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UnionBook.org
reviewed

4

Pakistani women
workers 'unnamed'

5

Wisconsin paper
mill closes

6

South Texas IWWs
Get Organized

9

Starbucks: Where's Anna's Money?

IWW Hits Starbucks with Protest

By Stephanie Basile

While New Yorkers were wishing each other "Happy New Year" this past New Year's Eve, a few select Starbucks managers were met with three words: "Where's Anna's Money?"

This simple question has become the catchphrase of a campaign to help Starbucks barista Anna Hurst win two weeks' pay from the company. Anna is a member of the Starbucks Workers Union (SWU), part of the Industrial Workers of the World.

The New Year's Eve protest was the latest action in the Union's ongoing campaign for Anna. A group of about ten union members spent an hour demonstrating in the cold, chanting outside the Union Square East store and holding

signs bearing slogans such as "Support Your Local Union Baristas," and the soon-to-be ubiquitous slogan "Where's Anna's Money?" For one of the demonstrators, Starbucks barista Henry Marin, it was his first public action as a member of the union.

Customers were encouraged to ask management this question inside. One customer reported that the manager pretended she had no idea what he was talking about.

When a part-time wage worker is sick and has to leave work early, she or he misses out on the remaining hours in that shift. Starbucks baristas have no paid sick time and face this situation constantly.

Continued on 3

Independent Unionism in Cambodia:

Severe challenges as garment industry takes hit

By Erik Davis

Chea Mony, the president of the Free Trade Union Workers of the Kingdom of Cambodia (FTUWKC), seems to work 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. When I meet with him, he is very tired, sick, nearing the end of a long day; and preparing to write up yet another complaint against the owners of a garment factory. He takes nearly an hour to talk with me about the experience of the Union and Cambodian workers, and to discuss the possibility of furthering solidarity actions with the IWW.

FTUWKC organizes across trades, but the majority of its members are in the garment industry. The FTUWKC currently has over 30,000 enrolled members; approximately 85% of those workers are women from rural areas who send significant portions of their monthly salaries to relatives in the countryside. The World Bank

estimates that such remittances improve the incomes of 13% of rural households—showing the significance of the budding urban industrial economy in a country which remains overwhelmingly rural and agrarian (71% of heads of household are primarily engaged in agricultural work, and over 80% live in the countryside).

Victories

In 2008, the union saw a few victories for the FTUWKC. A long-planned action demanding garment industry-wide salary raises, from \$50 to \$56 a month, was successful; though other issues, such as limits on seniority raises (limits which effectively freeze salaries for long-standing employees) were not effectively challenged. The FTUWKC has been the most successful union in the country in agitating for wage increases—starting originally from \$25 a month



Photo: Stephanie Basile

Anna Hurst protesting at the Union Square East Starbucks in New York.

Workers Occupy Thomson Factory in Poland

By John Kalwaic

Two hundred workers dismissed from a Thomson factory in the Warsaw suburb of Piaseczno are occupying the plant. The Indian company Videocon recently bought out Thomson, which makes TV screens and tubes, and planned massive layoffs and "restructuring" at many of the factories they bought. Videocon was planning to move a lot of its factories and equipment to countries with cheaper labor, and was planning to integrate its foreign operations with its business in India.

The bosses at Videocon complained that the "salaries of the workers were too high" at the Piaseczno factory. From the very beginning, the company had bad relations with the Solidarity Union, which represented the workers. Videocon also demanded that the Polish government give it money to keep the factory in Poland, much like governments of Mexico and Italy had done to keep Videocon's factories in those countries. However, the Polish government refused; and that's when the layoffs started.

Only two years ago, there were 5,000 workers at the Piaseczno plant. Since Videocon took over, there have been as many as 4,700 lay-offs. The company lowered workers' salaries by 40% this summer, and then wanted to cut pay by 30% more, despite the fact that Videocon was raking in profits from huge orders from Russia and Turkey. Many workers took voluntary redundancy or cuts. In the end, the vast majority

were simply fired. 200 of the fired workers were not given their back pay and compensation of up to 15,000 Zlotys (€3,500).

When they realized they were being denied their money, the dismissed workers occupied their factory and demanded what the company owed them. The leadership of Solidarity tried to convince them to stay home and not occupy the factory, saying that the money was being transferred to their accounts. The workers discovered this to be untrue thanks to mobile internet phones, and continued with the occupation.

Many of the workers had an idea the company would try to rip them off. Technically, they worked for a company called Eagle, registered in the Cayman Islands, of which Videocon owns 80%. However, Eagle, like many other outfits, is having financial problems. If Eagle is not able to pay them, workers rightly worry that Videocon may claim it's nothing to do with them.

This occupation has a striking similarity to the worker occupation at Republic Windows and Doors in Chicago two months ago. In both cases, dismissed workers decided to occupy the factory to get what was owed to them. However unlike Republic in Chicago, where the UE union supported the workers, the Solidarity Union in Piaseczno seems to be dead against it.

For now, the occupation continues, and workers are filing lawsuits against Videocon for unlawful dismissal.

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Starbucks: Where's Anna's Money?

Continued from 1

When Anna Hurst left work sick during a shift this past August, she already knew she would have to deal with losing a few hours' pay. Never did she imagine that her employer will then deny her an additional two weeks of work. Unfortunately, that is exactly what Starbucks did. Hurst called work the next day to find out her schedule, only to discover that her name was removed from the schedule for two weeks.

Since then, Hurst has been trying to procure back wages for the work she was denied. She first pursued channels through the company but made no progress. She then decided to join the union.

The IWW has engaged in a number of actions, starting on Nov. 6, 2008, when members from the union marched into the store and delivered a letter to management demanding the two weeks' pay. The union also organized a call and text-in to the store

manager, and leafleted outside the store with flyers that featured a photograph of store manager Gwen Krueger.

Not only has Starbucks refused to apologize for what happened, but management has repeatedly tried to convince Hurst to stop trying to obtain her wages. Krueger has even offered conflicting stories to upper management. She threatened a lawsuit and criminal complaint against the IWW.

After the first few days of the call and text-in, Hurst was called into a

meeting with Krueger and district manager Mark Ormsbee. During the meeting, she was told that she will never get the pay she is owed and to stop trying.

"Mark basically told me the conversation was over," recalls Hurst. At the same meeting,

Krueger made her conflicting remarks, first saying that on the day she went home sick, Hurst walked out of the store without telling anyone.

"First she said that I didn't say

anything and just left," says Hurst. "Then she said that she heard the beginning of what I said but not the end." Hurst says when she tried to point this and other contradictions out to Ormsbee, that he sided with Krueger every time.

In response to Krueger's lawsuit threat, the union stated, "the IWW Starbucks Workers Union takes our right to defend baristas' interests and our right to free speech very seriously." They plan to continue taking action until Hurst receives the pay she is owed.

Hurst says she is grateful to have the support of the union. "I appreciate everyone's help," she says. "Usually, when something like this happens, you're on your own."

It's approaching 8 p.m. and the protestors have been outside in the freezing cold for almost an hour. Hurst takes a look around, smiles, and says "I'm feeling a lot of love and support."



Graphic: Nicole Schulman

Independent Unionism in Cambodia

Continued from 1

in the late 1990s to the current wage of \$56, achieved at the beginning of last year.

The most public success in the second half of 2008 took place immediately upon my arrival in country—the release of Sok Sam Ourn and Born Samnang. Sam Ourn and Samnang were patsies arrested by the government and charged with the 2004 murder of FTUWKC president and exemplary labour militant Chea Vichea, the brother of current president Chea Mony. The FTUWKC, along with many other organizations, has been calling for their release since their original arrest, demanding the government search for Chea Vichea's real killers.

On Jan. 22, 2009, the fifth anniversary of the public execution-style murder, Chea Mony joined hundreds of workers and political activists in a march and memorial to the site of the killing, where they held a brief ceremony to benefit the spirit of Chea Vichea, identified him as a Virajun (Hero) of the workers, and laid flowers.

Future of Struggle

In spite of the successes in getting wages raised, 2008 cannot be described as a year of progress. Indeed, my discussion with union officers, and especially Chea Mony, left me deeply sobered and anxious about the future of the FTUWKC, and the union movement in Cambodia. The worldwide economic

crisis is the largest and most immediate threat to the Cambodian worker: Cambodia's industrial workers have made historic progress over the past fifteen years in part on the basis of a coordinated marketing push of sorts, in which the Cambodian government agreed to a labour law which were relatively favourable



Chea Money of the FTUWKC

Photo: Erik Davis

IWW Constitution Preamble

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.

TO JOIN: Mail this form with a check or money order for initiation and your first month's dues to: IWW, Post Office Box 23085, Cincinnati OH 45223, USA.

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. Dues may vary outside of North America and in Regional Organizing Committees (Australia, British Isles, German Language Area).

- 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 acquaint myself with its purposes.



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UnionBook: The social network for trade unionists

By Eric Lee

In early February, we launched UnionBook, a social networking website for union members and activists. Sponsored by LabourStart, UnionBook can be found at www.unionbook.org.

