness of your proverbial heart, but rather to your thoroughly diminutive comprehension. But first, I'd like to say that you haven't fooled anyone about this persecution being non-political. It's totally political. And your ulterior, but nonetheless real, motive has been to shut down the Ontario Coalition Against Poverty. And that goal has totally backfired on you. OCAP is stronger now than ever, precisely because of your pathetically determined attempt to immobilize them.

Go ahead and spend another million or two on trying these three political activists.

The result will simply be an even stronger OCAP. You know it and so do we, the working class.

Now don't get me wrong, Normie - I wouldn't pee on you if your heart was on fire, to paraphrase that excellent American, John Sayles. It's just a matter of time before the working class beats your side. It's just that it'll be a lot easier for our side, especially in Ontario, should you decide to retry these particular activists.

Support has demonstrably increased for OCAP since this political farce was initiated. If you try to stifle these particular voices of popular dissent, support for OCAP will only mushroom further.

Cut your losses while you can, Normie. Drop the charges.

Bonne chance,
Mark Dickson, IU 560

Need more inspiring news

I wish I could send in my usual \$10 to the IW this month, but my wife and I are both on Social Security disability and we're facing a vet bill for our cat. I promised Misty she was going to live if we have to eat oatmeal and potatoes for six months.

Anyway, I wanted to make an observation. You've probably thought about this too.

Your June article, "Argentinian police shoot workers to close factory": That people were shot is tragic. But what I found so uplifting about the story was that, yes, workers can unite and run their own damn program.

In the issue previous, I think, was a story about workers in England refusing to move armaments on a train, refusing to load them on ships.

I've wondered if maybe it is the good news that scares the ruling class. I've read the left press for years, and they'll go into great detail about the rainforest, fascist governments that we support, and such. It is extremely depressing, and I think debilitating. It seems to me that the capitalist media goes out of its way to present the human race as a hopeless pile of crap. I don't watch TV,

but my wife will be warming up the TV to do a yoga video and the Seattle "news" will be on: "A woman's body was found in a ditch, police say she was there about three weeks, here's a closeup of her feet poking out from under the blanket..." or "Police say the suspect, upset by a recent breakup with his wife's sister, stabbed his mother 14 times before running his car off a cliff..."

I know from the Project for a New American Century that depleted uranium has a half-life of 4.5 billion years. But when I learned that our government knowingly exposed our troops in Afghanistan to this, that they'll be having deformed kids and various cancers and stuff, I just felt so low. ...

I go to grab a box of tea in the store; the price tag on the shelf has a picture of a waving flag with the words "Celebrate America!" on it. I say to my wife, "Celebrate America? What the hell for?"

I wrote the Democratic National Committee with advice for their presidential candidate: "Don't have him say he is for the poor - that won't fly. Have him say he is for the middle class. That way the economic rug can be pulled out from under the less fortunate and that money used to create jobs for the mythical middle class."

Joe Randell

It's time for action

Working people in the state of Washington have just suffered a serious loss that will affect 300,000 workers and could harm the well-being of any worker in this state who finds themselves out of work.

Lawmakers have cut unemployment benefits to laid-off workers, both in the amount of weekly benefits and the number of weeks that workers receive checks. This was done under cover of a package meant to bribe Boeing to build the 7E7 plane in this state. But Boeing alone did not push for this; business interests have been pushing for this for a long time. Even if Boeing does not build the new plane here, the reduced unemployment benefits will still be the law.

Business also wanted to reduce the number of people who are eligible for unemploy-

ment benefits by eliminating workers whose jobs are not year-round. Right off that would have affected over 44,000 workers from such industries as fishing, agriculture, construction, manufacturing and retail. Business interests will try to get this passed next time.

They say that this reduction in benefits will help the economy. Why is it that those who are at the bottom of the economic ladder are the ones who must always make the sacrifices, while those on top continue to get richer? Do the governor and lawmakers offer to take the same cuts? If business is in such economic need, are the CEOs taking a pay cut too? You know the answer as well as I do: No, they are not taking a cut in pay.

Not only are they not taking any cuts in their pay, but this new law will increase the wealth of the rich.

There has only been a small amount of organized resistance against this attack on working people. All that I have seen is a few words from labor councils, and protests by farm workers and a handful of construction workers. What do you think the business interests and the politicians will think after they were able to pass this anti-working folks bill that directly harms 300,000 workers and threatens all workers in this state with very little organized opposition? They will think that people just don't care and more such attacks will be coming down the road.

I realize that to many social activists this issue just isn't as appealing as other issues, and that is why they have remained silent.

Who cares about poor people any more? Who cares about the reality of their daily struggle to survive? Each of those 300,000 people who will have their benefits cut has their own story of hardships. And what communities will be hardest hit? Those communities that have the largest number of poor people in them, those communities that are still struggling up the economic ladder, in other words communities of people of color.

There are few things that social activists can do at this time that would have a greater impact on the daily lives of people of color than to work to repeal this bill. Social activ-

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- ★ ORGANIZATION
- ★ EDUCATION
- ★ EMANCIPATION

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Post Office Box 13476 Philadelphia, PA 19101 USA 215/222-1905 • ghq@iww.org www.iww.org

General Secretary-Treasurer: Alexis Buss

General Executive Board: Jim Ellsworth (chair), Bob Helms, Patrick McGuire, Bethany Meisberger, Samara Paysse, Rochelle Semel, Donna Wilson

Editor:

Jon Bekken, iw@iww.org

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IWW directory

Australia

IWW Regional Organising Committee
PO Box 241, Surry Hills NSW 2010. email: roc@iww.org.au www.iww.org.au

Sydney Group: same as ROC.

Melbourne Group: PO Box 145, Moreland VIC 3058. melbourne@iww.org.au

British Isles

IWW Regional Organising Committee:
P.O. Box 591, Hull HU5 2WZ, info@iww.org.uk

Brighton: BrightonIWW@hotmail.com

Hull GMB: 0781-625-1466 (evenings), email: unionforall@aol.com, web: www.iww.org.uk/Hull.htm

London IWW: 0709-2016650.

Pioneer Cooperative Retail Society Job Branch & General Distribution Workers IU 660 phone Ray on 01202-257556.

Swindon Region GMB & Research Councils IU 620: Kevin Brandstatter, del., 9 Omdurman St., Swindon SN2 1HA. 01793-610707.

Yorkshire IWW: YorksIWW@hotmail.com, 0771-5517094.

Canada

Alberta

Edmonton GMB: PO Box 75175, T6E 6K1. email: edmonton@lists.iww.org http://edmonton.iww.ca

British Columbia

Vancouver IWW: PO Box 4755, Stn. Terminal, V6B 4A4. 604-682-3269 x8493. email: gmb-van@iww.ca http://vancouver.iww.ca

Manitoba

Winnipeg GMB: IWW, c/o WORC, PO Box 1, R3C 2G1. winnipegiww@hotmail.com

Ontario

Ottawa-Outaouais GMB: PO Box 52015, 298 Dalhousie St., Ottawa K1N 7E7, (613) 241-0382. ott-out@iww.org French-language del: Mathieu Brûle parti_hardcore@yahoo.com

Peterborough IWW: c/o PCAP, 393 Water St. Unit 17, K9H 3L7. email: ptoiw@riseup.net

Thunder Bay IWW: c/o IndyMedia, Suite 19c, 12 Court St. S., P7B 2W3. tbayiww@resist.ca

United States

Arizona

Phoenix GMB: 1205 E. Hubbell St., 85006-1758. 602-254-4057 phxiww@pro-union.net

Aaron Rothenburger, del., 480-303-9580.

Tucson: tucsoniww@email.com

California

Los Angeles GMB: PO Box 91691, Pasadena 91109. 626-644-1973. lagmb@iww.org

San Diego IWW: PO BOX 12423, 92112-3423. sandiego@iww.org, www.iww.org/sandiego/

San Francisco Bay Area GMB: PO Box 11412, Berkeley 94712. 415-863-WOBS. Meetings 1st & 3rd Thursdays at 7 p.m. (2022 Blake St., Berkeley) Curbside and Buyback IU 670

Recycling Shops: Bruce Valde, del., 510-652-9462.

San Jose: Adam Welch, del. pager: 408-795-9672 email: adam_freedom@yahoo.com

Santa Barbara GMB: PO Box 23008, 93121. sbgmb@iww.org

Colorado

Denver GMB: c/o P&L Printing Job Shop: 2298 Clay, Denver 80211. 303-433-1852.

Hawaii

Honolulu: PO Box 11928, 96828. Mike Long, del., 808-396-1078 mlong@hawaii.edu

Illinois

Chicago GMB & General Defense Committee Local 3: P.O. Box 18387, 3750 N. Kedzie, 60618. Delegates: Mike Hargis, 847-328-5919, Patick Brenner, 847-489-3520, Perry Sanders (GDC), 773-294-6780.

Kansas

Lawrence GMB: PO Box 176, 66044. lawrenceiww@hotmail, 785-865-0578.

Kentucky

Louisville: Ben Fletcher GMB, P.O. Box 1313, 40201. 502-727-5583.

Maine

Norumbega GMB: Barry Rodrigue, del., 75

Russell St., Bath 04530.

Massachusetts

Boston Area GMB: PO Box 391724, Cambridge 02139. Steve Kellerman, del., 617-469-5162.

Western Massachusetts Public Service Workers IU 650 Branch: IWW, PO Box 1581, Northampton 01061.

Western Massachusetts GMB: 43 Taylor Hill Rd., Montague 01351. 413-367-9356.

Michigan

Detroit GMB: 8916 Royce Drive, Sterling Heights 48313.

Grand Rapids GMB: PO Box 6629, 49516. 616-459-5928 (Matthew) or 453-0305 (Frank).

Minnesota

Duluth GMB: c/o Laverne Capan, 1522 N 8th Ave E, 55805-1115.

Missouri

Kansas City GMB: c/o 5506 Holmes St., KC MO 64110. sherrimichelle@hotmail.com. 816-523-3995.

St Louis: P.O. Box 11551, 63105 Del. Richard Burke, 314-849-3530. burkemo@earthlink.net

Montana

Construction Workers IU 330: Dennis Georg, del. 406-494-5837, trampiu330@aol.com

New York

NYC GMB: PO Box 7430, JAF Station, New York City 10116, iww-nyc@bari.iww.org

Upstate NY GMB: PO Box 74, Altamont 12009. 518-861-5627. Rochelle Semel, del, 291 Bristol Rd, Hartwick 13348. 607-293-6489.

North Carolina

New Bern: Bruce Arnold, del., 1350 Trent Blvd #Q-4, 28560.

Ohio

Cincinnati: Mark Damron, del., PO Box 42233, 45242.

Oklahoma

Tulsa: Karl Howeth, del., 7102 South Utica #3516, 74136. 918-499-3977. vaneigem25@hotmail.com

Oregon

Lane County GMB: P.O. Box 371, Eugene 97440. Hall: 454 Willammet St. 541-343-7828 www.laneiww.org.

Portland Industrial District Council: union hall: 616 E. Burnside St., 503-231-5488.

Portland GMB: PO Box 15005, 97293-5005. branch@iwwpdx.org 503-796-3474.

Restaurant Workers Industrial Union 640 Branch: PO Box 15005, 97293-5005. 503-231-5488. **Public Service IU 650 Branch:** c/o Industrial District Council.

Pennsylvania

Lancaster GMB: PO Box 796, 17608 Philadelphia GMB: PO Box 42777, 19101. 215-222-1905. phillyiww@iww.org

Paper Crane Press IU 450 Job Shop: papercrane@erols.com, 610-358-9496.

Pittsburgh GMB: c/o Meisberger, PO Box 162, Turtle Creek, 15145.

Rhode Island

Providence GMB: PO Box 27001, 02907. 401-455-4619

Texas

Austin GMB: PO Box 650011, 78765. 512-322-0083, jrfreeze@earthlink.net

Utah

Salt Lake City GMB: PO Box 520835, 84152-0835. slcgm@iww.org 801-485-1969.

Washington

Industrial Transportation Project: Arthur J Miller, PO Box 5464, Tacoma 98415-0464.

Olympia GMB: PO Box 2775, 98507. 360-956-3713. olywobs@hotmail.com

Seattle GMB: 1122 E. Pike St. #1142, 98122-3934. bp172@scn.org

Wisconsin

Madison GMB: P.O. Box 2442, 53703-2442. **IU 450 Lakeside Press Job Shop:** 1334 Williamson, Madison 53703. 608-255-1800. **Education Workers IU 620 Job Shop:** UW Greens Infoshop, 31 University Square, 53715. 608-262-9036. **Milwaukee GMB:** IWW, PO Box 07632, 53207.

Settlement reached in Stella's case

After five months of tusslin', the Winnipeg General Membership Branch of the IWW and Stella's Cafe & Bakery hammered out a conclusion to their dispute. On May 21st, in the offices of the Manitoba Labour Board, representatives from Stella's management and IWW members met again to set dates for the Unfair Labour Practice charge brought by the Wobblies. While there, offers and counter-offers were made until a resolution was reached.

As reported in earlier issues, IWW member John Stillwell was fired from Stella's in early January of this year for trying to organize a union. Since that time there have been a half-dozen informational pickets in front of Stella's, positive media coverage and an Unfair Labour Practice filed against Stella's by the union. As well, a small phone campaign was organized to put pressure on Stella's management to give John his job back. Although earlier attempts to reach a settlement failed, success was finally grasped by Wobblies sticking to their guns.

The final deal saw the IWW accept no return to work for Stillwell in exchange for approximately four months in wages as damages. After concluding the dispute, Stillwell reflected: "I'm satisfied that, with the drive done or over [inside Stella's], it's probably one of the best things we could get. Of course it would have been nice to have more and larger pickets to put more pressure on them

to hire me back, but this will do just fine."