The new site was launched to fill a gap. Union members have been using existing commercial web-based social networks such as Facebook and MySpace, but have found real problems in doing so. Facebook, for example, has shut down union groups—in one case during an organizing campaign at a casino in Canada. Union activists have had their accounts closed for being “too active.” We decided we needed

a social network that is advertising-free, under our control, and designed specifically to support the union movement. UnionBook is that network. UnionBook offers many features that activists will find useful. Among these are:

* Blogs. Every user of UnionBook can have their own blog, advertising-free.

* Groups. Users can create groups to support their union and their campaigns. Groups can have discussion

forums and shared documents. They can be public or closed. They're a very powerful tool. (The IWW group is here: <http://www.unionbook.org/pg/groups/1661/industrial-workers-of-the-world/>)

* Profiles. Users can post their profiles (with photos) and sign up their friends - just like in any other social network (with certain subtle differences).

UnionBook will never be as big as the giant commercial networks like Facebook, but once we have several thousand union members using it, we're confident it will become a powerful tool for our movement worldwide.

We're not telling anyone to stop using other social networks; but use UnionBook for your trade union activities and see how easy it is to build and form groups, and to publish content online.

Please spend some time on UnionBook.org and explore the possibilities. And then spread the word - because together, we can create something amazing here.



The fight at Great Western Erectors

By Jason Netek

DENTON, Texas—Lack of clean drinking water is just one example of the terrible conditions that workers at Great Western Erectors are organizing to end.

Great Western Erectors (GWE) is a steel, concrete and rebar contractor based in Dallas, with offices in Phoenix and Denver. In May 2005, a number of GWE workers walked out on strike against the company over the lack of drinking water at job sites, where temperatures regularly reach well over 100° Fahrenheit. In 2006, there was at least one serious case of dehydration at a GWE site; this unfortunate worker has yet to be compensated by the company for his medical expenses.

Since 2005, walkouts have increased—the most recent one in October 2008—as more workers find conditions unbearable. In addition to not being provided drinking water, workers are often forced to work through breaks and lunch periods. They aren't provided with affordable health insurance or vacation time, and even have to provide their own safety equipment.

Some workers have spoken of being hired on a Spanish-language contract only to find that management only speaks English whenever a grievance is

raised. GWE's employment relations are so bad that, once, management even threatened Phoenix workers with a handgun.

Workers formed the Coalition for Justice at Great Western Erectors, along with community groups and activists, to call public attention to the injustices they have suffered. Over the last few years, city governments, schools and companies that employ GWE have sent them multiple appeals to investigate claims of worker abuse. Despite this, the company refuses to listen to its workers.

The dedication of Coalition is getting results. Last month, some members joined North Texas Jobs with Justice and the International Socialist Organization in a demonstration against corporate bailouts, and their story made the front page of the local Denton Record Chronicle.

Public exposure of GWE's mistreatment is important, but it's clear that the company won't budge until they feel the pressure from friends of labor and justice. These workers need our solidarity, and a campaign to demand that our schools and local governments won't deal with Great Western Erectors until workers' conditions improve.

Contact the Coalition for Justice at Great Western Erectors by e-mail at coalitionforjustice@yahoo.com or call 866-493-5878.

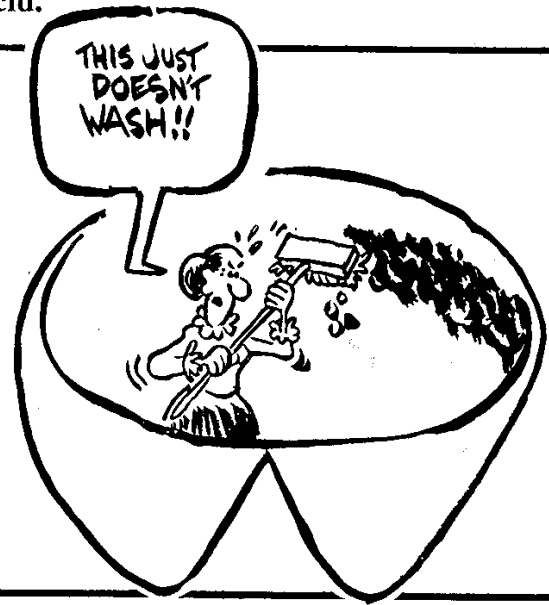


Graphic: Radicalgraphics.org

WOMEN WORKERS' HISTORY

Chapter 21 Revolt of the Laundresses

Production of detachable collars and cuffs and shirts used to be big business in Troy, N.Y.; washing, starching and ironing the collars was an important part of the process. Several hundred Troy women worked 12 to 14 hours a day, doing this back-breaking work in 100-degree heat, in air full of chloride and sulfuric acid.



In the summer of 1865, the Troy laundresses decided they had enough when the bosses introduced new starching machines. The machines were too hot to handle and cut prices for starching almost in half. Under the leadership of the fiery Kate Mullaney, the laundresses organized the Troy Collar Laundry Union.



The Troy Collar Laundry Union succeeded in raising the wages of the laundresses from \$2-\$3 a week to \$8-\$14! Kate Mullaney became one of the most important women labor leaders of the Nineteenth century.

Meanwhile, in Jackson, Mississippi, a June 18, 1866 “Petition of Colored Washerwomen” startled the white establishment. The petition announced the intention of black laundry women to charge a uniform rate for their labor. Says historian Philip Foner, this was the “first known collective action of free black workingwomen in American history.”

Graphic: Mike Konopacki

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Unnamed, unacknowledged worker

By **Aima Mahmood**,
Executive Coordinator of Working Women Organization

Talk of “a worker” and people imagine factories and industrial units. A worker is he or she who works in a factory or plant, they say. But privatization and the contract system increasingly taking hold of the global economy have changed the definition as well as perspective of a worker. Tens of thousands of workers in Pakistan today earn their livelihoods either individually or at cottage industry, not at big factories.

The majority of these workers are women, accomplishing various tasks in extremely unfavorable conditions. These working women are neither affiliated with any trade union nor they are organized, and are therefore counted as an “informal” sector of the economy, one not governed by labor laws.

Used extensively and in a broader sense, the term “worker” applies to housemaids, farm workers, bonded laborers, small shopkeepers, hawkers etc. This “informal” sector plays an important role in Pakistan’s national economy. The World Bank estimates, for instance, that there are over one million women farm workers in Pakistan.

These unacknowledged workers are victims of the worst economic and social exploitation. According to one estimate, housemaids earn from Rs10 to Rs50 daily. (1 Pakistan Rupee = 0.01267 US Dollars) These women are also shouldering double and sometimes triple responsibilities, but do not figure in official statistics of workers. The Pakistani government has neither adopted any strategy regarding the women engaged in informal sector nor attempted to bring them under labor laws.

Meanwhile, trade unions, guardians of workers’ rights, are themselves in crisis, under increasing pressure from employers, official restrictions and anti-labor laws. The closure of industries has on one hand deprived the workers of their employment opportunities and

on the other badly affected trade union membership. Faced with a fight for their own survival, trade unions fail to chalk out a line of action for informal sector workers.

All this has led to worsening conditions for women workers in the informal sector during the last couple of decades. The sector is so far exempt from the

minimum wages law, while working hours are also comparatively long. In a country where women already face extreme exploitation in the name of religion, societal norms and traditions, working in the informal sector is further plunging them into the ditches of oppression.

A cursory look at conditions in neighboring countries reveals a different story. In India particularly, women employed in the informal sector are not only aware of their rights they are also active in winning them. In Mumbai, for instance, housemaids have formed their own representative bodies which jointly

decide wages according to their workload, as well as leave and other privileges. No housemaid goes to work for families that do not accept these demands. Should a housemaid face a problem, all members of the organization find a solution to it.

This organization is not confined to housemaids. Rickshaw drivers, hawkers and others who do mundane jobs are also united at the platform of their respective unions. In Kerala, the labor department, workers of informal sector and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have formed a tripartite

body that looks after welfare of the working community.

“Unorganized sector” is the term used for the informal sector in India, and it encompasses farm workers. The sector has protection through the Welfare Bill, under which they are entitled to minimum wages, pension and provident fund through a Welfare Fund set up

for the purpose.

The International Labor Organization (ILO) has introduced a convention for protecting the rights of informal sector workers but, unfortunately, like other ILO conventions, this lacks teeth. The ILO needs go beyond just adopting conventions, and get laws enforced ensuring their implementation in countries which sign up to them. To improve the lot of workers in Pakistan, it is essential that workers, especially the woman workers associated with the informal sector, get themselves recognized as workers and are aware of their rights. Although it is a challenging task keeping in view the existing unfavorable circumstances in the country, the trade unions for the sake of their own survival should take a clear and solid line on organizing these workers. The organizations should produce a strategy to protect these women’s rights. There is much to be learned from labor movements in other countries (India, for example) in this respect.

Primary responsibility for improving the lot of laborers rests on the shoulders of governments. Those associated with government should understand and accept the fact that development and integrity of a country depends upon the development and security of its citizens. Therefore, it is necessary that the government should not only enact laws for provision of basic rights to the workers but these laws should also be implemented in letter and spirit, especially in the informal sector. The government should offer interest-free loans for improving business and skills. Training opportunities as well as social and economic protection should also be extended. This will be possible only when a popular government works for the interests and welfare of the masses and not a few people. Only then will these unnamed and unacknowledged workers get their due recognition and protection.



Photo: Working Women Organization

Melbourne Wobs commemorate indigenous freedom fighters

By **Jewel Topsfield**

Bushranger Ned Kelly, who famously defied the colonial authorities and was hanged for murder in 1880, is an iconic figure in Australian history. But few Australians know the story of indigenous resistance fighters Tunnerminnerwait and Maulboyheenner, who were the first men publicly executed in Victoria State, in 1842.

Anarchist Joseph Toscano convened a commemoration ceremony, supported by Melbourne IWW, on 20th January 2009 to mark the 167th anniversary of the executions opposite the City Baths. Dr Toscano is lobbying Melbourne City Council to erect a monument to acknowledge their place in the State’s history.

“Theirs is a great Melbourne story of love, resistance, passion and violence, which is much more significant, in my opinion, than the story of Ned Kelly,” said Dr Toscano.

“Everyone in Australia knows about Geronimo and Sitting Bull because of crappy TV, but no one knows about this country’s indigenous fathers.”

Dr Toscano told how Tunnerminnerwait and Maulboyheenner were among 16 Tasmanian Aborigines brought to Melbourne in 1839 by the Protector of Aborigines, George Robinson, to “civilise” the indigenous population of Victoria State. However, in late 1841, the two men, along with three women, stole two guns and waged a six-week guerrilla-style campaign in the Dandenong

Ranges and on the Mornington Peninsula, burning stations and killing two sealers.

They were caught by a party of police, settlers and soldiers, charged with murder and tried in Melbourne. Their defence counsel was Redmond Barry, who questioned the legal basis of British authority over Aborigines. (39 years later, Barry would sentence Kelly to hang.)

The women were acquitted and the men found guilty; although the jury made a plea for clemency on account of the “on account of general good character and the peculiar circumstances under which they were placed.” Judge Willis ignored the request and the men were hanged in front of 5,000 people—a quarter of Victoria’s white population—from gallows erected on a small rise near what is now the corner of Bowen and Franklin streets. Their bodies are buried under the Queen Victoria Market.

“Every town in Australia has a monument to remember people who died fighting other people’s wars, but nowhere in this country do we see monuments to indigenous people who fought to defend their country and way of life,” Dr Toscano said. “In order to begin reconciliation, the coloniser needs to acknowledge what happened.”

Lord Mayor Robert Doyle said he did not know the story of Tunnerminnerwait and Maulboyheenner until he met Dr Toscano, who also stood for lord mayor, on the election trail.

“We often don’t know these stories right in the midst of our own city,” he said at the commemoration ceremony. “Awareness of our indigenous history is vital to our understanding of ourselves. It is OK to focus on things which are admirable ... but we also need to look at things that are shameful squarely in consider a monument as he eye,” Toscano added.

The Melbourne City Council will part

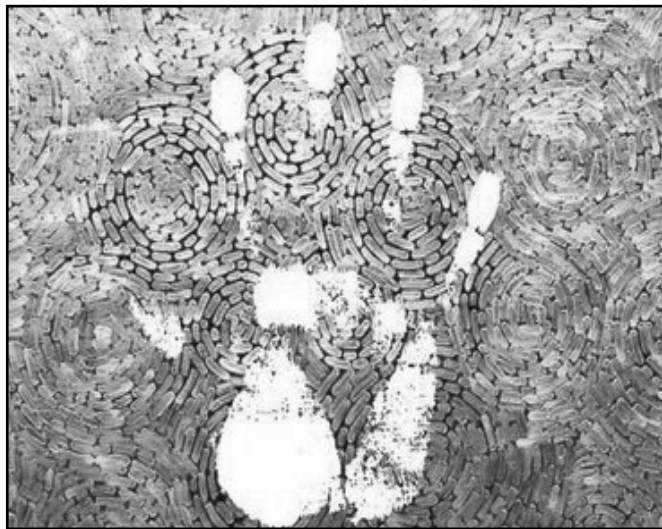
of its indigenous heritage study, to be conducted this year.

Also in January, Melbourne IWW delegate Canopy Son took part in the Aboriginal Peace Walk '09. This event included a delegation of activists and supporters who walked from Sydney to Canberra for recognition of Indigenous Sovereignty, an end to the Northern Territories (NT) Intervention and an end to Australia’s involvement in the dangerous nuclear-fuel cycle.

“Aboriginal Australia has been battling for over 200 years. The NT Intervention is the most recent attack on our human rights, our collective rights as Indigenous peoples and our sovereign rights as the true custodians of these lands” said spokesman Darren Bloomfield. “The Federal Government has been hacking away at Aboriginal Land Rights with the NT Intervention and now compulsory leases if Aboriginal communities want to receive basic services. The land grab has to stop,” Bloomfield added

While taking away Aboriginal land rights, the Australian government is moving the country in the direction becoming the largest miner and exporter of uranium in the world. The threat of becoming a nuclear waste dump still looms over Aboriginal communities of the Northern Territory.

Peace Walk '09 walk began Kurnell, Botany Bay—the first site of white settlement—and ended at the Aboriginal Tent Embassy in Canberra. It took 17 days and covered 290 kilometers.



Graphic: Melbourne IWW

Why Is Kimberly Paper Mill Closed?

By **Jim Del Duca**

Rick Hardrath, Randy Gossens, and Dan Sawall are all paper-makers. More precisely they are laid-off paper makers with families to support, mortgages to pay, and very uncertain futures. Being members of Local 9 of The United Steel Workers Union (USW), an organization with more than one million members, they won't accept that there is any good reason the profitable paper mill, where they had all worked for decades, had to shut down production. Being workers with no work, they have plenty of free time to explain their situation to IW readers.

On Sept. 18, 2008, NewPage Corp., a subsidiary of Cerberus Capital Management LLC, laid off 476 workers and closed their paper mill after 119 years of operation in Kimberly, Wisconsin (pop. 6,200). According to NewPage CEO Mark Suwyn, this was because the mill's high running costs made its coated paper product uncompetitive against a ready supply of less expensive paper from China. NewPage had owned the mill for only nine months when this action was taken. Other information, however, suggests capitalist manipulation of the paper market as the real reason behind this devastating blow to the workers and communities surrounding the mill. A NewPage corporate document circulated by Local 9 President Andy Nirschl shows that the Kimberly mill turned a profit of roughly \$55 million in 2007 before interest, taxes, depreciation and debt repayments.

Since then, paper pulp and energy prices had fallen dramatically. One worker, Dan—who has 31 years of experience in the industry—said “pulp prices have bottomed out. Right now Kimberly is the cheapest facility to run. It just amazes us that they don't restart us.”

Rick, Randy, and Dan suggest the real reason for closure was simply to drive up the price of paper by decreasing supply. When bosses see prices falling, they often take drastic measures.

Jon Geenen, USW Vice President for Wisconsin, in response to emailed questions, pointed out that the lower prices of the product relate directly to imports

that were produced in countries lacking environmental and labor standards of the U.S. He asserted that a sizeable amount of the imported product has been illegally “dumped” in the country.

Andy Nirschl explained that the International Trade Commission (ITC) had ruled in the past that importation of cheap Chinese paper was acceptable. However, he felt strongly that if presented with the case again in light of the mill

closure, the ITC would rule differently. Unfortunately, taking the ITC route takes millions of dollars and considerable time. The more timely solution to the corporation's profitability problem seems to have been plant closure: “NewPage Corporation doesn't care about people at all. They don't. You know, most corporations don't. They just let the [financial] men add their numbers,” concluded Dan.

What about the USW? Could they exert enough pressure on NewPage to put the Kimberly operation back into production? When I asked Randy Gossens if he felt that his union had done enough to help, he told me “we were kinda left out there on our own, trying to put something together.” When I pressed him to explain, he offered, “Sometimes they have different agendas than we have.”

His observation hit the nail right on the head. According to USW VP Geenen, “the USW has and continues to pour significant resources into this campaign. We have full time campaign staff on this effort, we have pulled rank and filers out of other shops to assist full time, and all agreed that Kimberly would be the most profitable mill that NewPage owns if it

were operating now. This have created the highest profile campaign in Wisconsin since the Patrick Cudahy and IP struggles 20 years ago.” He went on to describe a larger strategic campaign with a much wider focus.

The national and international industrial picture was clearly crucial in wider USW strategy planning. NewPage operates six other mills in Wisconsin, all organized by the USW. There were no



Graphic: Jefferson Pierce

sympathy strikes, slow-downs or work stoppages at these mills. The Kimberly workers took the full force of the blow themselves. Geenen wrote “There are moments of frustration in any campaign, and there are a few members in their desperation that have advocated a restart of the Kimberly Mill at the expense of other USW members - we do not share that view. Indeed, moving the injury from one location to another moves the injustice along with it.” This makes it pretty clear that the top USW leadership decided that there was no way around making a sacrifice, like the Spartans at Thermopylae, and Kimberly was it. It must have been a painful decision to make. Mr. Geenen's brother, after 27 years of employment, was among those sacrificed.