The process of filing an Unfair Labour practice was a long and winding one as always. The Manitoba Labour Board changed the date of the hearing four times in the five months of the dispute. Most recently, it canceled the May 28th hearing date with only two weeks' notice. Then, in a bizarre move, it called a conference call for all parties and only notified the IWW by mail and telephone calls which arrived four hours after the conference call was supposed to have happened. The Board then set a May 21st meeting to re-set dates and gave the IWW an ultimatum that if we didn't show up they would consider the ULP dropped. "The MLB is pretty hit and miss, for sure, depending on who you get. It's relatively user-friendly but it sure drags things out," Stillwell remarked.

Although John isn't returning to work at Stella's, he felt the outcome was still a victory for the IWW. "I think the bosses at Stella's learned a lesson. If you mess with organized workers, there'll be consequences. They'll be more careful in the future, I'm sure of it. Also, it's good that the Stella's bosses were exposed for what they really are; not cozy, progressive types, but anti-union." The Winnipeg IWW was happy to see a good amount of community support on the info picket lines as well as rank-and-file members from other unions coming out, boycotting Stella's or lending a hand by calling to complain on John's behalf.

"The solidarity is what counts," said IWW delegate Patrick McGuire. "That's what's really heartening. And hopefully, other young service industry workers who are getting screwed saw this action and will remember the Wobs. It's good for people to know that we're not some "pie-in-the-sky" organization but rather a real union dedicated to fighting for working people."

In hindsight Stillwell offers this advice to other Wobblies, "Go for it. Organize." He added quickly, "But organize carefully. I just

got the opportunity to take the IWW Organizer Training course at the end of May and I sure wish I'd had that info back last fall when I started talking union at Stella's. So I encourage all Wobs to take the course for sure."

Stillwell has been working as a bike courier since his firing and has transferred to the IWW's Municipal Transport Workers IU 540, where he hopes to help build an industrial union branch. Looking back on his job at Stella's and the ups-and-downs of the campaign, John was solid in his assessment of that it was worth it. "Definitely. I'd do it again even if I got fired. There's no other way that this work is going to get done."

Portland Wobs protest budget cuts

Thirty IWW social service workers and their supporters demonstrated against social service budget cuts June 12 outside the county commissioners meeting in Portland, Oregon. Signs reading "another unemployed social service worker" and "social services are cheaper than jails" drew honks of support from passing motorists.

IWW social workers spoke against the cuts both inside and outside of the County Building. Sara Manowitz underscored the effect of the cuts on workers and their clientele. The elected county commissioners smiled politely, and then moved "the people's business" along.

The IWW has been organizing in homeless youth services in Portland. We recently went public with our organizing campaign at Greenhouse, a homeless youth drop-in center. Management's response was to restructure the entire program, laying off most of the workers. This is the second time that IWW workers have organized at the Greenhouse, only to have the program restructured, or switched to a different agency.

Wobblies shine at Mayworks Festival

Mayworks in Winnipeg began in 1994 and has just completed its ninth year. Begun as a celebration of the 75th anniversary of the Winnipeg General Strike, it has continued and blossomed into a month-long celebration of the positive contributions of unions and working people to the arts.

The Winnipeg IWW has played an important role in the festival from the beginning, both with individual members sitting on the steering committee every year as well as the branch hosting several events throughout the month. The organizing committee brings together members of many different unions as well as the local labour councils.

This year the branch kicked off the festival by carrying an anti-war banner in the Mayday march, and two of our members entertained the crowd with songs.

Throughout the month we hosted three Wobbly Wednesdays. The first was an evening of progressive hip hop with some of Winnipeg's most notorious artists called Beats, Rhymes & Strikes. The following Wednesday was an interesting and well attended panel discussion with three local artists on the topic of Art and Struggle. Finally we had a presentation from GST Alexis Buss on the history of art in the union. Alexis also did an interview based on her presentation for CBC's Internet news magazine while she was in town, which can be found at http://www.cbcradio3.com/issues/2003_06_06/index.cfm.

The branch also tabled almost all the other events throughout the month, and FW Patrick McGuire hosted two Winnipeg General Strike bus tours to an audience of approximately 100 folks. FWs McGuire and Hardy closed off the festival with Wobbly songs at the Winnipeg Labour Council's Picnic in the Park. Once again this year's festival was a huge success, and the Winnipeg branch is proud to continue to be a mainstay of the contributing unions.

Around Our Union

Staff at the national office of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (in Philadelphia) have joined the IWW and requested voluntary union recognition. At press time, management is asking for several more weeks to consider the request.

Portland, Oregon, Wobs are active in a fight against social service budget cuts which are hitting three IWW-represented shops particularly hard. In one shop, half the workers could lose their jobs. The first edition of their newsletter, the *Stumptown Wobbly*, includes a report on the Reed College education workers IU 620 campaign, which has been confronting administrative stonewalling.

The Portland branches will be hosting the IWW General Assembly August 29 - 31 at Norse Hall, 111 NE 11th Avenue.

In Pittsburgh, members of the East End Co-op have booted board of directors members who were spearheading an anti-union fight, replacing them with members pledged to support workers' right to organize. IWW authorization cards are going fast.

Boston Wobblies continue to walk picket lines at the Somerville Theater, where projectionists have been locked-out for six weeks after demanding union recognition. An IWW member was among the speakers at a June 13 solidarity rally that brought 50 community supporters and unionists out to picket on a rainy Friday evening.

Many movie and concert-goers honored the picket line, but too many (including several who boasted they were union members) crossed. UPS drivers and an elevator repair crew are honoring picket lines, and one musician insisted that his show be relocated. But the owner is relying on scabs (union and otherwise) and the profits from his real estate empire to crush the workers, who joined IATSE after tiring of working for minimum wage in unsafe projection booths.

Preamble to the IWW Constitution

The working class and the employing class have nothing in common. There can be no peace so long as hunger and want are found among millions of 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 the 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.

Join the IWW Today

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

We are the Industrial Workers of the World because 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 can pool our strength to fight the bosses together.

Since the IWW was founded in 1905, we have recognized the need to build a truly international union movement in order to confront the global power of the bosses and in order to strengthen workers' ability to stand in solidarity with our fellow workers no matter what part of the globe they happen to live on.

We are a union open to all workers, whether or not the IWW happens to have representation rights in your workplace. We organize the worker, not the job, recognizing that unionism is not about government certification or employer recognition but about workers coming together to address our 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 issues or 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 to pursue are made by the workers directly involved.

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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.



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When workbells chime
for bits of overtime
whose wars we love to fight
for leech and parasite
Praise Boss
by F.N. Brill

As I write this column, it's mid-June and still no Weapons of Mass Destruction have been found in Iraq. But on March 30, in an appearance on the American Broadcasting Company's "This Week" news show, U.S. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld stated: "We know where they are, they are in the area around Tikrit and Baghdad." But now they can't find them.

Here's another American war started on lies. Remember the Maine? It was a boiler mishap, not an enemy bomb. Remember the Lusitania? It had munitions on it, just as the Germans had said. The Gulf of Tonkin didn't even happen. Since the present Iraq War is also a UK and Australian war, I'll leave it to readers to supply me with occasions that those rulers lied to their workers to start war. I'm sure they have tonnes of stories.

At least the IWW doesn't lie to you folks; the Class War is based on real facts.

★ ★ ★

Why is it that the capitalists praise the war dead who have defended our freedom, yet we are to give up our limited freedoms so we don't have to die? In the United States, the revolutionary guerrilla armies who created this country had a slogan, "Give me liberty or give me death." Now it's being inverted to say "Take away my liberties to keep me alive."

But what can we expect from a bunch of Chickenhawks, right? For those of you located outside the U.S., "Chickenhawk" is a derogatory term for a politician who avoided fighting in (usually) Vietnam, but is very pro-military action now. Bush, Cheney, Rumsfeld, the whole putrid lot of them are Chickenhawks. Oh, wait, Bush was in the Alabama National Guard but didn't show up for duty. That's ruling class patriotism for you.

Working people don't get to run away. That's why IWWs stood and fought for working class liberty. And often died. In the past even rulers stood alongside "their" people. The royal family refused to leave London in the Blitz. Churchill rode the tube in the same. Franklin Roosevelt went to Yalta in the midst of war. Bush and Cheney ran and hid during 9/11, just like they did in Vietnam.

That's why the time is ours folks, the rulers of the world are cowards and bullies. All we have to do is take the initiative and stand up to them.

★ ★ ★

It's almost forest fire season out here in Oregon. It's rumored that since the Oregon state budget is so heavily in debt, the legislature is going to burn it down for the insurance money.

★ ★ ★

I've had a rare treat in stumbling across a film titled "Winstanley." All of you radical historians and Billy Bragg fans should know about the English Digger movement. They are often credited of being the first modern radical movement, forming a series of illegal communes during the English Civil War of the 1640s. While this seems rather tame now, at the time it was considered a serious threat to the established order. The title "Winstanley" comes from Gerard Winstanley, the main theorist of the True Levellers or Diggers.

"Winstanley," the film, was made in 1975 for perhaps £30,000. Using black and white film, amateur actors and real life sets, it is an amazing bit of story telling and film making. The directors attempted to make everything as authentic as possible, from the handmade clothing, the huts were all built (on the next hill over from the original Diggers' colony) by hand by the actors. History buffs were incorporated into the film as well, Civil War reenactors, farm implement and rare breeds of stock and poultry collectors were also recruited. Actual 17th century armor was lent by the Tower of London Military Museum as well. Filming started the same day the real Diggers first moved onto the commons at St. George's Hill, Surrey, and the film's set was burned on the same day the Diggers' commune was burned.

The story isn't action packed; it's slow and rural, but never dull. The acting is quite good considering there's only one professional actor. The story is, as far as I can tell, quite sympathetic to the Diggers, but is even handed and not pedantic. Often the real Winstanley's writings are used in narration, still radical and clear in their meaning after nearly 500 years.

The photography is wonderful, drawn from the best of the black and white silent era, especially Sergi Eisenstein, whose "Alexander Nevsky" is honored through imitation. Images from other Russian revolutionary film makers, such as Eisenstein's Ukrainian contemporary, Dosvienko, are also called up.

"Winstanley" the film has been recently released in North America on both VHS and DVD packaged with a documentary on the making of the film. The documentary, a BBC show on the (then) collapse of the British film industry is almost as fun, showing how to make a feature film for almost no money.

FN Brill, a modern-day, but ill-equipped, Diogenes, is looking for truth. Send it to him c/o IWW, 616 E. Burnside, Portland OR 97214 USofWMD. Or e-mail fnbrill@yahoo.com

Sweeney's McCarthyesque imposition

Members of the Washington State Federation of Labor are struggling to overturn an AFL mandate that they incorporate into their constitution a provision the AFL adopted in 1997 to replace the Federation's previous ban on communists.

The provision reads: "No individual shall be eligible to serve as an officer, member of the executive board or committee or other governing body of, or any other committee of, or as a delegate from, or as a representative, agent or employee of any state central body who consistently pursues policies and activities directed toward the achievement of the program or purposes of authoritarianism,

totalitarianism, terrorism and other forces that suppress individual liberties and freedom of association."

Presumably intended to exclude members of the Democratic and Republican parties from holding union office, the provision has never been enforced. However, AFL-CIO President John Sweeney ordered state labor councils to add the language to their own constitutions. Delegates to Washington's council rejected the demand. "It was almost McCarthyesque, some of the stuff that was in it," says council spokesman David Groves.

Now the council is asking AFL-affiliated unions to join its efforts to reverse the order.

Ontario work ers need a raise

BY JEFF SHANTZ

It's high time Ontario's low income workers received a raise. The minimum wage in Ontario has been frozen at \$6.85/hour (\$6.40 for students, \$5.95 for liquor servers) throughout eight brutal years of Tory rule.

During that time Ontario's minimum wage slipped from the highest in Canada in 1995 to fifth place today. Even worse, inflation has eroded the real value of the minimum wage by 20 percent. Minimum wage earners took in only 38.5 percent of the average earnings for all workers in Ontario for 2001, compared to 44.8 percent in Quebec and 46.2 percent in B.C. This leaves people earning well below poverty wages. In fact, someone earning minimum wage and working 35 hours per week for a full year would be left almost \$7,000 below the poverty line.

Almost 250,000 Ontarians are compelled to work for these poverty wages. At least as many have to take jobs for wages only slightly above the minimum wage level. Taken together one-fourth of Ontarians earn less than poverty-level wages - 31 percent of women, 32% of people of colour and 41% of recent immigrants work for wages below the poverty level.

Incredibly, minimum wage rates in Canada are lower than in most industrialized countries and even well below those in the land of the free market, the U.S. Ontario is well behind nearby states such as New York and Michigan (CAN\$8.15 each) as well as Maine (C\$7.30), Vermont (C\$7.94) and Massachusetts (C\$8.57).

Ontario is the only province not to have at least some increase since 1998. Despite Tory assertions that people can better themselves by taking on paid work (a big part of their vicious attack on welfare recipients), the government's rotten minimum wage policies mean that many people who go from welfare to paid employment suffer worse financial conditions (even after the lethal cuts to welfare).

This is a situation of gross exploitation of workers by Ontario businesses and their Tory mouthpieces. In a country whose political leaders boast of the best-performing economy in the G8, the country club of wealthy nations, it is nothing less than a shameful disgrace.

Politicians and business groups try to scare people away from calls for a minimum wage increase by claiming it will drive away business and therefore cost jobs. Supposedly labour will be priced out of the market. This is absolutely untrue. Labour, as the primary source of value, is not like other commodities and bosses can't choose to do without it. Research in Canada and the U.S. shows that increases to the minimum wage actually benefit the economy while increasing the total amount of money going to low-wage workers. There is little evidence that minimum wage increases lead to increased unemployment. In 1999 Manitoba increased the minimum wage and saw unemployment fall to its lowest level in a generation (below 5%). Of course this doesn't even take into account the crucial social benefits that come from reducing inequality.