The sad story of Kimberly suggests that the members of Local 9 are the perfect example of how workers who are unfamiliar with direct action are short-changed. The corporation saw them as an obstacle to some unknown profit goal and got them out of the way; the USW, have been used to keep the Kimberly likewise, saw them as expendable for the short-term greater good of their orga-

nization. This left no one prepared to effectively defend the interests of these workers or their community because the workers themselves had not been educated in the vital IWW principles of direct action and industrial solidarity. With the recent success of the Republic Window and Doors action fresh in our minds, it is interesting to speculate upon possible tactics that could mill open. A first step would have been for the workers to refuse to leave the plant. With the entire town of Kimberly supporting the workers, it is doubtful that local officials would have had any enthusiasm for evicting them by force, or if so, that a local jury would have found anyone guilty of criminal trespass.

Being in physical possession of the works would have created an entirely different set of possibilities, including worker ownership and operation (currently, NewPage is both refusing to operate the facility or to sell it, despite continual community appeals).

Also to be considered, if industrial solidarity had been inspired throughout all the mills owned by NewPage, the solution to the problem could have been to reduce output at all facilities; Wobblies, living the philosophy of “an injury to one is an injury to all”, have been willing to work reduced hours as individuals to insure that every worker at a plant kept their job. Or, if the other mills realized their industrial solidarity power, they could have just sat down until the Boss realized that a little less profit was better than no profit at all.

We'll never know, because none of the members of USW Local 9 that I spoke with had even heard of the IWW and our ways of taking care of business. Perhaps if they had, things would have turned out better for the workers and their families. Randy, Dan, and Rick are doing the best they can to make ends meet and plan for the future. Retraining with new skills at the local community college is one possibility, but with so many out of work, many classes are full for the next eight months. The future looks bleak for these workers and their whole town. Unfortunately, at this point in time all we can do is wish them luck.

Support I.W.W. Members in Legal Trouble Support the General Defense Committee of the I.W.W.



Marie Mason

Marie is a dedicated wobbly who in the 90's and was part of the Industrial Worker editing staff in Detroit, MI and has continued her membership in the union since the then and most recently was an active member of the Ohio Valley IWW GMB. She was also heavily involved in environmental issues as well.

Marie had been arrested and put in jail for several arsons in which no one was hurt. Her arrest has been part of a U.S. government crack down on the environmental movement called the “Green Scare”. Recently Marie plead guilty to the charges.

The General Defense Committee issued a \$10.00 assessment stamp to help Marie while she spends the next 20 years in jail. Not only has she incurred legal fees but also needs money in her commissary for necessities and phone calls to her family. Read more about the case at www.freemarie.org Industrial Worker at : <http://www.iww.org/PDF/IndustrialWorkerIWApril08.pdf>



Alex Svoboda and Jason Friedmutter

Alex and Jason are I.W.W. members who participated in a I.W.W. rally in Providence, RI to pressure restaurants to pull business from a N.Y.C. food distributor where I.W.W. members are organizing to unionize across an entire industry. Alex was thrown to the ground by police officers and arrested breaking her leg and charged with several crimes. Jason was also arrested at the rally.

The G.D.C. is raising money for their defense and has issued a motion of support and a \$25.00 assessment stamp has been issued. “Police Attack Warehouse Solidarity March” read more at : <http://www.iww.org/PDF/IndustrialWorkerIWSepember07.pdf>



Tom Kappas

Tom is an I.W.W. organizer in Cincinnati, Ohio who works amongst t-shirt printers and textile and clothing workers. He worked at a shop for 2 years as a salt to improve working conditions and in December of 2007 Tom and other employees demanded to the owner that heat be provided.

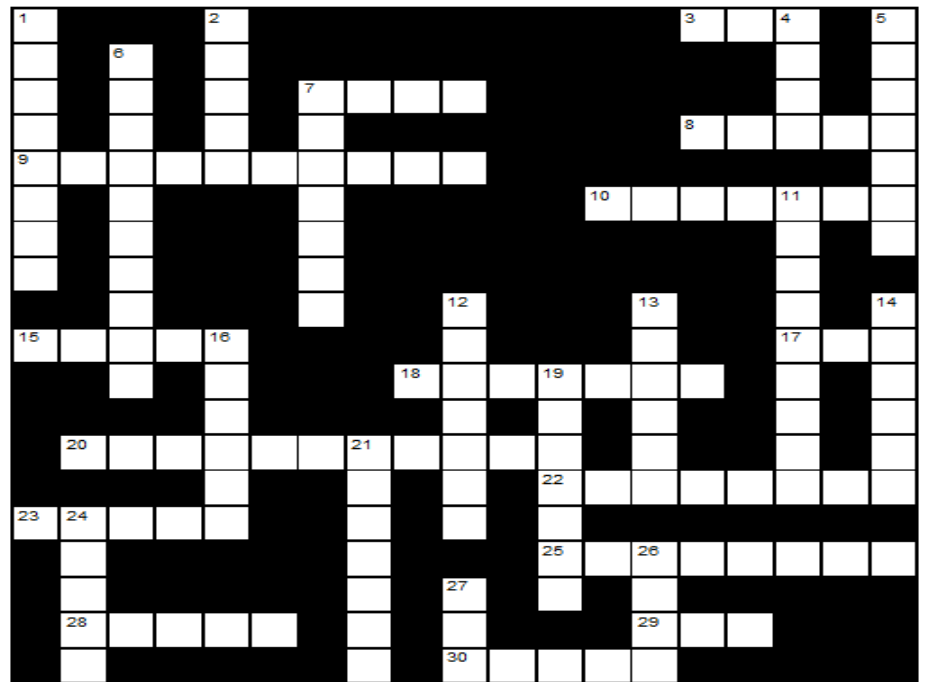
The next day Tom questioned why the owner had not fulfilled his promise to employees. The owner then threatened to issue Tom written warnings, reduce his hours, and suspend him for that day. Tom was then suspended.

With the help of the IWW and a local workers center he filed an unfair labor practice. An investigation and complaint was issued by the National Labor Relations Board. Two days later, he was sued by the company for making false, defamatory, and disparaging statements, libel the company in writing, and filing false claims with the NLRB. Kappas has incurred legal fees in the thousands as a result

and it taking donations to help pay the legal fees. Read the full story in the September Industrial Worker “No Heat at Ohio Textile Shop Sparks Complaint, Workers win NLRB ruling” <http://www.iww.org/PDF/IndustrialWorkerIWSepember08.pdf>



To buy assessment stamps or donate money send to:
General Defense Committee
P.O. Box 23085
Cincinnati Ohio 45223
Make checks and money orders payable to GDC



Crossword #1: “In the Beginning”

Across

3. Everything
7. Desire
8. She sells ones from the sea by the sea shore
9. I, not internation
10. Not bosses
15. Used to give the clap
17. The loneliest of its kind
18. Different pitches simultaneously
20. PEOPLE WHO WRITE LIKE THIS
22. Finishing this crossword is a real
23. Rest it
25. Don't mourn
28. Like craft or skill
29. Opposite of new
30. Disney

Down

1. They probably have between 6 and 8 zeroes
2. Ways and
4. Cereal, board game
5. Do away with
6. Heart-, skin-, critical-
7. Not employing
11. Not working
12. Found in schools
13. Hulking Bruce, you won't like him when he's angry
14. Misanthropes hate these
16. Happens in baseball
19. Catholic, impossible
21. Opposite of what happens in baseball
24. Wind, fire and
26. Better than bad
27. Just out of the box

Answers will appear in the next IW

NYC Union Barista Fired on a Friday, Unfired on a Monday

By FW double jeff

Barista Sheanel Simon went public with her Starbucks Workers Union (SWU) affiliation on Thursday, Jan. 29, was fired on Friday, Jan. 30, and rehired on Monday, Feb. 2.

Sheanel, an African-American single mother of two who is very well liked by her fellow workers but singled out by the largely white management at the Union Square East Starbucks in New York City, was fired the day after declaring her affiliation with the SWU. Store manager Gwen Krueger and Starbucks district manager Mark Ormsbee had Sheanel brew them a french press of coffee, which they enjoyed at their leisure while firing her—unintentionally illuminating everything that is wrong with capitalism. In that single moment, two white managers had the black single mom serve them before firing her in the middle of a global economic crisis, proving what we already knew about bosses: they are lazy, parasitic, and incapable of even making their own coffee!

The official reason given for Sheanel's termination was failure to follow the dress code: she has a tongue piercing, which violates the archaic "no visible piercings" rule.

However, this cannot have been the real reason. Sheanel had her tongue pierced the entire year and a half she worked for Starbucks with no formal reprimand. It was only the day after she

went public with her Union affiliation that her tongue piercing became a fire-able offense...

Over the next few days, Starbucks stepped up its subtle and not-so-subtle intimidation campaign against SWU baristas at Union Square East. District managers would come into the store from other districts, staring at Union baristas through their whole shifts, hovering over them while they worked the bar, repositioning the store cameras, interrogating both union and non-union baristas, and illegally soliciting grievances to undermine the union drive. Immediately following Sheanel's firing, SWU baristas Liberte Locke and Cezar Ramirez were subjected to interrogations by Krueger,

Ormsbee, district manager Tracy

Bryant and regional manager Nicole Mozeliak. During these illegal and unethical interrogations, they were told, among other things, that they would never win. Liberte was denied a lawyer and Union representation when she was called into the back of the store, to be reprimanded for the first

time in her two and a half years at Starbucks. When asked why she was so scared that she needed a "third party" involved, she made the observation that the fact that they were denying her a witness showed they are far more scared of us than we are of them. Both Liberte and Cezar stood their ground throughout an entire weekend of interrogations and intimidation.

NYC IWW members verbally

confronted Krueger in the store just hours after Sheanel was fired. In an act of solidarity, SWU members at the Twin Cities store in the Mall of America engaged in workplace direct action the night Sheanel was fired. Union baristas engaged in periodic work stoppages, where they announced loudly to customers that they were protesting the firings of two Union baristas, Sheanel Simon in New York and Neal Linder in the Twin Cities.

On Monday, Feb. 2, Sheanel was contacted at home by Krueger and told that Starbucks had reconsidered firing her; and that she could come back to work as long as she bought a clear retainer for her tongue piercing. Sheanel returned to work at Union Square East at 8:00 a.m. on Thursday, Feb. 5. Greeted with hugs and laughter by her co-workers (and some frowning managers), Simon proudly began her shift with her IWW pin firmly affixed to her Starbucks hat.

When Liberte Locke had informed regional manager Nicole Mozeliak that we would win Sheanel's job back, Mozeliak had responded with a grin and the words "No, no you won't." As Wobblies, we stood in solidarity and said, "Yes, yes we will." And we did.

The fight for the reinstatement of SWU barista Neal Linder continues.

For more information on the Starbucks Workers campaign go to www.starbucksunion.org



Graphic: Nicole Schulman

Starbucks Loses Round in Battle Over Union

By Steven Greenhouse

A National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) judge ruled on Dec. 23, 2008 that Starbucks had illegally fired three baristas and otherwise violated federal labor laws in seeking to beat back unionization efforts at several of its Manhattan cafes.

Administrative Law judge Mindy E. Landow found that Starbucks had also broken the law by issuing negative job evaluations to union supporters and prohibiting employees from discussing the union even though the employees were allowed to discuss other subjects not related to work.

"The judge's ruling shows that this company has trampled on workers' rights to organize a labor union," said one of the fired baristas, Daniel Gross, who is a long-time leader of the effort by the Industrial Workers of the World to unionize Starbucks workers in New York, Minnesota, Michigan and other states.

Judge Landow ordered that Mr. Gross and the two other baristas be reinstated to their jobs and receive back wages. She also ordered Starbucks to pledge to end what she said was discriminatory treatment toward workers who supported the union at four of its Manhattan shops: 200 Madison Avenue at 36th Street, 145 Second Avenue at 9th Street, 15 Union Square East and 116 East 57th Street.

Starbucks was quick to voice its dismay with the ruling.

While we respect the NLRB process, we're disappointed with the decision, and we intend to appeal it to the next

stage in the process," said Tara Darrow, a spokeswoman for Starbucks. She said the company was disappointed that the decision did not take into consideration what she said where personal threats lodged against managers.

Darrow said the company was proud of its tradition of communicating with its employees directly, and not through a union.

"We believe that at the end of this, our policies and approach will be deemed fair and consistent." The judge's ruling grows out of charges the

NLRB's Manhattan office brought against Starbucks in April 2007. Previously, in March 2006, Starbucks had reached a settlement with the union, agreeing to pay \$2,000 in back

pay and reinstating two other New York baristas who the Board said had been fired illegally as part of an effort to quash unionization. Judge Landow ruled against Starbucks on most issues, finding that its managers had improperly barred employees from

wearing more than one pro-union button and had illegally prohibited workers at its Union Square East store from posting union items on a company bulletin board.

The judge also ruled that a Starbucks manager had illegally prohibited employees from talking about wages and other terms of employment. But the judge found that Starbucks managers did not improperly discriminate when they prohibited two union supporters from wearing what the managers said were overly obtrusive necklaces. The 88-page ruling describes a bitter and escalating battle between Starbucks and the union since it



Photo: Pittsburgh Indymedia

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Column

Working Family



Parents sticking with the IWW

By Peter Moore

Sticking with the IWW as a new parent can be a hard thing to do. The stock argument that we must “fight the power for their sake” rings hollow when doing so means spending less time with one’s children and partner.

As a father of two children under three years old, the needs of my family are often more concrete and immediate than the needs of the IWW. The baby and toddler need changing, walking, breastfeeding, consoling, dressing, bathing, immunizing, sleeping, and hugging. My partner needs showering, napping, feeding, listening, house cleaning, and more.

As we see the end of her paid maternity leave coming, I know that work will compress time even more. Our life is already a sandwich of family needs and the work regime. Personal time can disappear, and time for working with the IWW can get squeezed out, or at least fall in priority. Perhaps most challenging is that I have much less personal contact with my local Fellow Workers, limited to the branch meetings I can attend. Telephone and email help, but it’s not the same.

As the IWW doesn’t represent directly most of its members in the workplace, the need to be a member can come into question as the benefits are less tangible. As the children grow, budgets can get tight, so even that \$6 or \$18 a month for dues can become a place to cut expenses for more immediate needs, such as baby clothing, furniture or children’s activities.

So how can IWW members who are new or soon-to-be parents cope with the new reality and stick with the union?

An important “to-do” is to look at one’s current role in the union and see whether caring for children fits with the demands of that role; then, imagine a different role that does fit, however minimal. When an opportunity for organizer training came to Ottawa, I wanted to participate. But weekends are family time and, most importantly, break time for my partner; dumping the children on her to attend a weekend-long IWW event wasn’t fair. So I volunteered to cook the lunches for the training to reduce catering costs. That was something practical that I could do each morning while the children played in the kitchen and living room, where I could keep an eye on them. The food drop-offs gave me a chance to say a brief hello to members from Toronto and Ottawa, which was good enough.

Changing roles can be hard, especially if the members in your area or branch have counted on you to do certain tasks, such as leading pickets, posterizing, doing face-to-face organizing or being the local’s secretary-treasurer or delegate. As a parent who was the primary caregiver, I had new, unfamiliar limits. I learned the hard way that I could not commit to certain tasks; I missed important meetings or had to back out of commitments simply because taking

care of children is unpredictable.

Looked at positively, this provides the opportunity for other members to learn new skills and take on new responsibilities.

Also, there is a lot of important IWW work that can be done from home during the afternoons or evenings when the children are sleeping. Being part of a telephone tree, administrative work, research, monitoring the news, writing for the Industrial Worker, sending letters to the editor and planning are all possibilities, depending on each person’s situation, interest and skills.

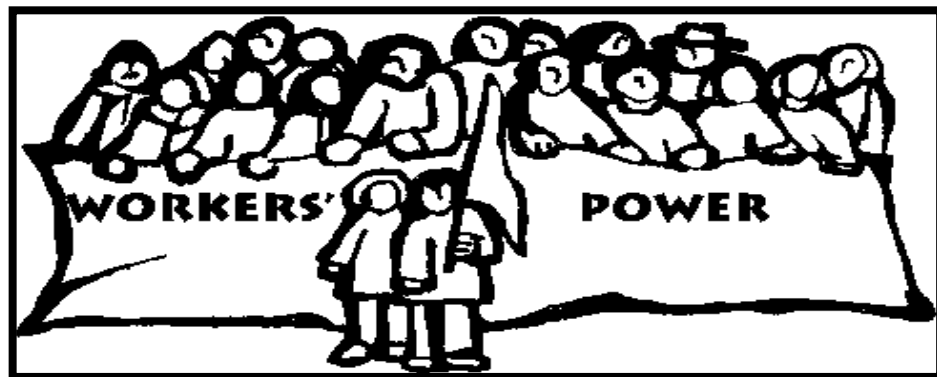
The second “to do” is to explain what is going on in your life with a pregnancy or adoption and a new baby. If most members in the branch don’t have children, they may not know what a new parent faces with a baby and what s/he needs.

For Wobs who see members of their locals become parents, stay in touch, help them out when they need it, deliver a meal, and accept the new role that these members are playing. Caring attention, not guilt-tripping and insensitive demands, is more likely to keep parents involved.

Here are a few tips for Wobs who want to maintain contact with members who are new parents. Before a union meeting, call the member and see if they want to raise a point or add something to the agenda for discussion, even though they can’t attend. After the meeting, make sure the minutes are promptly posted to the group’s email list or the parent gets a copy so they feel connected. If the child is older, then ask the parent how babysitting could work for them so they can participate. If a parent does get to a meeting, members should be mindful that their time is likely limited, so the meeting should start on time and be chaired efficiently. A meeting that turns into a waste of time is a deterrent for the parent (and indeed other members!) to commit to coming again next month.