Conservatives also argue that most minimum wage workers are middle class teenagers doing after-school or summer work while living at home. In fact, most minimum wage workers are adults (61% according to Statistics Canada) and almost half are working full time. Many of the part-timers hold more than one job. Most minimum wage earners, around 64%, are women. College students trying to cover increasingly expensive tuition costs often have to take minimum wage jobs. This burden is especially harsh for students from lower-income backgrounds.

This is part of a broader neoliberal assault on workers. In addition to freezing minimum wage rates the provincial government cut social assistance rates by 21.6% in 1995. Thus, after inflation Ontario's poorest residents have suffered an income decline of

almost 40% over the past eight years.

With a provincial election looming, two complementary campaigns have begun to fight the government over this brutal situation. On June 9, the Ontario Coalition Against Poverty sent delegations to the offices of Members of Provincial Parliament of the ruling Tory and opposition Liberal parties to hand-deliver messages serving notice to each party that direct actions will be taken against them over these issues. A broad-based campaign under the banner of "Ontario Needs a Raise" has been initiated by a coalition of unionists, low income workers and anti-poverty activists to press for an increase to social assistance and minimum wage rates. Significantly these campaigns are working to overcome the false divide between the "working and non-working poor" that the current government has tried so hard to construct. All workers have a right to live in dignity whether they are currently employed or not.

The brutally low social assistance rates and the poverty-assuring minimum wage are linked in the broader attack on workers and must be fought together. Whichever party takes control of government in Ontario after the upcoming elections, they must restore the cuts to welfare and increase the rates to account for inflation. They must also raise the minimum wage to at least \$10, something above a poverty wage. They should index the minimum wage to cost of living increases or to a percentage of average wages above 50%. No worker in this province should have to settle for anything less.

Of course workers cannot rely on any government to provide a decent living since governments exist to aid and protect capital. This is why campaigns and coalitions like OCAP and "Ontario Needs a Raise," which bring employed and unemployed, unionized and non-unionized workers together against the divide-and-conquer policies of bosses and their governments are so crucial.

Illegal to follow work rules?

The Ontario legislature has outlawed work-to-rule job actions by the Canadian province's teachers - a measure many fear may spread to other provinces.

Work-to-rule is one of the oldest direct action methods in labor's toolbox, relying on the fact that virtually every job is governed by a myriad of unworkable rules put in place by bosses who either don't know the work or are trying to cover themselves against risks (or both).

"People just follow the rules," explained Cliff Andstein, a spokesman for the Canadian Labour Congress told the *Globe & Mail*. "It's effective because union members will take breaks, lunch and not complete work outside of their job description. How can they be faulted for doing that?"

Unionized workers from airline employees to prison guards to doctors have resorted to work-to-rule for decades because it's a powerful way to pressure management. Work quickly begins to pile up, since it's generally impossible to get the work done while strictly following the rules.

In the Ontario case, the government has banned teachers from refusing to do work (such as coaching or after-school meetings) not required by their contract, but which they often volunteer to take on given authorities' refusal to hire adequate staff. Teachers have been waging work-to-rule campaigns instead of striking for a new contract.

It's not clear that the province has the legal authority to compel teachers to do unpaid, non-contractual labor. "There are serious legal concerns when you prescribe that a citizen has to do something that has historically been considered to be voluntary," labour lawyer Paul Cavalluzzo told the *Globe & Mail*. "I thought we got rid of slavery 200 years ago."

The sweatshop at Lands' End

BY KENNETH MILLER

5,000 workers sew at the Primo factory in El Salvador. A majority of the work orders are from Lands' End, the catalog retailer owned by Sears. Primo is located in a Free Trade Zone called San Bartolo that was established in the early 1980s to entice U.S. manufacturers to abandon their U.S. work forces. As though the average wage of less than 70 cents an hour for garment industry workers in El Salvador was not enough of an enticement, companies in the FTZ pay no taxes and are exempt from numerous labor and environmental laws. Just as their U.S. counterparts faced plant closings as factories moved to FTZs like this one, today apparel factories though out Latin America are closing down to move to China where wages and legal protections are even lower.

Despite shop floor intimidation and the threat of plant closing, workers are organizing with the Sindicato de Trabajadores de la Industria Textiles. Some of these workers are veterans of a STIT drive in 2001 at the Tainan plant that produced for the Gap in a nearby FTZ. Tainan closed its doors rather than recognize the first independent garment workers union in any of El Salvador's FTZs.

Forty unionists have been fired and blacklisted from Primo. These workers cannot find jobs in their industry at any company in any of the numerous FTZs even though blacklisting is illegal in El Salvador.

We know about these workers' struggle because some of the Lands' End clothing they make is emblazoned with the logos of colleges and universities. 114 universities have responded to student and community pressure by forcing companies to disclose factory locations and agree to minimum labor standards. These standards are often called Codes of Conduct and the corporate codes are well known for not having any enforcement teeth. Lands' End has one that forbids blacklisting but is completely ignored.

Major League Baseball Properties, which also has licensed apparel made by Lands' End at Primo, says it requires its business partners to obey the law, but does nothing when they break it. More hopefully, the Codes put into force by many university licensing agreements are being overseen by an independent watch dog group, the Workers Rights Consortium, that actually talks with workers and unions to investigate violations.

The heat is on Lands' End to tell its contractor Primo to obey the law, rehire these workers and respect union organizing rights. We can all email Lands' End's propaganda minister at Richard.Mensch@landsend.com.

Students and university community members are pushing administrations to use their licensing agreements with Lands' End as leverage. One group with a particularly strong history of pressuring their administration is No Sweat! @ Indiana University in

Bloomington. This group was one of the first to force its administration to join the WRC and now it has convinced them to step out in front of the university pack and warn Lands' End that its licensing agreement is in jeopardy. These students know that helping to win the union at Primo also means continuing the fight to keep Lands' End orders at the factory once the union is recognized.

In addition to the rapid action on Lands' End, another historic victory marked the end of the school year. Indiana University will now require wage disclosure as part of its licensing agreement renewals (the agreements are renewed annually).

Most sweatshop workers are paid in cash or with script checks. Often they don't receive any accounting of overtime payments and deductions made for food at work, factory housing and health care. In many cases workers are not provided with any documentation of employment. Wage disclosure measures could force companies to account for who and how much they actually pay.



TOM KEOUGH

Asked what makes No Sweat's position as strong as it has been over such an extended period of time, recent IU graduate Nancy Steffan replies, "Our (university committee) works well because No Sweat! is totally engaged... we bring whoever we want and we know so much more than anyone else (administrators) that it doesn't really matter what the committee structure is because it never comes down to a vote."

Workers fight remote control rail operations

BY BALTIMORE RED

The Federal Railroad Administration, the agency charged with overseeing safety on the nation's railroads, gave its approval for U.S. railroads to employ Remote Control Operators (RCOs) in switching operations in 2001. Within months, the corporate leadership of the nation's largest railroads reached agreement with the nation's largest rail union, the United Transportation Union, to implement remote control technology at rail yards across the country. Pilot projects were set up in early 2002, and the new technology began to be implemented.

Jobs, safety and efficiency

For the locomotive engineers who formerly performed this work, the carriers pledge that there will be no actual layoffs. These employees may retire, exercise their seniority and bid on road jobs in pools and extra lists, or even "flow-back" to conductor/trainman positions in the yard or on the road. However, it is not clear that the less senior trainmen displaced as a result of this bumping chain will remain on the payroll. Whatever the case, one thing is certain – the carriers' desire for near universal implementation of remote control from coast to coast will ultimately have the effect of eliminating thousands of good union jobs.

In addition to job losses, there is the issue of safety. What effect will remotes have upon railroad employees and the communities within which these engineerless locomotives operate?

The carriers speak in glowing terms about the safety record of RCOs. They note that botched communication is no longer possible between switchman and engineer as now a single employee wearing a remote control belt-pack performs the entire switching operation. The industry points to figures it claims show a decline in accident-related claims at facilities where remote control was implemented. But these figures may simply be the result of the fact that less employee-hours worked translates into less injuries. Already remote control has been involved in a series of wrecks and accidents which have resulted in severed limbs and death to trainmen using the technology.

Finally, the jury is still out on just how economically efficient RCOs really are in the

field. Evidence abounds to show that switching operations are slowed, in some cases considerably, when remote control is used to switch out a train. The work that had been performed by a switchman and an engineer simply cannot be completed in the same time frame by the switchman who now, in addition to the traditional work of coupling cars and air hoses, throwing switches, performing paperwork, conducting air tests, etc., must operate and tend to the locomotive.

In fact, some switching facilities (e.g. Kamloops, B.C.) in Canada, where RCOs have been employed for over a decade, are abolishing remote operations and re-establishing traditional engineer positions aboard locomotives after studies documented the inefficiency of RCOs there.

Rail workers fight back

The fight-back, such as it is, against remotes now largely turns on the safety issue. The Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, which represents the majority of the nation's enginemen (freight and passenger), opposes RCOs on the grounds that they are unsafe and untested.

Originally, the BLE attempted to strike, saying the carriers violated the collective bargaining agreement and years of accepted practice that the engineer be the sole operator of the locomotive. The impending strike was outlawed by a federal judge in January 2002. The union then sued, demanding that a certified engineer be in charge of all locomotive operation, not a trainman, whether the operation be manned or remote. It lost that case before federal judge in the fall.

Not finding success with these approaches, the BLE has sought other avenues to make its case for safe locomotive operation. The union is highly critical of the brief training period granted to remote control operators (80 hours) versus that of a real engineer (average six months), and is calling for the FRA to develop safety standards.

At a rally in Washington, D.C., on March 11, engineers and their allies gathered at the FRA headquarters to protest the use of remote control operations. However, the BLE is careful to point out that it is not opposed to the technology per se, but rather to the

lack of federal regulations to safely govern the operation of remotes. The BLE is joined in their efforts by RRESQ (Railroad Employees Safety and Quality), a feisty group of family members and rail workers who are working on workplace safety and quality of work life issues (see March IW). The Teamsters union, currently in merger talks with the BLE, and the AFL-CIO Transportation Trades Dept. are in close alliance with the engineers.

Unfortunately, as is often the case with rail labor, the operating unions are divided on the subject (see April IW). The UTU has embraced the technology in a dramatic about-face in the last few years. Only a few short years ago, the shoe was on the other foot, with the UTU deriding "black boxes" as dangerous, unsafe and impractical while the BLE was seemingly warming to the idea, especially on roads like the Montana Rail Link where BLE-represented employees wear the remote control belt packs. Now, while the BLE and allies point to its failures, the UTU lauds the technology as practical, safe and efficient, and has even gone so far as to claim the technology has put the "fun" back into railroading!

The failure of the UTU and the BLE leadership to form a united front on the issue has undoubtedly dealt a major blow to the rank-and-file of both unions. But the foes of remotes have made some progress in recent months in outlawing the technology.

The strategy they have employed has been one directed at both city and county levels of government, working to convince local legislatures of the dangers inherent in remote operations. Pointing to a number of wrecks and fatal injuries over the last year which have involved RCOs, the BLE and others are attempting to win over local governments to their cause. While the FBI and the rail industry harp on the susceptibility of railroads to terrorism, the anti-RCO forces make a convincing case that if indeed they are serious about this supposed threat, then remote control operations would seem to represent a vulnerable and dangerous target. With these arguments, they have persuaded nine county and 17 city governments – including Detroit, Boston and Cleveland – to ban the use of remotes within their jurisdictions.

Between safety & efficiency, there is no compromise; workers must choose the safe path...

The movement appears to be picking up steam as almost weekly a new local governing body somewhere in the country joins the list banning remote operations.

While this strategy has certainly had its successes, at this point only a small percentage of switching operations in the U.S. are affected. And it is not hard to conceive of a pro-industry federal judge striking down a local ordinance of this nature as unconstitutional. However, remote control may ultimately fail regardless of the actions of judges, politicians, CEOs or union officials. The forces aligned against it do have an ace in the hole that may eventually lead to its downfall and removal from the nation's railroads – that is, its inherent propensity for inefficiency.

A winning approach

The rail industry itself has admitted that, in yards where RCOs have taken over traditional switching operations, there is a notable slow-down and a decrease in efficiency in switching operations. Some Canadian facilities have already begun the process of reverting to fully staffed locomotive operations. When a major freight yard is not fluid, the ripple effect can wreck havoc upon the entire rail system, as trains line up to get into the yard, plugging up the mainline, affecting operations hundreds of miles distant.

And while the leadership of the UTU may sing its praises, the rank-and-file on the ground is not adjusting to those rose colored glasses so easily. The membership did not ask for this, they do not trust it and do not like it. For just a few dollars more per shift, in addition to performing their old jobs, they are now responsible for the operation and security of the locomotive as well. Many complain of being harassed and rushed up by trainmasters and other supervision to get the trains switched out. But since the rules clearly state that when the choice is between safety and efficiency, there is no compromise, the employee must choose the safe path.

By working safely, always in strict conformity to the rules, UTU-represented switchmen have the potential to sound the death knell of remote control operation and restore the BLE-represented brothers and sisters to their rightful places in the cab of the yard locomotive.

Pension rights withering under bosses' assault

BY CHARLES WALKER,
LABOR TUESDAY

As this is written, hundreds of thousands of French workers are off the job and in the streets, protesting government plans to "reform" the French pension system. The so-called reform would add on two and a half years to the 37.5 years a French public service employee now works to get a full pension. Trade unions provided buses and trains to take their members to Paris, where the protesters' banners summed up their point: "Retirement before Death!" The demonstrations will be followed up by strikes against airlines, trains, subways and schools. Weeks of successful similar protests in 1995 led to the downfall of the national government.

Pensions are under attack throughout Europe, as corporate-dominated governments seek to win back concessions made to workers as the European economy was rebuilt following WW II. Despite the huge productivity gains of European workers over the years, corporations now find they need to wring more profits from their work force as their rate of profit falls under competitive pressures. But first they must overcome a powerful roadblock: their workers and the workers' unions and political parties.

American workers have good reason to look at the French protests and wish them well. That's because their expected pensions too are being whittled down, as corporations seek to bolster their bottom lines on the backs of future pensioners.