Passing a childcare policy at a branch meeting is OK on a symbolic level, but it is best to figure out how it could work with the parent before doing so, or it will never be practical and useful for the people who need it most. For me, I didn’t want to leave my baby with anyone other than my wife for the first year. After that, finding and arranging for a babysitter I could trust was more hassle and the available branch subsidy didn’t pay for it. Fortunately, my branch is supportive when I bring my busy toddler to our meetings.

Finally, for parents who belong to this Union, remember that there are a lot of Wobblies, but your children only have you. Especially in the first five years of their lives, they need you more than the IWW does; it is OK to step back and concentrate on raising your child. Just stay a part of the rank-and-file, pay dues, and hopefully, you’ll have plenty of union friends to provide support and keep you connected to our generation’s struggle for the One Big Union.



Building Radical Unionism

By Adam W.

In the IWW, many of us have an opinion of the “service unionism” of most of the large trade unions. From this perspective, a union is seen as a service that workers pay for with dues. The service the union offers is representation with and protection from the boss.

On the IWW Organizing Department email list, a small debate arose over how services relate to our organizing. How do we not become the service unionism we criticize? Opposing service unionism is an important critique about unions and social movements in general, but whatever we may call them, services can play a useful role in building radical unionism and social movements.

We need to understand what service unionism is. It is usually defined as a passive relationship where workers expect union staff, outside representatives or even shop stewards to “fix things” for them. The model is prevalent throughout the US labor movement and can even occur in professed radical unions like the IWW. Unions promote this type of thinking through offering services such as credit cards, discounts or similar benefits. Slogans such as “Union membership pays!” suggest that the benefits of being a union member are like the advantages of signing up with Bank of American instead of Wells Fargo.

The part of service unionism we are trying to avoid is a relationship of expert and worker who needs help or leadership. What we want to create are services that are member to member and build leadership of workers. Such services play a role in integrating members into the larger union and the theory and practice of class struggle. Our consciousness around class struggle provides us with an important contrast to the mostly apolitical service unionism. We are trying to build a different world than the adherents of service unionism are. We try to make a concrete link between our ideas and the way we fight the bosses.

Service unionism creates vertical relationships where workers look to politicians, the government, lawyers, experts and even the bosses to get what they need. What we are trying to create are horizontal relationships between workers where workers look to each other, people in their communities or other workers around the world to address their needs. We often use terms like “solidarity” or “mutual aid” to describe this. This also doesn’t mean we will never use labor lawyers to support our fights. We will use them to support our organizing but we do not rely on a legal strategy and courts to do our work for us. Some of our fellow workers won’t take on leadership or expert roles. We seek to ensure that these roles do not become permanent and

try to teach skills to as many people as possible. We want everyone to become a leader. An example of this is the IWW’s Organizer Training Program, which is somewhat based on an expert-like relationship. What doesn’t make this service unionism is that we encourage participants to share their experiences. We build on those experiences during the trainings. Overall goal is that participants take these tools, put them into practice and they become the future trainers.

There are a number of other examples in the union. Many of our campaigns actively recruit workers sympathetic to our goals and help them with their resume and references to get a job in the industry they are organizing. In New York, Spanish speaking immigrant Mexican members working in food warehouses meet with English speaking members and they learn each others language from one another. Also recognizing that the fight of immigrant workers is the fight of all workers, New York members are referred to local immigration support services. The Chicago Couriers Union has a program that allows members to borrow a loaner bike if their own is suddenly damaged. The defunct South Street Workers Union in Philadelphia would organize clinics where the workers they were organizing. This allowed low wage retail and service workers without health insurance to get health screening and a check up by a nurse. They even had a member who was an accountant showing them how to get a rebate on their taxes many low-income workers do not know about (the Earned Income Tax Credit).

There are countless other examples of these currently throughout the union but also in history. The influence of late nineteenth century anarchist mutualists on the workers movement in Mexico is very strong. North of the US border, small towns made up of Mexican workers were run through various associations. Also practiced throughout the Mexican labor movement are worker run savings programs, banks, discounted food stores and health services. These can be important programs that help workers in the short run, reduce their dependency on capitalist institutions and allow them to gain experience with cooperatively run institutions.

The choice between providing services as a union and not providing them is a false choice. We need to keep the critique of service unionism. But we also need to provide services for our members by developing member-to-member relationships, building leadership and supporting programs that meet our needs. This will integrate workers into the union and connect them to the class struggle.



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Crisis Is Time For IWW Ideas, Organizing

By Chris Agenda (Portland IWW)

The current economic crash provides an opportunity for the IWW to push the battle against capitalist power structures to a new level. That being said, it also provides those same power structures an opportunity to push forward an even harsher conservative agenda.

As unemployment grows, along with foreclosures and associated socio-economic pressures, people will become increasingly dissatisfied and angry. The union's goal must be to help guide that anger in a clear and conscious direction against the ruling classes. If we fail to do so, we will become silent witnesses to a new wave of xenophobic and divisive propaganda. It is difficult to compete against a conservative, multi-billion dollar corporate media; but it is crucial we do so. The media will make sure that anti-immigrant and anti-union sentiments become an ever-more common theme in public discussion.

Undocumented workers, already highly exploited, will become an obvious target for the media. They will be used to focus the frustrations of the "average American working person" away from the government and corporations, despite their glaringly obvious culpability. Similarly, as we can see from the recent crisis in the automobile industry,

trade unions will quickly lose what influence they have. Greedy unions will be blamed for redundancies, rather than inept bosses.

The IWW should seize the moment, however, with a massive education campaign focused at examining the larger issues at hand, namely the workings of the capitalist system itself. This campaign can become the foundation for revival of a radical social and labor movement, as well as spreading a popular consciousness in which individuals know which side they are on.

Rather than begging for minor reforms and concessions, we can use this opportunity to radicalize workers with the hopes of larger gains. Factory/workplace occupations such as the one at Republic in Chicago could be but one of many tactics utilized as more support grows from the working class. Instead of encouraging more fiscal responsibility from above so that workers get a little piece of the economic splendors that imperialist capitalism promises, we need to transform our society by removing not just the obvious faults of the system, but the system in its entirety.

The reformist approach will look far more appealing to a lot of people, but it will not cause substantial change. A cost of living increase or an extra sick day will (maybe) be gained, not ownership

of the means of production or significant control of one's labor.

Worker Identity poses problems

Much historical emphasis has been placed on the potential role of workers in building a revolution, whether it be an explicitly "working class revolution," or as part of a broader revolutionary movement. The emphasis on the individual identifying as a worker has many benefits in terms of promoting solidarity, but also poses some problems.

For an individual to identify as solely a worker raises the dangerous specter of robotism. Hailed authors such as Antonio Negri (*Empire*) have referred to the modern radical as a cyborg, half human / half machine, tirelessly plugging away at work and activism with little room for emotion. While risking the crossing into some "fluffy" areas, it is important to confront this view.

We are human beings first and foremost, with all of the capacities and shortcomings that this includes. Identifying as "worker" can potentially play into the control mechanisms of society, whether it is capitalist, socialist or utopian. Becoming a cog in the machine, however progressive that machine may be, reduces the nature of our humanity to nothing more than being a tool. In my opinion, this is not something we should

aspire to since it can stunt our growth in other areas, both personally and politically (and some would argue these are the same).

If we are looking for a revolutionary process that simultaneously changes society as a whole and us as individuals then we need to remember that being an IWW member is only one aspect of our approach. So what does that mean for how the IWW organizationally addresses this in our work?

I believe the union's education, internally and in outreach efforts, must reflect a wider scope of issues related to personal development; we must go beyond teaching the principles of worker solidarity and industrial unionism. There are many layers of oppression, and so there should also be many layers of resistance. These methods of resistance require self-education and a healthy approach to self-criticism.

Democratic unionism can be more than an economic movement if we intentionally make it so, by combining other aspects of social transformation within it. This is where the IWW stands apart from other unions or the labor movement as a whole. The radical history of, and critical analysis by the IWW provides room for a wider movement as we strive towards a truly different society.

IWW Members Hold Organizer Training in South Texas



Photo: Greg Rodriguez

By Greg Rodriguez

MCALLEN, Texas—The weekend of Jan. 31-Feb. 1, 2009 was a historic one for the radical labor movement in general, but also for workers in the Rio Grande Valley (South Texas) looking to create democracy on the job. The IWW—an international labor union known for its principles of direct action and working class empowerment—held a training for working residents of the Deep South Texas area. Young labor leaders from Laredo, McAllen, Edinburg, and Mission attended the two day event.

Space for the training was provided by the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 5, which organizes local public employees, including Hidalgo County and Hidalgo County Head Start workers.

The training was independently organized by a group of local IWW members whose goal is to establish an officially chartered IWW branch in the months to come.

Attendees were able to be part of a very comprehensive and participatory educational experience. By means of role plays, brainstorming, and discussion,

participants learned how to talk to their fellow workers about the union.

"The training was really good. It really kept my interest throughout the entire weekend," said local IWW member and training participant, Sammy Zumwalt.

"Now I feel positive and confident about organizing because I know the steps I need to take in order to have a successful union effort," Zumwalt added.

The training, given by IWW members Jefferson Pierce (Pennsylvania) and Patrick Brenner (Illinois), whom are significantly involved with the IWW's national and international activity. They are part of the IWW Organizer Training Committee, which was formed in 2003 for the purposes of training workers across the United States to become radical labor organizers, grow IWW ranks, and to increase national solidarity with the broader labor movement.

"I think it's important to have these trainings because they give workers the confidence to improve their lives at work and improve the world as well. The McAllen training went very well and I found the burgeoning group very inspiring," said Brenner.

IWW Principles

Why does the IWW stand out from other labor unions in this country? What makes the IWW a radical labor organization is its principles and structure.

One fundamental difference between the IWW and the rest of the labor movement is its emphasis on member-run unions in strict opposition to the capitalist class.

Since its founding in 1905, the IWW has held strong to the idea that the strength of the working class lies in its ability to control the flow of production, and that employees and employers have nothing in common—one exploits while the other is exploited. Furthermore, the organization collectively believes that decisions concerning any work place should be made by its respective workers—not by some bureaucrat entirely disinterested from the shop floor (not to mention, the working class in general)—as is the case with most large trade unions today. IWW leaves the face of every labor action, dispute or negotiation up to the creativity and ingenuity of each individual branch.

The concept is that every work group knows what is best for them,

therefore it should have the ultimate say on what type of strategies to execute. The IWW also believes that in order to develop a successful working class movement capable of dealing with the fundamental problems of our society, all workers—irrespective of trade, skill or industry—should be united into one big union.

Moving forward in the Valley

Totally energized and boosted by the skills learned at the training, the local IWW group is ready to put their newly acquired knowledge into action. They seek to grow Valley IWW membership and play an effective role in the local labor struggle.

At a time when unions are on the decline and society finds itself in a state of economic crisis, Zumwalt says, "Things will only get worse if no unions exist — this is especially true of the Rio Grande Valley, where many workers are susceptible to abuse at work."

"I like the IWW because they really try to involve workers in the plan for change. They have a vision that embodies democratic values and workplace democracy," he added.

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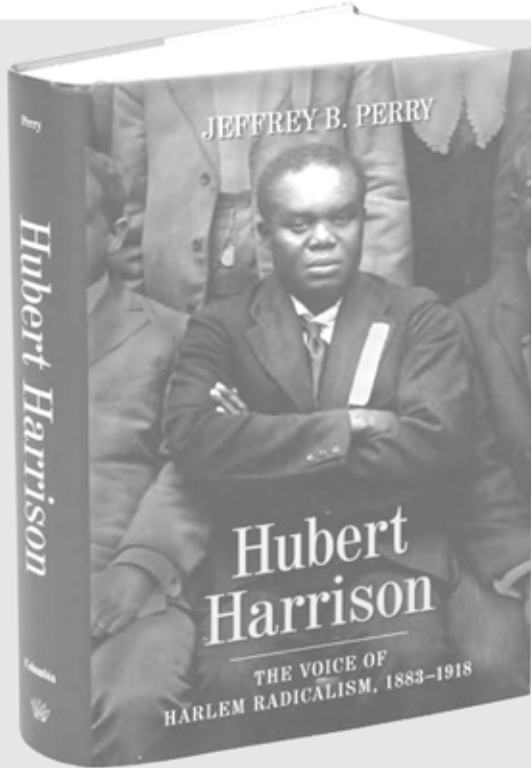
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**Hubert Harrison:
 The Voice of
 Harlem
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 1883-1918**

BY JEFFREY B. PERRY

Hubert Harrison was an immensely skilled writer, orator, educator, critic, and political activist who, more than any other political leader of his era, combined class consciousness and anti-white-supremacist race consciousness into a coherent political radicalism. Harrison's ideas profoundly influenced "New Negro" militants, including A. Philip Randolph and Marcus Garvey, and his synthesis of class and race issues is a key unifying link

between the two great trends of the Black Liberation Movement: the labor- and civil-rights-based work of Martin Luther King Jr. and the race and nationalist platform associated with Malcolm X.

The foremost Black organizer, agitator, and theoretician of the Socialist Party of New York, Harrison was also a supporter of the IWW, the founder of the "New Negro" movement, the editor of *Negro World*, and the principal radical influence on the Garvey movement. He was a highly praised journalist and critic (reportedly the first regular Black book reviewer), a freethinker and early proponent of birth control, a supporter of Black writers and artists, a leading public intellectual, and a bibliophile who helped transform the 135th Street Public Library into an international center for research in Black culture. His biography offers profound insights on race, class, religion, immigration, war, democracy, and social change in America.

624pp, hardcover, \$37.50



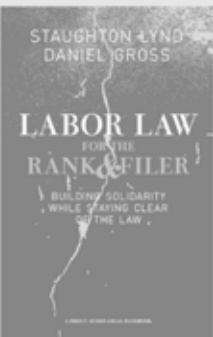
**Wobblies and Zapatistas:
 Conversations on Anarchism,
 Marxism and Radical History**

BY STAUGHTON LYND AND ANDREJ GRUBACIC

Wobblies and Zapatistas offers the reader an encounter between two generations and two traditions. Andrej Grubacic is an anarchist from the Balkans. Staughton Lynd is a lifelong pacifist, influenced by Marxism. They meet in dialogue in an effort to bring together the anarchist and Marxist traditions, to discuss the writing of history by those who make it, and to remind us of the idea that "my country is the world." Encompassing a Left libertarian perspective and an emphatically activist standpoint, these conversations are

meant to be read in the clubs and affinity groups of the new Movement. The book invites the attention of readers who believe that a better world, on the other side of capitalism and state bureaucracy, may indeed be possible.

300 pages, \$19.95



**Labor Law for the Rank and Filer:
 Building Solidarity While Staying Clear of
 the Law**

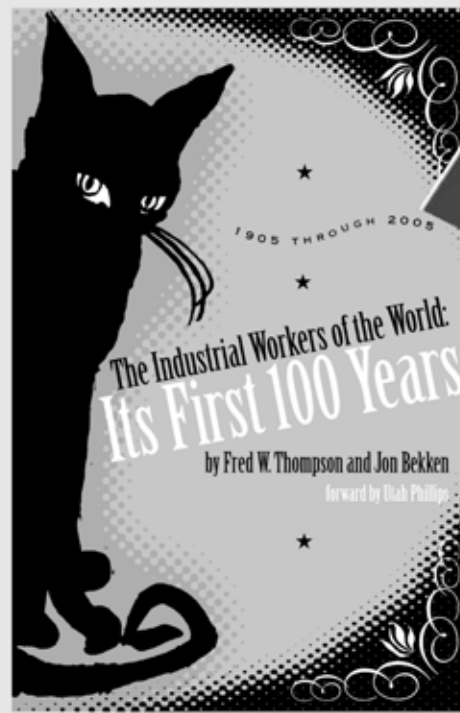
BY STAUGHTON LYND AND DANIEL GROSS

Have you ever felt your blood boil at work but lacked the tools to fight back and win? Or have you acted together with your co-workers, made progress, but wondered what to do next? If you are in a union, do you find that the union operates top-down just like the boss and ignores the will of its members?

Labor Law for the Rank and Filer is a guerrilla legal handbook for workers in a precarious global economy. Blending cutting-edge legal strategies for winning justice at work with a theory of dramatic social change from below, Staughton Lynd and Daniel Gross deliver a practical guide for making work better while re-invigorating the labor movement.

Labor Law for the Rank and Filer demonstrates how a powerful model of organizing called "Solidarity Unionism" can help workers avoid the pitfalls of the legal system and utilize direct action to win. This new revised and expanded edition includes new cases governing fundamental labor rights as well as an added section on Practicing Solidarity Unionism. This new section includes chapters discussing the hard-hitting tactic of working to rule; organizing under the principle that no one is illegal, and building grassroots solidarity across borders to challenge neoliberalism, among several other new topics. Illustrative stories of workers' struggles make the legal principles come alive.

110 pages, \$10.00



**The Industrial Workers of the
 World: Its First 100 Years**
 by Fred W. Thompson & Jon Bekken
 forward by Utah Phillips

The IWW: Its First 100 Years is the most comprehensive history of the union ever published. Written by two Wobblies who lived through many of the struggles they chronicle, it documents the famous struggles such as the Lawrence and Paterson strikes, the fight for decent conditions in the Pacific Northwest timber fields, the IWW's pioneering organizing among harvest hands in the 1910s and 1920s, and the war-time repression that sent thousands of IWW members to jail. But it is the only general history to give substantive attention to the IWW's successful organizing of African-American and immigrant dock workers on the Philadelphia waterfront, the international union of seamen the IWW built from 1913 through the 1930s, smaller job actions through which the IWW transformed working conditions, Wobbly successes organizing in manufacturing in the 1930s and 1940s, and the union's recent resurgence. Extensive source notes provide guidance to readers wishing to explore particular campaigns in more depth. There is no better history for the reader looking for an overview of the history of the IWW, and for an understanding of its ideas and tactics.