In the wake of the partial deflating of the stock markets, many corporate and union pension funds don't have the reserves to cover their pension promises for future retirees. In part, that's due to corporations cutting back on pension contributions during the expansion of the stock market bubble. The pension fund shortfall runs in the hundreds of billions and continues to grow. Corporations of all sizes are sitting on workers' shrinking nest eggs as the value of their stock investments fall off.

Pension plans managed by some unions are telling future retirees that expected increases are not in the cards, as the falling market value of their investments forces cutbacks. The powerful Western Conference of Teamsters Pension Plan shocked working Teamsters this year when it recalculated future payouts, cutting them nearly in half, though workers' accrued earnings were not touched. The union's controversial central states plan has frozen pension earnings despite negotiated contractual increases. Some

unions seek to maintain, if not increase, pension levels by negotiating smaller amounts for wages and/or health benefits; a sort of "Rob Peter to pay Paul" scheme.

There's a move afoot in Congress to allow corporations to lower their pension reserves on the actuarial premise that blue-collar workers don't live as long as white-collar workers. The proposed law has the blessings of the highest leaders in the auto workers union (note: there's no parallel proposal to increase pension reserves for white-collar workers). The UAW negotiates its big-three contracts this year, and it's thought the union is looking for the proposed law to free up some money for the new contracts.

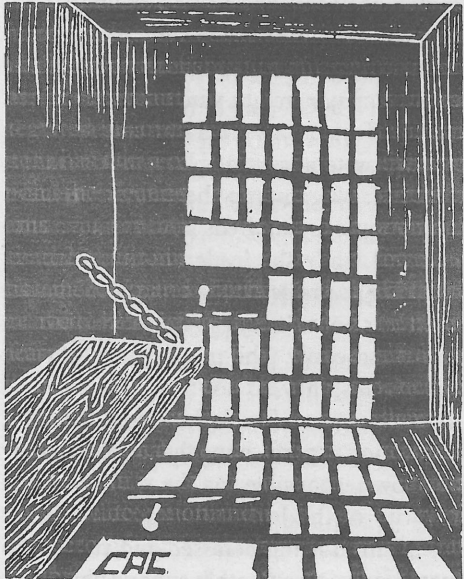
One auto retiree told *Labor Notes*, "A real union would not be advocating for lower contributions to the members' pension funds. A real union would say: let us find out why our members are dying so young!" Instead of looking to save the companies money, he insisted, the UAW could seek to pass on full pension benefits to spouses when workers die young. "Or if our life span is so short, they could demand '25 and out.' During the '90s the UAW was silent when the pension fund profits averaged 15% a year and the money was used for investments in Asia and Europe rather than future pensions."

While some unions seek to shift some wage and medical money into pension reserves, others announce cutbacks, and still others, such as the auto union, work to reduce corporate pension fund obligations, no unions are calling on their members to express their disappointment and anger about the assault on pensions in mass street protests. That's not the way the U.S. union leaderships lead. Their idea of a grassroots campaign favors "e-mail activism," massive postcard mailings to politicians, and lobbying in the Capitol's hallways and anterooms.

While the worldwide media features the Paris marches and strikes to protect workers' pensions, the media take little or no notice of a few busloads of American union members pleading their plight on Capitol Hill. Some say that organized labor's bureaucratic leaderships are so disconnected from their duespayers that they just can't turn the ranks out, even for issues as basic as pensions, health care and maintaining the Fair Labor Standards Act.

The French workers may or may not win their pension beef. On the other hand, there can be no hope at all that U.S. organized labor can save workers' pension bacon with an e-mail blitz.

213 unionists killed globally...



continued from page 1

Bangladesh, a country with an appalling record of workers killed by factory fires in workplaces where workers are locked in so there is no way of escape once a fire starts.

Long terms in prison and labor camps, beatings, psychiatric internment and harassment of families continues in China, where repression of independent unionism is systematic. Dozens of independent unionists languish in Chinese jails in appalling condi-

tions. 2002 was a year of growing social conflict in China, as massive retrenchments from state enterprises led to protests which were often suppressed with great force.

China is just one of dozens of countries where workers face massive obstacles in their efforts to organize. In South Korea for example, when public sector employees tried to get around legal obstacles in an effort to form a union, a thousand police "visited" their inaugural congress. 178 delegates were arrested and 5 imprisoned. Also in South Korea, a hospital strike met with a heavy response from anti-riot police. 20 workers were sacked, 573 subjected to "disciplinary measures" and 7 sentenced to prison.

Workers in some of the most industrialized nations also experienced serious violations of their rights, especially in the United States where firing workers is seen by many employers as the best way to stop union activity. At least one in every ten workers trying to form a union in 2002 was dismissed. In Denver, Wal-Mart managers advised employees that any union activity would be monitored, and encouraged workers to spy on their colleagues. Workers showing union sympathies were subjected to interrogation and harassment.



Brazilian workers protesting neoliberal attacks on their pension rights.

INDYMEDIA

Fighting 'reform' throughout Euro zone

Workers across Europe are fighting pension "reforms" that would force them to work longer for reduced retirement benefits. For years, governments have been cutting back on the benefits and social safety net that helped moderate social conflict after WW II. But with corporate globalization offering employers the opportunity to exploit workers at \$1 a day, many are no longer willing to honor that decades-old compromise.

In France, parliament is considering proposals that would increase the number of years of full-time work government workers must put in to qualify for a pension from the current 37.5 to 40 by 2008, and eventually 42. Unions have responded to the proposal with a series of massive strikes. Given the growing casualization of work, the "reforms" would mean that large numbers of workers would likely never receive their pensions — working until they dropped dead on the job.

Austrian chancellor Wolfgang Schüssel pushed even more draconian pension reforms through parliament a week after that country's largest strike and protest actions in its post-war history when more than a million workers struck 18,000 work sites. Unless reversed by a broader general strike, the legislation will cut pension benefits by 10 percent next year, eliminate adjustments for inflation, and require workers who now generally retire at age 58 to work until age 65.

In Germany, the "socialist" Schröder government is considering similar measures.

Governments have long relied on current pension contributions to pay retirees' benefits, and pandered to business interests by keeping rates well below what was necessary to build up adequate reserves. As popu-

lations age and massive unemployment keeps many out of the regular workforce, the economic foundation for these schemes is increasingly shaky.

Most European governments face similar issues, a convergence encouraged by the single currency and constraints on public spending enforced by the European Central Bank. However, Members of European Parliament recently voted to allow themselves to retire on generous pensions at age 60.

Workers are rejecting these efforts to balance state budgets on their backs. A series of national strikes by public sector workers in France have shut down air, rail and truck traffic, banks, schools, subways, the postal system, garbage collection and many other services. Trash in the southern port of Marseille was piled 10 feet high after three weeks of protests.

The strikes spread to the private sector June 3, even as the government stepped up its efforts to divide workers — the 'reforms' would not affect rail workers, private sector workers would suffer more modest cuts, and attacks on teachers have been withdrawn.

While two-thirds of the population supports the strikes despite a \$17 million propaganda campaign, the government has succeeded in dividing unions. France's second-largest union, the CFDT, has accepted the plan while other unions are balking at efforts to step up pressure on the government.

Many rail workers and teachers did not participate in the June 3 and June 10 strikes, strengthening the government's hand. But some believe expansion of strike action to private firms has the potential to force the government to withdraw the reforms.

The U.S. National Labor Relations Board has a backlog of some 25,000 cases involving employers' unfair labor practices, and it takes the Board an average of 557 days to resolve cases of unlawful firings. Immigrant workers have been stripped of effective protection against labor rights violations, and some 32 million workers are outside the ambit of U.S. labor relations law altogether.

Migrant workers face particular difficulties around the world. In Jordan, 50 Indian employees in an industrial zone — deprived of their salaries for three months, and having eaten virtually nothing for a week — were forced to leave the country with nothing but debt and misery to show for their willingness to travel so far for the promise of work.

The Middle East remained a dangerous place for migrant workers, often treated as virtual slaves as is the case for many female domestic workers. But violations of the rights of migrant workers exist in every region of the world, and they are amongst the most marginalized exploited workers on the face of the earth.

In Europe, hundreds of workers have been sacked due to union activities, and many countries restrict the right to strike. Belarus is by far the most worrying country

with regard to basic union rights. President Alexander Lukashenko has worked hard to eradicate free unions, openly stating that unions should be integrated in government bodies. The government has taken over the country's largest union, the Federation of Trade Unions of Belarus.

In Africa, more than 200 unionists suffered physical violence in 2002, and three lost their lives. There were 125 victims in Zimbabwe alone. At least 244 unionists were arrested across the continent for union activities, although Ethiopian unionist Teye Wolde-Semayat was released under international pressure after six years in prison.

In Mauritania, where the detention and mysterious disappearance of unionists remains common, the national guard rounded up jobless workers and took them to the port of Nouakchott to break a strike by dock workers in October 2002.

Unpaid wages, a massive decline in formal jobs and the corresponding growth of the informal economy are all part of a bitter struggle for survival against the backdrop of an economy bled dry by diktats handed down by the IMF and the World Bank. Working conditions and pay are especially poor in the export processing zones. In all, almost 4,000

Workers in Washington state get screwed so parasites can get richer

BY ARTHUR J. MILLER

Well it is a done deal. Tens of thousands of workers in the state of Washington are getting screwed to try to pay off Boeing for 1,200 production jobs. Those workers who will be harmed the most will be those who are the poorest.

Not only will Boeing get \$3 billion in tax breaks at a time when the state is cutting programs for working people, but the state has passed the most "monumental overhauls of the unemployment system in state history," as the *Seattle Times* puts it. The paper goes on to say that, "The new law, written largely by business lobbyists, will affect more than 300,000 jobless workers in the state and many more in the future."

That is 300,000 workers struggling to pay rent and feed their families. 300,000 workers who are already facing great hardships. 300,000 workers who now must do with a lot less so that fat parasites can get even richer off the exploitation of the working class. Each one of those 300,000 workers are individual people forced to suffer by the shameful greed of a few.

In these times of increasing corporate greed and the CEOs of companies raking in huge amounts of money, it is not surprising that the super-rich bosses sought to rape the working class even more, but one of the most enthusiastic and active supporters of this outrageous attack on most working people was the Boeing Machinists union.

Not only has the Machinists union scabbed on the working class, but it has also scabbed on many of its own members who



have been laid off from Boeing. The Tacoma paper called this a "coalition of GOP, machinists and business interests."

All working people should view the Boeing Machinists union as a scab union and it should be kicked out of all labor councils. The fact that these scumbags would seek to benefit from 1,200 jobs at the expense of all other workers in this state, including laid-off Boeing workers, is a crime against the working class.

To these Boeing Machinists scabs I give you the words of Jack London:

"After God had finished the rattlesnake, the toad and the vampire, he had some aw-

ful substance left with which to make a scab. A scab is a two-legged animal with a corkscrew soul, a water logged brain and a combination backbone made of jelly and glue. Where others have hearts, the scab carries a tumor of rotten principles.

"When a scab comes down the street, people turn their backs, angels weep in heaven and the devil shuts the gate of hell. Judas Iscariot was a gentleman compared with a scab. For betraying his master, he had the character to hang himself – a scab hasn't.

"Esau sold his birthright for a mess of pottage. Judas Iscariot sold his savior for thirty pieces of silver, Benedict Arnold sold

his country for a promise of a commission in the British army. The modern scab sells birthright, country, spouse, children and co-workers for an unfulfilled promise from an employer, trust or corporation.

"Esau was a traitor to himself, Judas Iscariot was a traitor to his God, Benedict Arnold was a traitor to his country. A scab is a traitor to himself, a traitor to his family, and a traitor to his class.

"There is nothing lower than a scab."

The working class in the state of Washington has taken a major attack upon their well-being at a time when they are already suffering high unemployment. Will this open the door for more to be taken from those in need and given to those that have far more than they could ever use? I don't know how other workers are taking this, but at the shipyard where I work folks are pissed off and there are no kind words being expressed for the scab Boeing Machinist union.

Shall these times be like the early 1980s when many working people were forced to give back so much to the greedy bosses? Or will working people realize that they are up against the wall, not only here in the state of Washington, but also on the national level where even overtime laws are under attack? It's time for working people to understand that the only ones they can trust are themselves and join together in a bond of solidarity and fight back!

It is interesting to note that as soon as Boeing got their tax breaks they showed everyone their true colors by outsourcing overseas 270 jobs and laying those workers off. Boeing workers will also lose because of the change in unemployment benefits. Boeing spokeswoman Jill Langer said about those jobs, "It's simply a reflection of the harsh business reality."

UAW agrees to slash auto parts wages

BY CHARLES WALKER,
LABOR TUESDAY

Recently, United Auto Workers president Ron Gettelfinger complained about the crisis in healthcare and the auto bosses' effort "to cost-shift the crisis onto the backs of workers" (*People's Weekly World*, May 31). But the auto union official, who's due to renegotiate the Big Three's auto pacts in July, should have also lambasted the auto bosses' "cost-shifting" within the auto-parts sector.

Despite a soft market and growing competition, the auto moguls are reaping billion dollar profits partly from forcing down wages in the parts industry where only 15-20% of over a half-million workers are unionized.

But Gettelfinger kept silent about "cost-shifting" in the parts industry, not because it's not on his mind; but because the UAW now bases its strategy for reversing its membership losses on that cost-shifting – but in a way that might shock today's autoworkers

Oakland port closed

Hundreds of anti-war protesters again shut down two terminals at the Port of Oakland May 12, but this time police did not open fire. On April 7 police wounded dozens of longshoremen and activists picketing APL and Stevedoring Services of America to protest their role in the war on Iraq.

Police abandoned plans to corral picketers into a protest pit, but surrounded the site with heavily armed police and brought in hostage negotiators to liaison with the crowd. The targeted companies shut down operations for the day.

Activists continue to press for an independent investigation of the April 7 shootings, which followed meetings between Oakland police, the California Anti-Terrorism Information Center, and the companies. The CATIC routinely gathers information on activists, and spokesman Mike Van Winkle told the *Oakland Tribune*, "You can almost argue that a protest against (the war) is a terrorist act."

and would certainly outrage the militant workers who battled cops, judges and politicians in order to get their right to organize accepted, however reluctantly, by the auto industrialists and their bankers.

The union has worked out an agreement with Chrysler that allows Metaldyne Corp., a parts supplier, to cut the pay of its 1,200 unionized workers by \$10 an hour. In return, Metaldyne agreed to a card-check recognition at its ten non-union plants.

Present union workers will vote on the wage cut, but not until September. "The UAW won't let workers vote unless they promise to stay at Metaldyne and accept the \$16 hourly wage and reduced benefits, including out-of-pocket expenses for health care that increases from nothing to as much as \$46 a week for families," the *Seattle Post* reported May 19.

What Chrysler gets from the UAW officialdom is likely to be demanded by General Motors and Ford, who probably retain strong influence with their former parts divisions, sold off in 1999 and 2000. Subsequently, Delphi, GM's one-time parts subsidiary, "downsized" 17 percent of its unionized work force and Ford's one-time Visteon Corp. did the same to 12% of its UAW workers.

"Delphi and Visteon may start increasing production and work forces and encouraging their own suppliers to adopt a neutral stance during UAW organizing drives.

"The trade-off: The union accepts hourly pay for new workers closer to Metaldyne's

Coke worker sacked for drinking Pepsi

A Coca-Cola Bottling Company truck driver was fired after being spotted drinking a Pepsi in the back of an El Monte, Calif., store where he was making a delivery. The Teamsters charges that the 12-year veteran was fired in retaliation for his role in organizing Coke merchandising workers into the union. Coke says he was fired for product "slander" – by drinking a competing brand.

\$16 hourly rate rather than Daimler-Chrysler's \$26," an industry analyst told the *Seattle paper*.

The union's "jointness" strategy may help the union gain more duespayers, now at 638,722, down from 1.5 million in 1979. It's estimated by industry analysts that the union could sign up 45,000 new members in the parts plants in the next three years. A majority of workers at nine parts plants operated by Johnson Controls recently signed pledge cards, after the firm agreed to the card-check procedure, following a two-day strike called by the UAW. The union has its eyes on the firm's remaining 16 plants.

As the Big Three auto firms, closely working with the union tops, who still have the nerve to call their office building Solidarity House, put pressure on their parts suppliers to lower wages and prices, the big parts suppliers will, in turn, seek price relief from their suppliers, despite the reduced wages and benefits the UAW seems to be planning to agree to. Those that can't meet the Big Three's demands may, as some already have, move their operations overseas.

Clearly, the union tops have rejected the early UAW's goal of achieving equal pay for all autoworkers. Still, from "the UAW's standpoint, it's a good strategic move," said Dan Poole, a vice president of equity research at National City Bank. "From the auto companies' perspective," Poole asked, "what are they giving up? Not a darn thing."

Tea workers face crisis

Tea gardens across Assam have put out "No Vacancy" signboards in what is the industry's busiest picking season, leaving hundreds of tea pickers destitute.

A manager at Medarkhat Tea Estate was killed after he refused employment to three workers who had worked there in past years. At least two other managers have suffered similar fates, as laborers who rely on the seasonal work for survival grow increasingly desperate.

Dissident SEIU janitors harassed by piecards

Dissidents in SEIU Local 36, which represents janitors and building engineers, are protesting a concessionary master contract covering most large office buildings in Center City Philadelphia. The agreement included higher premiums for dependent care, cuts to the dental plan, and larger co-pays.

In early June, five members of the negotiating committee wrote a letter describing the negotiation and ratification process as a "dog and pony show and rubber stamp designed to keep [Trustee Wyatt Closs] from having to take responsibility." Copies of the letter and petitions calling for an election of officers are being distributed by the Local 36 United For Power Committee.

The local was placed under trusteeship last year after militant shop stewards and organizing staff began running the local office during a dispute over the presidency of the local. Dissidents are now suffering harassment from union staff. Members have been physically assaulted and verbally harassed by union staff while filing grievances or visiting the union office.

Hunger strike seeks wages

Some 2,000 Iranian textile workers in the Behshahr chintz-making factory have been on hunger strike since May 15, after a long struggle to collect 27 months' unpaid wages. Workers are owed some 5 billion Tomans, but have been offered only 200 million, with the balance to be paid at some future date.

Swedish strike closes schools

The Swedish Workers Central organization (SAC) joined the SKAF union in a rolling national strike of public sector workers for full staffing and better wages.

Many schools have been closed by the strike, and local politicians have taken up scabbing. On May 20, the SAC organized support demonstrations for school children and their parents, to counter media attacks that blame workers for the disruptions, rather than the bosses.

Train drivers threaten strike over 'dangerous' hours

British train drivers have threatened industrial action in an attempt to cut dangerously long work weeks of up to 70 hours.

Members of the train drivers' union Aslef say they face increasing pressure to work overtime despite evidence that sleep deprivation is making the rails unsafe. Under the slogan "Drive down the hours," the union is seeking a maximum 48-hour work week with an average of 35 hours. Drivers of passenger trains in the south of England now average 48 hours while those operating freight services throughout Britain average 55 hours.

Comp time bill goes down

House Republicans withdrew a compensatory time bill hours before its scheduled June 5 vote, after it became clear that they did not have the votes to push the proposal through. The bill would have allowed business to offer comp time instead of overtime pay to workers; unions charge it would allow bosses to pressure workers to waive their right to overtime pay, saving companies billions of dollars.

The bill was part of a full-scale assault on the 40-hour work week. Companion legislation in the Senate would have allowed workers to be forced to put in up to 80 hours in a two-week period before overtime rules would kick in. The Department of Labor is presently

considering regulations that would eliminate overtime protections altogether for millions of workers who would be reclassified as exempt professionals.

German metal workers demand 35 hours

Thirteen years after reunification, striking workers in Germany's former communist east are demanding a reduction in weekly working hours to 35 from the current 38 to bring them into line with western Germany.

A wave of selective strikes has already won an agreement to phase in the 35-hour week in the east German steel industry over the next six years. The IG Metall union continues to fight for shorter hours in the metal working and electrical industries.

Employers have thus far proved adamant, with Germany's largest employers association claiming that the 35-hour week has "already wreaked havoc in western Germany. Eastern Germany doesn't stand a chance if the workweek is shortened."

Despite national agreements, a study by the business think tank IW Cologne says only a fifth of west German workers actually work a 35-hour week, and a third have to put in as many as 38 hours on the job.

Australian unions confront seek to regain lost time

The Australian Council of Trade Unions' secretary Greg Combet's speech to the June 12 Future of Work conference in Sydney noted that since 1983, the average work week

FIGHT for SHORTER HOURS



in Australia has grown steadily.

"We now have the second longest average working hours for full-time employees in the OECD and the largest proportion of people working more than 50 hours a week.

"At the same time hundreds of thousands of workers are looking for more hours so that they can earn enough to live on, and many more than this are unemployed.

"We've got the work rich and the work poor, the overworked and the underemployed," Combet said, calling on unions to explore solutions to the problem of long working hours and the related problems of unemployment and underemployment.

Among the ideas he said should be explored was a cap on working hours.

Labor Ready says will obey law

In addition to assuring investors at Labor Ready's annual meeting that they expect larger profits this year, the company stressed that it's working to improve the company's tarnished public image.

On June 12 the Tacoma-based job shark signed an agreement with the Department of Labor promising to comply with safety, overtime and wage laws. Labor Ready is negotiating a similar agreement with the Occupational Safety and Health Administration.

The agreements are part of the Bush administration's "voluntary compliance" program in which companies are asked to agree to follow the law and thereby avoid pesky inspectors and enforcement actions.

Labor Ready has about 780 storefronts in the United States, United Kingdom and Canada. It also recently signed an agreement with Habitat for Humanity to build 13 homes for the homeless, perhaps in recognition that its low wages leave many Labor Ready workers living on the street.

Protesters from the National Coalition for the Homeless and the National Alliance for Fair Employment picketed outside the annual shareholders meeting June 11. Inside, activists challenged Labor Ready's health and safety record and its policy of charging workers to cash their pay checks.

Labor Ready has one of the highest number of OSHA violations of any temporary labor organization in the country, though Labor Ready insists the companies it supplies workers to are responsible for the problems.

Continental Carbon lock-out continues

A lockout of 86 Continental Carbon Co. (CCC) workers in Ponca City, Oklahoma, that began May 7, 2001, is continuing after contract talks broke down. CCC produces carbon black, a bonding and filler agent used in the manufacture of tires and other rubber products. The firm has three U.S. plants, and is owned by China Synthetic Rubber Corp. and China Cement Corp., part of the US\$36 billion Koo family empire.

The negotiations, which resumed under heavy pressure from international unions, broke down after the company said that union workers could re-enter the plant only as independent contractors, and would have to bid to keep their jobs. CCC said union bid would have to bid at least 30 percent below competitors to keep the work.

Solidarity pickets hit Evergreen line

Evergreen Marine Corp. withdrew a NLRB complaint it filed against the International Longshoremen's Association June 10 in hopes the gesture would help get tons of cargo unloaded from its ships. Since May 14, ILA members in several East Coast ports have refused to handle Evergreen cargo because the shipping company refuses to recognize a vote by five office workers to join the union. The National Labor Relations Board rejected Evergreen's appeal of that vote in April.

Evergreen filed another complaint after ILA pickets began following its ships, claiming it was the victim of illegal solidarity strike action. It is that complaint that the company has withdrawn, apparently after striking a deal with the union to allow at least some ships to be unloaded. Evergreen's appeal to the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals is continuing, and it refuses to recognize or negotiate with the union.

Fourteen Evergreen ships containing tens of thousands of containers of imported goods for retailers such as Big Lots, BJ's Wholesale Club, Costco, IKEA and Wal-Mart were affected by the dispute. Taiwan-based Evergreen has nearly 150 vessels, and is among the world's largest container shippers.

While the union did not officially call on members to refuse to work Evergreen ships, pickets blocked cargo from being handled at ports in Newark; Elizabeth, N.J.; New York; Baltimore; Hampton Roads, Va.; Norfolk, Va.; Fort Lauderdale, Fla.; and Savannah, Ga. The Norfolk picketing shut down the entire container port for a few hours, before it was scaled back to include only Evergreen vessels.

In Charleston, South Carolina, pickets arrived after work had begun, and longshoremen continued working behind picket lines. A second ship was diverted from that port to avoid picketing, before Kenneth Riley, head of ILA Local 1422, said he would encourage workers to cross picket lines so long as other ports such as Savannah and Houston were working Evergreen ships. "I'm not going to be the only one," he said.

Charleston longshoremen then worked ships that had been turned back from ports in New York and New Jersey. Evergreen ships were also diverted to ports in Halifax and Colon, Panama.

Not everyone in Charleston joined in this scabbery. Some local longshoremen joined the picket line, as did several truckers who haul cargo in and out of the port.

A Charleston owner/operator trucker was fired from TFX Trucking for his support of the Evergreen workers. TFX does not recognize lease operators as employees, and claims it has no control over them or their trucks. But the company told a captive meeting of its truckers that any union activity, including attending Teamsters union meetings, would result in immediate termination.

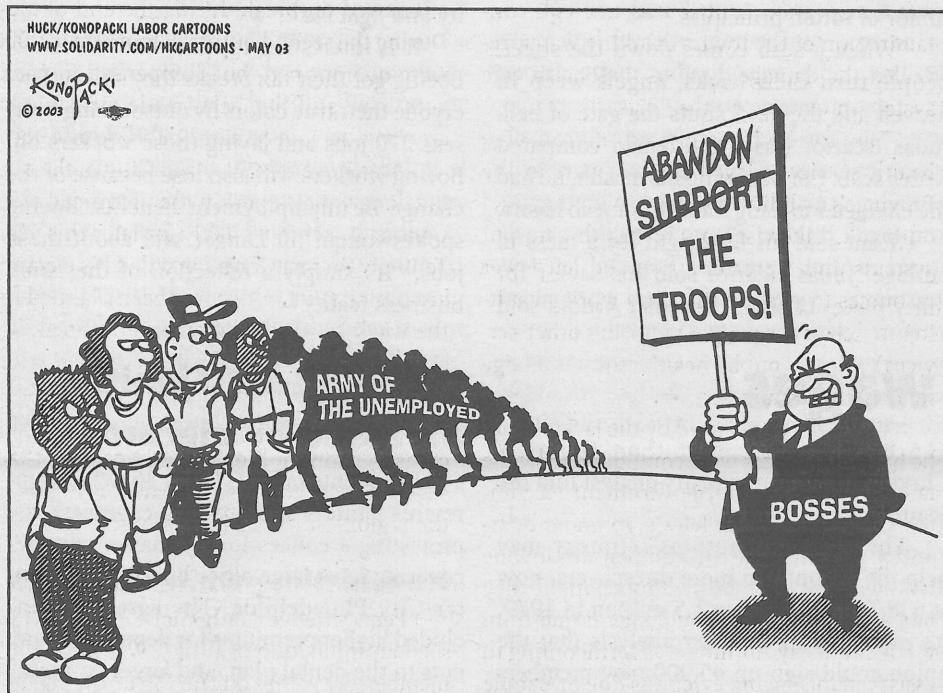
The company had the fired driver followed after work hours, and saw him bring drinks and food to the Evergreen picket line.

The Charleston local became famous around the world after a January 30, 2000, battle when 600 cops attacked their picket line. A two-year struggle forced authorities to drop felony charges against five of the picketing workers, including Riley.

They also kept the Charleston docks unionized thanks in part to the timely solidarity of Spanish dockers who refused to work a scab-loaded ship. Back then Riley said, "We have learned that we are a part of something much bigger, something that spans oceans and bridges cultures. We are part of an international labor movement."

Your right to drink

A Danish labor court has ruled that the MJ Mason Company must allow its masons to drink a cold beer while on unpaid breaks. The General Workers' Union went to court after the boss introduced barred beer drinking without discussing the issue with workers.



Economy in ruins...

continued from page 1

other services while trying to shoehorn workers who once earned \$50,000 or more a year into \$10 an hour temp jobs. (Lower-paid workers are usually left alone by these sharks, as it is harder for them to come up with \$129 for workshops such as a recent one titled "Courage and Energy: New Ways to Succeed in Hard Times.")

Ironically, the army of unemployed workers is growing even as the average work week continues to grow ever longer and the government pushes to eliminate restrictions on overtime work. Millions of workers are putting in 10 or more hours of overtime every week — much of it unpaid. (Another 7.4 million workers are working two or more jobs to make ends meet.)

As workers are laid-off, the survivors are forced to pick up their work, resulting in speed-up and often unpaid overtime. We pay a high social cost for this intensification and lengthening of the work week. Instead of addressing this crisis, the Department of Labor plans to eliminate overtime protection for most workers with a college education or specialized job skills (see article in May IW), further lengthening the work week and reducing the need for workers.

Simply enforcing the 40-hour week would create more than 7 million full-time jobs, cutting the unemployment rate in half. Following the lead of our European fellow workers and moving to a 35-hour week and reasonable annual vacations could not only eliminate unemployment altogether — it would create a labor shortage, forcing em-

ployers to choose between bringing the so-called unemployable poor into the work force or ridding themselves of some of the gaggle of sycophants and snoops that proliferated in so many workplaces as employers scrambled to find ways to squander the proceeds of our increased labor productivity.

The typical Norwegian worker puts in the equivalent of 11 weeks less a year on the job (across Western Europe as a whole, the gap is about nine weeks), while enjoying a range of social programs and benefits that far exceeds what is available to most American workers. By putting in such long hours, we are condemning millions of our fellow workers to unemployment, starving ourselves of the time that would enable us to lead more rewarding lives, and creating a labor surplus that ultimately drives down our wages and benefits.

ILWU calls for general strike, repeal of Taft-Hartley

The 2003 convention of the International Longshore & Warehouse Union adopted a resolution calling upon the ILWU to campaign for U.S. workers' rights to engage in a general strike, and to work with other unions toward the repeal of the Taft-Hartley Act which outlaws many forms of labor solidarity.

The ILWU also approved resolutions calling for an end to the occupation of Iraq and the restoration of full civil liberties in the United States.

Although the ILWU opposed the war on Iraq, workers on both coasts put in long hours of overtime loading munitions and other war material. Workers who refused war work were assigned to other cargo.

Wikis, workers & the Web

BY ERIC LEE

In the mid-1990s, all journalists writing about the net were focussing on the "browser wars" – the competition between Netscape and Microsoft for domination of the web browser market. When that competition ended with Microsoft's victory, and later on, when the dot.com bubble burst on the stock markets, the general consensus among mainstream journalists was that there wasn't a lot of innovation happening on the net.

They were wrong. The period since the end of those sterile "browser wars" has been one of enormous innovation in use of the web and two of the most innovative ideas have been web logging (or blogging, as it's come to be known) and Wikis.

If these terms are utterly new to you, they no doubt sound very cute and fuzzy; blogs and wikis join with other cute and fuzzy terms like Yahoo and Google to give the increasingly commercialized net a feeling of being a friendly and informal place to be – which it increasingly isn't. Though most of the innovations with the cute names are in fact now covers for highly profitable businesses, one – the Wiki – is actually interesting and brings us back to the very earliest days of the non-commercial net.

When Tim Berners-Lee invented the World Wide Web his dream was not that there would be a web browser which would read off pages written by others. Rather, he thought the web would be a place where everyone could both read and write. The ideal web browser was a place not only for visiting web sites, but also for creating them.

The popular web browsers these days come with software that allows people to create web pages. For example, the non-commercial Mozilla browser comes with its own Composer software. But one still needs to sort out web space, to upload files, and so on. It's still a bit too "techy" for most people.

Wikis are different. Wikis are, basically, web sites where anyone visiting can not only read, but write to, the pages they're looking at. If you can find the page, you can co-author it.

The most famous example of a Wiki is the Wikipedia (<http://www.wikipedia.org>), an online encyclopedia based on the Wiki software. It currently includes over 132,000 articles in English which are the result of the collective knowledge and imagination of visitors to the site.

Go to the Wikipedia and search for IWW and you're going to find not only an intro-



ductory piece on the Wobblies, but articles about Ralph Chaplin, Joe Hill and others. And there's room for more: if you click on the link to Big Bill Haywood, a page appears with a blank box and above it, text reading "You've followed a link to a page that doesn't exist yet. To create the page, start typing in the box below."

Start typing in the box – that's the essence of the Wiki.

Anyone can visit a page, anyone can write to a page, and the results can be sites as impressive as the Wikipedia.

I was impressed by this technology when I first saw it and am still amazed at its bold challenge to notions of intellectual property. But I was also thinking: could there be a specifically trade union use for a Wiki?

To test out the idea, I set up a Wiki for internal discussion by a group responsible for a union website. The group consisted of eight people. All they needed to know to start working together was the web address of the Wiki. Within days, all eight had added pages, made corrections, even fixed up the layout of pages. The Wiki now consists of several dozen pages, many of them updated every day.

We're using our Wiki it to come up with agreed drafts of documents, to plan online campaigns, to share information and ideas, to make lists together. Think of it as an online whiteboard on which everyone can write.

The downside to all this is that anyone can come in and write on your whiteboard, or even erase it. There's no security at all. So the Wiki I've described is an internal one, not for public consumption. There are versions of Wikis with password protection, which could solve the problem.

For small groups in unions working on projects together, Wikis seem like excellent tools for group discussion, including the drafting of texts together as well as the sharing of information.

They are not an alternative to websites but do represent another way of thinking about the web. And unlike websites, no one is using Wikis to make any money – so in that sense, as in others, the Wiki represents a return to the original vision of Tim Berners-Lee back in 1991.

the social activists to break their silence on this issue and get out and organize for the repeal of that bill. But if the social activist movement wants to talk about racism, talk about sexism (many women will be hard hit by this bill), talk about corporate greed and corruption, and talk about how the rich are getting richer and the poor are getting poorer, then they need to come together and organize a campaign to repeal this bill now!

I hear some social activists say that class no longer matters; I view that as an excuse to turn a blind eye to the suffering of the poor. But if social activists do believe that poor people matter, then they should organize a campaign to repeal this bill with the same enthusiasm as they fought against the WTO, the LEIU and for peace.

You need not wait until someone tells to do this – organize in your groups, on your e-mail lists and with the coalitions you work within. Some type of coalition of poor and working people needs to be created – not only to fight for the repeal of this bill, but so that there is organized resistance to make sure that things like this will not happen again without organized opposition and so we can start to deal with the everyday issues of poor and working people. If there are any who have an interest in creating such a coalition, please e-mail me at bayou@blarg.net so we can see what we can organize.

Just an old shipyard worker,
Arthur J. Miller

SARS and neoliberalism are making Toronto sick

BY JEFF SHANTZ

The recent outbreaks of severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) in Toronto put a harsh light on the inadequacies and outright failures of neoliberal public health policies and practices. It also showed clearly the extent to which neoliberal governments prioritize business security above the health and social security of workers.

Public health officials first received warnings of SARS in early February and a full-blown crisis was emerging by March. By late-April Ontario's Tory Premier, Ernie Eves had not even recalled the legislature, which had been on hiatus since Christmas, to devise a plan for dealing with the various aspects of the crisis. For weeks the Tory plan appeared to consist of little more than suggestions to "wash your hands" or "eat in Chinatown." Governments only responded, and even then largely in terms of public relations, after the embarrassment of the late-April WHO travel advisory and the threat of losses for tourist industry owners.

SARS, like the Walkerton tragedy before it which saw several people die and hundreds become sick after privatization and cuts to water inspection contributed to e-coli contamination of the town's drinking water, revealed the damage done to the health care system in Ontario by the Tories.

The Tories' privatization of front-line health services played a major part in the Province's inability to keep up with the SARS outbreak. Likewise cuts to health care put systems under greater strain and left fewer resources to pick up the extra work (resulting in delays for people requiring other services). Clearly public health requires a large increase in resources.

The problems caused by the lack of public health resources were compounded by the failure of any level of government to compensate workers who had to go under quarantine and the failure to compensate anyone who was not quarantined but thought they had symptoms and should stay home from work. Similarly, nothing was forthcoming to assist tenants facing evictions due or people unable to make utilities payments due to SARS layoffs or work cutbacks. That this failure played a part in the spread of SARS in Toronto, and in the spread of panic over SARS, was highlighted when an infected

nurse from Mount Sinai hospital took the GO Train and TTC to work on April 14 and 15 because she could not afford to miss.

The government largesse shown to entertainment magnates and hotel companies, through subsidies to ticket prices, did not extend to workers in food, entertainment and hotel industries who were affected by layoffs or lost hours. As late as May 27, Hotel Employees, Restaurant Employees (HERE) Local 75 were still requesting, unsuccessfully, meetings with government officials.

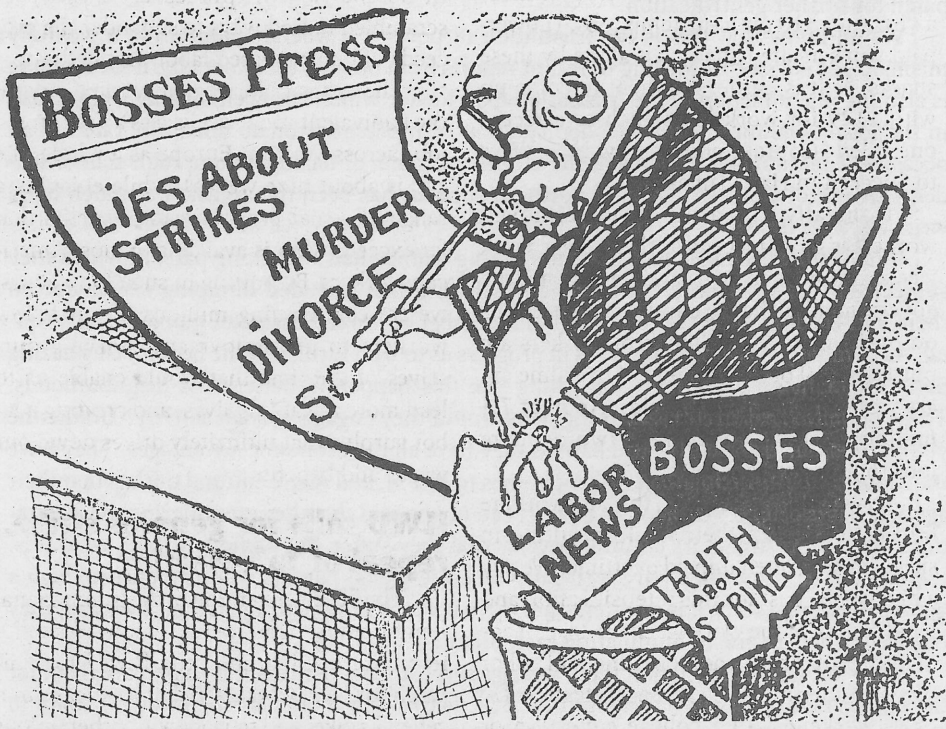
For its part the federal Liberal government offered such "symbolic support" as holding a cabinet meeting at an exclusive Toronto hotel, to and from which they were chauffeured with great haste. Other responses were little more than gimmicks, including the proposal to pay the Rolling Stones \$10 million in public money to put on a "free" concert. Ironically this was the same amount as the total federal relief package to compensate laid-off and quarantined workers and affected small businesses.

Even worse, the province's rush to proclaim the crisis over following the WTO advisory seems to have played a major part in a renewed outbreak during the end of May. During the second outbreak more than 7,000 were quarantined, but compensation packages have still not been made available by any level of government for those affected.

Anger over the Tory handling of the outbreak may play a part in the provincial elections to be set most likely for later this year. Tellingly Premier Eves cancelled his election announcement, which had been planned for the week in which the second outbreak occurred, lest the election be become a referendum on Tory health care policies. Still, anger over the Tory bungling of the SARS crisis is running high, extending into their support base among suburban consumers in the regions surrounding Toronto.

No whistling while you work

Federal judge Nathaniel Gorton has issued an injunction against CWA local 1365 members whistling on the job at the request of OFS/Fitel, a Massachusetts fiber optic cable maker which says the whistling – part of an in-plant solidarity campaign – disrupted production, violated the union's no-strike clause, and drove managers batty.



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Ludlow beheaded

continued from page 1

the mine workers' union, and then I hung my head and cried." This monument is our "twin towers."

This isolated 40 acres, which had been the Ludlow tent colony site, was purchased by the United Mine Workers of America in 1917 and this monument was built next to the "black hole" to memorialize the tragic 1913-1914 U.M.W.A. strike. The Ludlow tent colony was the largest of several tent colonies spaced strategically to block the canyons leading up into the Sangre de Cristo mountains where the coal mines were located. The monument was officially dedicated at a large gathering of mostly miners and their families on May 30, Memorial Day, 1918. It was a magnificent sculpture and has witnessed a yearly memorial service for the past 85 years in the quiet, peaceful spot nestled at the foot of the majestic Sangre de Cristos, unmolested

until May 7, 2003.

As I sat there looking at this monument – miner, wife and child now covered with black plastic – I heard Mike Romero drive up with his friend "Wolf."

I had planned to meet them here as they were driving up from Trinidad, Colorado, to begin sprucing up the site for the memorial service on Sunday, June 29. Mike graciously offered to remove the black plastic for awhile so I could take pictures of the damage. It was a shock. The handsomely sculptured heads of the miner and his wife are gone, as is the woman's left arm.

This sculpture is solid granite. The breaks are straight and clean, almost as if sawn, but there are no saw or chisel marks and the surface is very rough to the touch. I got the feeling that whoever did this either knew a good deal about working with granite or they were very lucky with a sledge hammer. Mike said the vandals took only the two heads, one arm, and a small vase from the

southwest corner of the monument, then neatly cleaned up all debris before leaving. Why only these select pieces? Why wasn't there more random violence if this was done by vandals, and why clean up the chips?

Investigators from the Las Animas County Sheriff's and the Trinidad Police departments say they have no suspects or motives according to Mike Romero, and he said that the U.M.W.A. had received no threats. Whoever did this did it between the caretaker's normal rounds at 6:00 p.m. May 7 and 6:00 p.m. May 8. The U.M.W.A. has posted a reward for any information that leads to a conviction.

On Sunday, June 29, beginning at 10:00 a.m., a very special memorial ceremony will be held at the Ludlow site. There will be a barbeque in the afternoon following the ceremony. Ludlow is 12 miles north of Trinidad, and a three hour drive south of Denver. Working people should come from every corner of the globe in support of the United Mine Workers. This monument is dear to us all. Let's send our universal message "We Never Forget" to the perpetrators.

Both Mike Romero and Bob Butero, director of Mine Workers union Region 4 here in Denver, told me that the union will repair or replace the sculpture. I have no doubts that they will, even though the corporations and government have devastated their treasury over the past decade, but if we let them do it alone – shame on us. Come on down and be with us. Share rides, catch a freight, but find a way. If the boxcars are full, send a generous donation to: Ludlow Memorial, c/o Mike Romero, Local 9856 U.M.W.A., 1804 N. Linden Avenue, Trinidad CO 81082. Phone 719-846-8234.

UMWA president Cecil Roberts will be speaking June 29th. Those of you who went to Virginia in the late '80s to assist the miners during their Pittston strike will remember Roberts when he was the vice president of the union. I can't remember how many times he was jailed during that strike for violating injunctions, etc. I'm not sure I can count that high, but Mike told me Cecil was recently jailed again for sitting in at the corporate headquarters of Bethlehem Steel. If you come to hear him speak and feel no passion, you have blue blood.

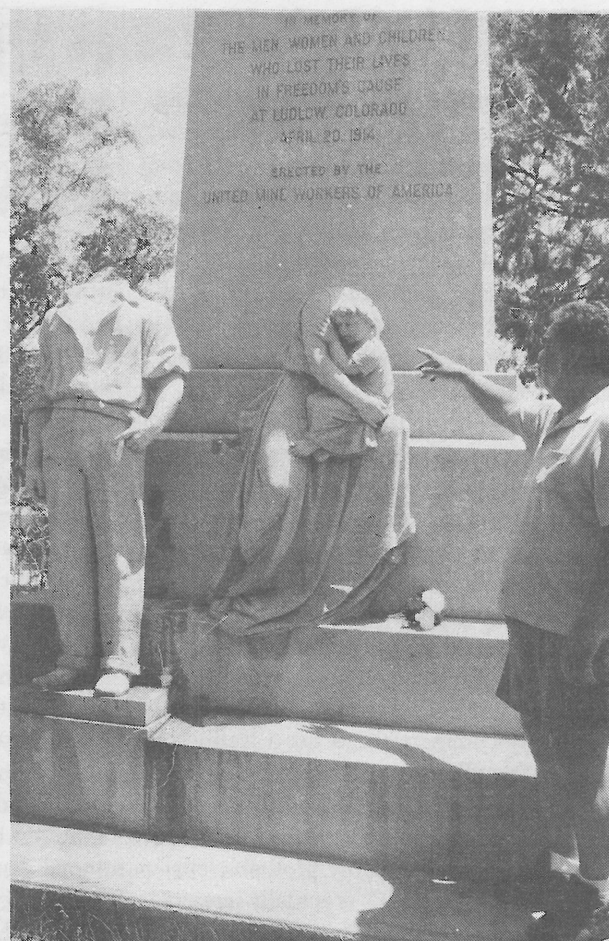
City of Oakland honors Judi Bari Day

BY DARRYL CHERNEY

The Judi Bari/Darryl Cherney legal team wrestles with the FBI and Oakland Police to try to extract the \$4.4 million award they were granted by a jury in federal court last year. The civil rights case the two Wobbly/Earth First!ers brought against the police agencies stems from the 1990 car bomb attack on the pair that almost killed Bari and landed them both in jail in an attempted classic frame-up job to blame the victims for bombing themselves.

Less known have been my attempts to attain "nonmonetary" awards, which include a reward fund for capture of the bomber, continued access to the evidence, and the proclamation of May 24 as "Judi Bari Day" by the City of Oakland. While some were skeptical of achieving any of these, we were able this year to convince the City of Oakland to officially designate the date of the bombing as a day to honor Judi Bari's environmental, labor-organizing and feminist consciousness-raising work.

Several Wobbly and Earth First! supporters attended the May 20 meeting at Oakland



Mike Romero removed the plastic from the Ludlow Monument and pointed out the damage. Both statues were beheaded, the woman's left arm was also broken off. The inscription reads: "In Memory of the Men, Women and Children Lost Their Lives in Freedom's Cause at Ludlow, Colorado, April 25, 1914." A plaque on the other side lists the victims and their ages, ranging from 3 months to 45 years.

If your knowledge of Ludlow history needs a brushing up, look for *Out of the Depths* by Barron Beshoar, son of the only doctor who would care for striking miners or their families at Ludlow, and *The Great Coalfield War* by George McGovern, written for his doctoral thesis. It is the best of the two, in my opinion, but harder to find and more expensive. For some strange reason, all the accurate books on the history of Ludlow are out of print (including these; try a library or a used book dealer). Mike tells me George McGovern has been invited to come on the 29th but hasn't responded yet. He's no spring chicken. Look who's talking.

See you on the 29th. If you have time, stop at the old county jail in Walsenburg, just 15 miles north of Ludlow. The jail has been converted into a delicious two story mining museum. It's on 5th Street, behind the county courthouse. Mother Jones slept here.

More information on the Ludlow massacre, including some rare documents, can be found online at <http://web.webaccess.net/~rtmyers/rg/ludlow.html> or at <http://www.cdphheritage.org/heritage/ludlow/>



Because of the lack of adequate cultural outlets, many of our inner-city youth are in a bad way. With inadequate educational facilities and a bleak future ahead of them, there is this undercurrent of anger that is pervasive. The inner-city ghettos and barrios become a cesspool of young people struggling to survive in a society that has closed off all avenues of opportunity to them. Alienated from older generations as well as from themselves, and with no constructive outlets for their energies, anger and resentment are the motivating forces.

Having grown up under an economic system where the accumulation of money denotes respectability and prestige, there is no need to wrong one's hands when some of these young dudes prefer to make hundreds of dollars pushing crack on street corners in preference to working for substandard wages flipping burgers at MacDunghills or Booger Kings.

Because of limited availability of such street-wise merchandise within a competitive field, there can be some sharp competition among vendors, reminiscent of the bootlegging days in the earlier part of the last century, with the result that the roaring twenties roar once again. What has been mentioned before in this column is that if we ignore history we are condemned to repeat it.

Because of no other social outlets, many of these young people, crack pushers or not, have the human need to belong and gangs will be formed, territories will be staked out, along with the inevitable disputes over whose turf is whose. You will have the specter of young people with nothing better to do but engage in gang warfare. Every day in our inner cities these young dudes are wasting each other, rating little more than a footnote in the mass media – other than giving the real estate sharks the opportunity to push their campaign for further gentrification.

We all know that this is the frustration of poverty, a woeful symptom of a woefully mismanaged society. According to recent reports from outside the inner city, it seems there is also the phenomenon of the frustration of affluence which has been making a big splash in the local headlines. While the depredations of the less-fortunate inner city rate but an occasional footnote in the media, the recent incidents of hazing among high school students in one of Chicago's affluent northern suburbs has been the occasion of much hand wringing over the toob.

It had been disclosed that the senior young women had a drinking party at which they subjected their classmates to certain indignities which included dumping excrement on them and kicking them. This resulted in a number of lower classmates going to the hospital. As of this writing a big inquiry is in progress as to who furnished the beer for this hazing party and how on earth does something like this happen in better-class neighborhoods. These young people have everything; why would they engage in such activity? Unlike the young people in the ghettos and barrios they have all the economic advantages. They have the luxury of better education, decent homes to live in, and many cultural outlets that their age-mates in the inner city do not have. It can not be said that they are suffering the frustrations of poverty, unless it's cultural poverty that they suffer. But obviously that's what it is. Despite the fact that they have well-salaried professional parents who can ensure them a good educational start, it is apparent that there is a lack of something in their lives that they engage in the pastime of humiliating each other.

Who knows what function these hazings serve, unless perhaps it is to prepare them for the odious task of brown-nosing future CEOs. Is that why underclassmen would submit to being smeared with excrement and urine? We of the lower classes obviously are not the only ones to be demeaned by those who are our superiors. Why does basic training in the military involve being put down by the non-coms? Our present class system conditions us to recognize who is the boss.

The big emphasis behind getting a "better education" is so we may take advantage of those who didn't have as much education. This, of course, is inconsistent with the Wobbly vision of a cooperative commonwealth where each worker is valued for their particular contribution to society, be that worker a doctor who cures diseases or a garbage collector who prevents diseases. What would be a bigger disaster for a city the size of Chicago? For all the doctors to disappear, or all the garbage collectors?

Draftees of the world unite; you have nothing to lose but your generals!

— C.C. Redcloud

BOOKS FOR REBEL WORKERS

Remember Ludlow!



"Remember Ludlow!"
Ludlow Massacre April 20, 1914
by Joanna Sampson

"Remember Ludlow!": Ludlow Massacre April 20, 1914

by Joanna Sampson

Don't forget the past – the land at Ludlow, where machine gun bullets once sprayed death into striking coal miners' tents, is peaceful now. The study of history, especially dark events like the Ludlow Massacre, can prevent us from repeating a tragedy like the one that ended with the killing of miners and their families on the plains.

This excellent pamphlet, packed with photographs, is a terrific tribute to these working people. Includes a discussion of the monument.

32 pp. \$4.00

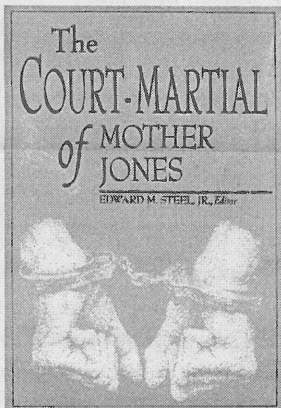
The Autobiography of Mother Jones with an introduction by Clarence Darrow

Mother Jones (1830?-1930) was one of the most colorful and best-known fighters for the cause of workers' rights from 1880 into her advanced years. By the time she wrote these memoirs, her battles on behalf of miners, against the evils of child labor, and for unionism in general had become legendary. Mother Jones was arrested during the Ludlow strike when she was over 80 years old.

302 pages, \$12.00

The Court-Martial of Mother Jones edited by Edward M. Steel Jr.

One year before the Ludlow Massacre, Mother Jones and 47 others were tried by a military court on charges of murder stemming from the coal miners' strike in Kanawha County, West Virginia. Mother Jones and 11 others remained imprisoned until early May. The resulting outcry ultimately forced the release of all the prisoners. The trial transcript was thought to have been destroyed until Steel uncovered a copy. This fascinating transcript, reproduced in full, and Steel's extensive introduction sheds new light on the strike and reminds us of the ways military power has been used to suppress labor.

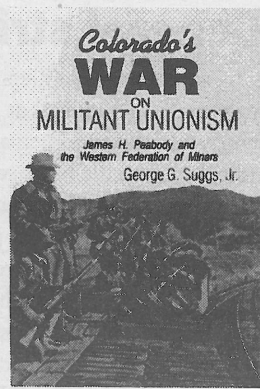


319 pages, \$12.00

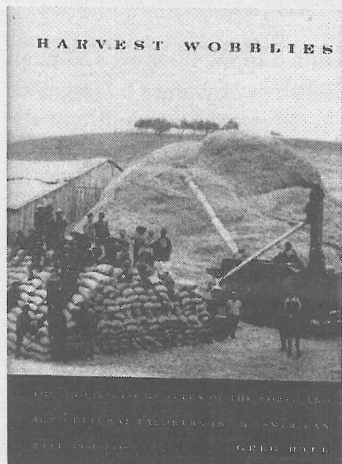
Colorado's War on Militant Unionism by George G. Suggs, Jr.

In 1903 and 1904 the Western Federation of Miners faced full-scale warfare from the Colorado state government, acting at the behest of Eastern mining interests. This richly detailed history examines the repression, and the WFM's effort to mobilize community support in its struggle to survive.

242 pp. \$10.00



IWW History



Harvest Wobblies: The Industrial Workers of the World and Agricultural Laborers in the American West, 1905-1930 by Greg Hall

Increased mechanization and the expansion of new markets transformed the face of American farming in the early decades of the twentieth century, especially in the American West. These changes demanded a new kind of agricultural worker--gone was the local farmhand, replaced by a cheap and temporary labor force of migrant and seasonal workers. Greg Hall's fascinating book analyzes how the IWW organized these men, women, and sometimes children who had become so essential and yet so exploited on the farms of the West. Hall examines the diverse and changing nature of the agricultural work force, offering a social and cultural history of a union uniquely suited to organizing tens of thousands of migrant and seasonal workers.

hardcover, 288 pages, \$35.00

IWW Literature

Little Red Songbook 36th Edition

103 labor songs to fan the flames of discontent from around the world, with music. Includes songs by Joe Hill, Billy Bragg, Anne Feeney, Utah Phillips, and more. \$10.00

One Big Union An introduction to the structure, methods and goals of the Industrial Workers of the World. \$2.00

A New Union Vision by Arthur J. Miller A discussion of the present-day need for democratic, revolutionary unions. \$2.00

The General Strike by Ralph Chaplin The classic text – a call for organization. \$2.00

Labor History

Rebel Voices: An IWW Anthology

Compiled and edited by Joyce L. Kornbluh Culled from Wobbly periodicals from the movement's founding in 1905 to the present, *Rebel Voices* presents pamphlets, stories, songs, poems, courtroom testimony, skits, cartoons and illustrations that bring the story of the "minutemen of industrial unionism" to life in native accents. – *Detroit Labor News* \$24.00

The Fragile Bridge: Paterson Silk Strike, 1913 by Steve Golin

A discussion of the challenges faced in the relationship between workers and the radical bohemians of Greenwich Village. A good discussion of the "self-activity" of the workers involved in the strike. \$17.00

The Great Bisbee Deportation by Rob E. Hanson Wobblies so worried the authorities of Bisbee, Arizona, that the state ran them out of town. This comprehensive account brings the events of the day alive. \$2.00

Solidarity Forever by Stewart Bird, Dan Georgakis, and Deborah Shaffer Oral histories of IWW members. \$10.00

Strike! by Jeremy Brecher A classic text – a history of American workers' struggle from a working-class viewpoint, arguing that class upsurges are based in everyday life and rank-and-file initiative. While this edition is somewhat less optimistic than the original, it still provides rich detail of workers' rebellions throughout American history, and abundant evidence for the proposition that workers are fully capable of making our own history, should we set our minds to the task. \$22.00

Richard B. Moore, Caribbean Militant in Harlem: Collected Writings 1920-1972 edited by W. Burghardt Turner and Joyce Moore Turner. Moore was one of the leading leftists in the Harlem community in the 1920s and 1930s, and prominent in Caribbean independence struggles in the decades that followed. This collection offers a biographical overview, and excerpts from Moore's writings on labor struggles, housing conditions, racism, the pan-Caribbean movement, and related topics. \$12.00

Class-Conscious Environmentalism

The Fate of the New Carissa

by Arthur J. Miller A first-hand account of a ship explosion which filled Oregon's Coos Bay with chemicals, fuels, and filth. Also discusses the "flag of convenience" system which allows ship owners to escape safety, environmental, and labor laws. 16pp \$2

Cool Stuff

Strobing Bike Lights Two-inch red reflectors printed with the IWW's logo. Clips onto the belt or pocket of runners & riders. Battery included. \$4.50

Don't Be a Scab poster Historic photo of two girls on rollerskates with "Don't Be a Scab" sashes, beautifully reproduced in a red & black duotone. \$5.50

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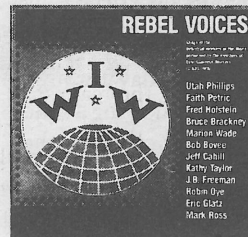
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Nine-month health strike ends

Doctors and other public health employees in El Salvador returned to their jobs June 16, ending a nine-month strike (see March IW). The settlement blocks privatization plans for the Salvadoran Social Security Institute, preserving the public health care system which serves working Salvadorans.

The striking workers, as well as 125 employees whose dismissal sparked the strike, will be reinstated, and will receive half the salaries they would have earned during the nine months they were on strike.

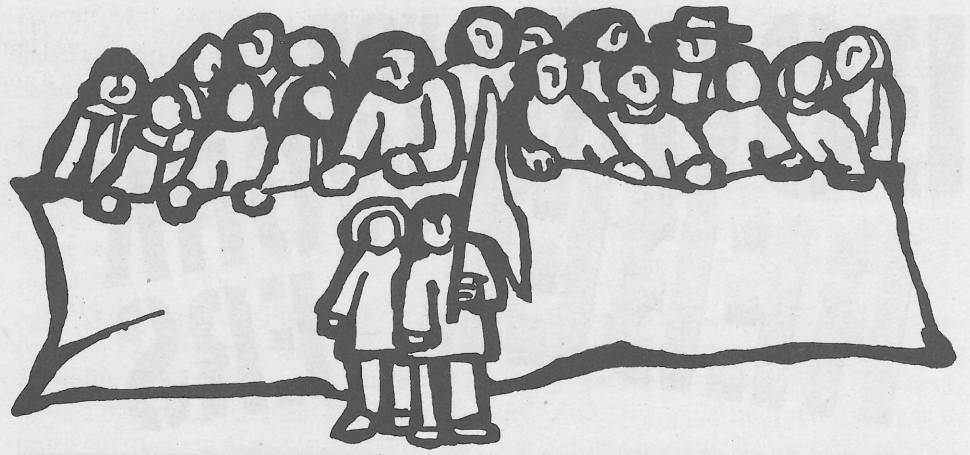
ISSS doctors and other employees will work extra hours without pay over the coming months, and will set up health brigades to visit towns and villages in rural areas, to address the health care needs that have gone unmet for the last nine months.

With this strike, "we are sending a message to all of Latin America, to show that it is possible to fight neo-liberalism," said ISSS union secretary-general Ricardo Monge.

The strike is also widely credited with costing the ruling ARENA party its parliamentary majority in recent elections.

"The greatest achievement of this strike is that we reactivated the social movement, and were able to block the privatization" of the ISSS, said surgeon Isaias Cordero del Cid, secretary-general of the ISSS doctors' union.

"We did not achieve everything we wanted," Cordero del Cid added. "But this is a good start, because we have awakened a public that was sleeping, and that will now oppose the privatization of the water services, education and public works."



General strikes against privatization

Colombia: Colombia's three union centers, the CUT, CGTD and the CTC, called an emergency general strike against privatization for June 19 after the government announced plans to liquidate the state telecommunications firm TELECOM and eliminate as many as 10,000 jobs. The decision was taken at the United States' behest.

As Miguel Caro, CUT's director for the public sector points out, "The U.S. has insisted as a condition for including Colombia in the Free Trade Area of the Americas negotiations that one-sided 'shared risk' contracts signed with U.S. companies be implemented."

The misnamed 'shared-risk' contracts were a mechanism for foreign multinationals to rip off the state sector. In 1993 TELECOM signed contracts with six multinationals to provide 2 million telephone lines. They put 1.8 million lines in place, but only 1.15 million were sold. While the investment came from state funds, the 'shared risk' agreements meant that the multinationals were guaranteed revenue irrespective of the number of lines sold. NORTEL and the other companies demanded a \$2 billion contract settlement. The previous Colombian government offered \$600 million, but this was not enough for NORTEL who lobbied the U.S. Congress to block any general trade and investment agreements until its demands are met.

Other unions across the whole state sector, from Bogota's telephone corporation ETB, to the agrarian reform institute INCORA, to the universities, to several health and social security agencies are also facing privatization. The government has pledged to push this program through to meet IMF demands to halve the fiscal deficit.

This is part of a broader process of dispossession and repression of the Colombian people. Alexander Lopez, former president of public services union SINTRAEMCALI who was elected to Congress last year, warns that, "The result of this policy is the elimination of the public function of the State, leading to misery, general degradation and conflict."

The rate of assassination of Colombian unionists has decreased, with only (!) thirty murdered in the first five months of this year. But while the modes of paramilitary and state terror are evolving, the danger is ever present. Recently a flood of graffiti appeared in the city of Cali, with slogans declaring "Death to Sintraemcali," "Sintraemcali = Thieves" and "Sintraemcali = Guerrilla." The government is reneging on commitments to provide protection for targeted union leaders, and is denying them the right to hire their own bodyguards.

India: Millions of government workers in India went on strike on May 21, disrupting rail and air transport and banks to demand reversal of the government's privatization program. The strike was called by the Centre for Indian Trade Unions, the All India Trade Union Congress and the Hind Mazdoor Sabha.

Unions are demanding the government freeze the ongoing privatization of state undertakings which is resulting in massive job losses. The strike closed oil production, air services from New Delhi to Calcutta, and industrial production elsewhere in the country.

In New Delhi, police arrested a number of union leaders after they staged a noisy rally before the Supreme Court to demand the right to strike.

General strike hits Zimbabwe regime

Zimbabwean soldiers beat an opposition supporter to death June 4 on the third day of a general strike aimed at toppling President Robert Mugabe. Hundreds of opposition and labor activists have been arrested. Security forces have crushed street demonstrations, using rubber clubs, rifle butts, water cannon, tear gas and warning shots with live ammunition to disperse crowds. Hundreds of workers have been injured in these clashes.

Police also attacked patients at the Avenues Clinic, where opposition supporters injured in earlier clashes were seeking treatment, abducting at least seven.

Most Zimbabwean shops and businesses shut down in defiance of a threat from President Mugabe to seize businesses taking part in the largest-ever protests against his rule. A handful of firms reopened in response to the threats, operating with skeleton staffs as workers honored the strike call.

The opposition blames Mugabe for sinking the country into political and economic ruin. Annual inflation is at 269 percent, and more than 8 million people rely on food aid to avert starvation. More than 70 percent of Zimbabwe's workers are officially unemployed, although many eke out meager existences in the informal economy.

As a result of the economic crisis, the strike is largely limited to the banking and retail sectors. "Otherwise there is no industry to talk about in Zimbabwe any more," Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions' Collin Gwiyo told Inter-Press Service. "The generality of the worker is not any better with or without the work disruptions."

Since 2001 more than 100 factories have closed, and hundreds of thousands of farm workers have lost their jobs in the collapse of the country's agricultural sector. Those workers lucky enough to still have jobs often earn US\$30 or less in a month, far from enough for food and housing.

Sacked by email, workers sack office

The Mirror newspaper reports that after personal injury claims giant The Accident Group emailed more than 2,400 workers in 12 regional offices across Britain, telling them they had been laid-off and would not get their final pay check, outraged workers in Birmingham ransacked TAG offices. Workers reportedly took computers, furniture and other equipment, and management claims some sold company cars to recoup the lost wages.

Bosses who told workers everything possible had been done to save the firm were shouted down at TAG's Manchester headquarters. TAG went under when parent firm Amulet went into bankruptcy. While workers were sacked without their wages, Amulet's millionaire boss is walking away unscathed. Last year he pledged £6 million to a child welfare charity.

Management estimates the cost of damage and missing equipment at over £80,000.

Garment bosses admit worker abuse

Factories making products in China and other countries for Nike, Levi Strauss and five other companies violated labor laws, ranging from violating China's minimum wage law of 31 cents an hour to failure to provide proper hearing protection, according to a new report by the industry-supported Fair Labor Association.

Seven companies – Nike, Levi, Liz

Claiborne, Reebok, Adidas-Salomon, Eddie Bauer and Phillips-Van Heusen – set up the FLA to inspect factories that make their products in an effort to deflect criticism from the growing anti-sweatshop movement. Its report details the results of inspections of 48 factories. The seven companies participating in the inspections have at least 3,000 subcontractors, including about 600 in China.

Cambodian police kill Gap worker

Hundreds of Cambodian police opened fire on more than a thousand picketing garment workers June 13. One worker was killed by a bullet to the chest when police fired hundreds of rounds from AK-47 assault rifles and used water cannons on workers. His work card identified him as Yoeum Ry of the Terratex Knitting and Garment Factory.

Workers were trying to enter the factory to confront managers when police began shooting. Cho Kimchhen said workers are demanding removal of their boss because "he is corrupt" and refuses to negotiate.

Police say an officer was also killed and 20 wounded when they came under attack from a hail of stones. Police were trying to break up the demonstration amid final preparations for the June 18 ASEAN Regional Fo-

rum. Police claim they fired into the air.

"We did not do anything," a policeman complained to the AFP news service. "We went there to protect them."

Police opened fire on pickets again June 14, arresting several demonstrators. No one was killed in that incident.

Union protests have taken place outside the Terratex factory for weeks with hundreds of workers picketing and demanding the removal of a senior manager. The Terratex plant manufactures garments for the Gap, among other companies.

Cambodia's 220 garment factories produced some \$1.1 billion in exports in 2001, about 77 percent of the country's total. Most of the clothes go to the United States, to be sold by brands such as Nike, Adidas and Gap.

Peru: Teachers defeat 'state of emergency'

More than 20,000 striking teachers and other unionists marched Tuesday through downtown Lima, Peru, June 3 defying a state of emergency decree aimed at crushing the strike. Protesters also marched in other major cities across the country. In Arequipa, Peru's second largest city, unions called a general strike to support the protest.

President Alejandro Toledo declared a 30-day state of emergency on May 27 in the midst of a rising wave of discontent and strikes by teachers, farmers, public health workers and judiciary employees. Since then, one person has been killed and dozens wounded as the army fired on protesters.

The state of emergency decree strengthened Peruvian unions' resolve to exercise their rights, rather than allow a return to

military rule, and weakened public support for the Toledo administration. Polls show his public approval slipping to just 15 percent.

Teachers defied the back-to-work order, forcing the government to resume negotiations that concluded June 11 with an agreement for an immediate 15 percent wage increase and the doubling of teachers' wages in the next three years. Teachers now earn an average of \$200 a month. The government also agreed to lift the state of emergency.



One in three workers to be 'casual'?

A new report conducted by the Australian Centre for Industrial Relations Research & Training concludes that while the country's prosperity has increased in recent years, few workers are sharing in the newly created wealth.

Wage inequality has grown, with only the top 40% of income earners enjoying real wage growth throughout the 1990s. New jobs created in the 1990s consisted almost entirely of casual and part-time jobs. Only half the Australian work force is now employed on a permanent basis.

Although half of all workers work overtime, 60 percent are not paid for it. More than half of employees working more than 45 hours a week would prefer fewer hours, ac-

ording to the study.

One million people are now classified as casual workers, and by 2010 one in three workers will be casual. But half of these casual workers, who are mostly female, have been in the same job for over a year.

Crowning Miss Debt

Three thousand workers marched on the streets of Panama City, protesting against the millions their government spent on the Miss Universe Pageant.

The protesters organized a mock beauty pageant in which they crowned Miss Unemployment, Miss Privatization, Miss Corruption, Miss External Debt, Miss Impunity, Miss Poverty and Miss Misery.