255 pages, \$19.95

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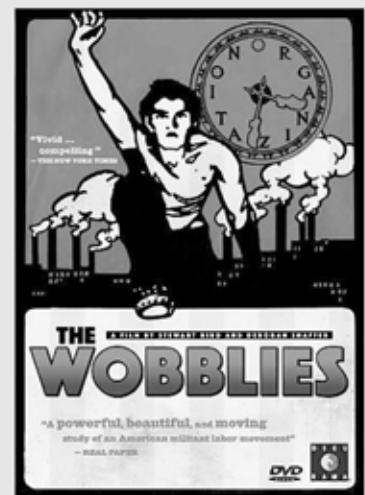


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The Wobblies DVD

This documentary from 1979 takes a look at the IWW's organizing from its early days, with a combination of interviews from the people who were there, and archival footage. Features songs and appearances by Utah Phillips.

90 minutes, \$26.95

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Movie Review

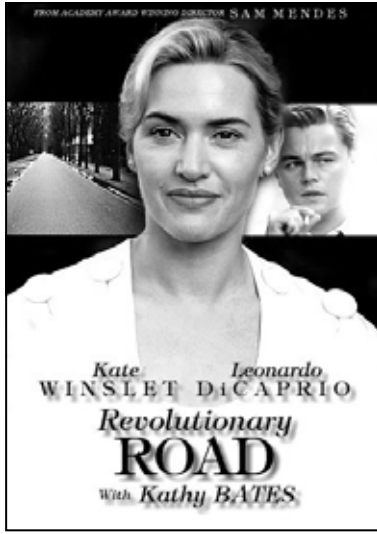
Revolutionary Road Is About Desire For Freedom

By Mike Ballard

Wage-slaves tend to reproduce the lives their parents lived, with minor changes of location and personnel. Some young adults, of course, swear they'll live life differently; they have youthful, Kerouac-like urge to escape the Big Bourgeois Trap, to jump in the car, put the pedal to the metal and be free.

However, just because you spend your life on the road doesn't mean you're free. Willy Loman of Arthur Miller's "Death of a Salesman" was a tired, forgotten wage-slave near the end of the (actual and metaphorical) road—loyal to his bosses, disloyal to his wife, lying to his kids at the same time as supporting them financially thanks to his tireless journeys. (Ironically, or not, Elia Kazan, who directed Lee J. Cobb as Loman, has a granddaughter with a significant role in Revolutionary Road.)

Willy Loman's world is just one aspect of this 1955-centered movie which can be mined by the mindful. There are others, including references to Edward Albee's George and Martha in "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?" with its bickering, secrets, lies, the use of sex as a weapon in the struggle between married men and women. However, there's more to Revolutionary Road than this.



Graphic: elseptimoarte.wordpress.com

Revolutionary Road is about the desire for freedom—an instinct stomped on inside the Big Bourgeois Trap from the time you are a "terrible two" until you've finally "grown up" and decided you must be an adult and conform. Either that or die, become a hobo or be thrown in an insane asylum like the mathematics PhD John Givings in the movie. Givings (played by the excellent Michael Shannon) is the kind of Frances Farmer non-conformist who has not grown out of child-like bluntness, who must therefore be shocked to keep from shocking others. (Was he thrown in the asylum by his

ever loving mother, played by Kathy Bates?) He blurts out truths, even within proper, safe social settings. He blurts them out like the machine gun fire one might face as a soldier during WWII.

Frank Wheeler (Leonardo Di Caprio) has heard this kind of truth before. At first, he and April (Kate Winslett) recognize it and embrace it. Frank had been a soldier, facing death in WWII, a war still fresh in the memory. It was in the face of death, he confesses to his wife April that he felt most alive. And April, whose love for her husband has been challenged by the hum-drum life of housewifery in the safe, leafy suburbs of New York City, confesses that she felt the same, existential awakening when first experienced making love with Frank, back when they were young and on their own revolutionary road away from the ordinary lives which their parents had lived. (This moment of mutual recognition leads to a steamy sex scene in the kitchen. Oscars, anybody?)

The thing is that Frank is now a salesman for the same company which employed his father, and he sees the death trap of Willy Loman looming over him, much as Willy's children saw it destroy their father. April sees it too. So they decide it's time to chuck it all and take a chance on Paris. Yes, "move the

whole catastrophe," to quote Zorba) to Europe, where the existentialist juices are flowing as freely as the espresso at Les Deux Magots.

The suddenly rekindled prospect of 'finding themselves' lies over the rainbow-shrouded Atlantic Ocean; they must shake off the doldrums of life in the '50s 'burbs—the father kissing the wife goodbye in the morning and taking off to bring home the bacon from the office which Mr. Dithers runs, while the kids run around in the yard shouting "Mommy" and "Daddy." However, when it comes down to it and Frank is offered a big promotion in sales (as an ad-man for the Next Big Thing—new, exotic machines called computers), he falters, and is tempted by the bait in the Trap.

April is not. She is still struck with the idea of getting out, perhaps escaping to the sheltering skies of Tangiers with her lover, rather than end up as yet another Lucy Jordan, wife to that ultimate tragic victim of capitalism, Willy Loman. Thus, lovers become haters and the road to revolution in their lives turns into its opposite: slow death on the installment plan in middlebrow suburbia, complete with occasional visits to a reputable psychiatrist, so they can remain safely shrink-wrapped inside the Big Bourgeois Trap.



Suggestions for improving the IW

continued from 1

(that unfortunately, but realistically) makes them think of Sovie Russia. Workers instinctively know their interests. And, no doubt, the current economic crisis has laid bare the faulty foundations of the capitalist system, but we still need to be aware of how to best approach folks so that our message most strongly resonates. This brings us to the next article of contention...

Conservative Workers Ready for Exploitation

Many of the drivers I'm helping organize in the NC 530 campaign may very well identify as conservative. They may have an inherent understanding of the labor theory of value; they may realize that only organized power, not an appeal to fairness, can counteract the inhuman drive for corporate profit; but they may also be proud gun owners and go to church every week. We're an economic organization, not a political one, and any worker who is willing to use direct action in the workplace and does not violate the constitution is welcome to join. I realize the author may have specifically meant economically conservative workers, but regardless, a headline such as this instantly alienates socially conservative workers. When the IW offers analysis, we should concentrate on helping less politicized workers understand the nature of class society and do it in a non-confrontational way. As I'm sure you can imagine, these two examples

can be generalized throughout the entire paper. Finally, I have three more general criticisms:

1) We need to be more positive when reporting on IWW actions. Instead of "IWW Member Fired for Organizing" the IW's headline should focus on the more positive aspects of a less-than-ideal situation. A headline like "IWW Members, Community Support Organizer" and then an explanation of the situation would paint a much more positive picture of union membership.

2) More images. We need to be able to draw readers in. When members submit articles (and I certainly know I'm guilty of this) we ought to make an effort to include at least one picture. Unless the article reflects a current event, the editors should feel empowered to send the article back requesting an appropriate photo before a story will be published.

3) Better editing. I appreciate the hard work of the IW staff, but there are just way too many typos, rushed editing jobs, and poorly-worded sentences. Before the IW goes to press there should be a list of five to ten Fellow Workers who read each article and check for typos and clarity of prose. I, for one, will volunteer for an IW final edit committee. I encourage others to do the same.

For the One Big Union and the One Awesome *Industrial Worker*, X361737, Raleigh, NC

Announcing the Lafayette Area General Membership Branch of the Industrial Workers of the World

On Jan. 21, 2009, the Lafayette, Indiana area GMB of the Industrial Workers of the World came into being. Our branch began with a single individual five years ago who instilled in others the spirit to agitate for workers' control of industry. Gradually, we've grown in numbers, now being 14 strong in our GMB. Though this is a major step for a generally right-wing, apathetic, "American" town, it is still only the beginning. We hope that this achievement, along with the other recent successes of the IWW, will encourage others to see that another world is possible, but only with a lot of hard work.

We are currently organizing to begin

IWW should support 'sweat-free' campaign

Fellow Workers,

I encourage the all members of the IWW, and particularly our representatives elected to the International Solidarity Committee and IWW members who are students at colleges and universities that license their logos to read the 2007-2008 Workers' Rights Consortium report to its affiliates, which can be accessed here: http://www.workersrights.org/linkedddocs/WRCReportToAffiliates_20072008.pdf

It's remarkable for many reasons: the scope of work that the WRC is undertaking, the description of the power dynamics within the global apparel industry, the frankness with which the WRC's university affiliates are confronted with the obstacles they face as licensees which have accepted responsibility for the enforcement of their codes of conduct.

Accepted at face value—as a report to university administrations that describes their role and what is done with the funding they provide the WRC, we cannot help but be impressed and gratified at what the WRC has accomplished and what students have accomplished by convincing their administrations to adopt this "academic standard" of accountability.

The WRC, and the university's commitment, is real leverage—but if we don't ask ourselves what it will take to support a global apparel union organizing drive,

the formation of Industrial Unions in the Lafayette area and agitating workers towards the class struggle. These actions are in the preliminary stages, but we hope to begin by organizing our meeting structures around IUs relevant to where our employed members work, and gearing unemployed members towards the wider dissemination of class struggle education. This seems to us, given our geographical location and the socio-political climate, to be the best way of taking forward the IWW in our area.

We wish you all luck in your struggles; your injuries shall be our own.

In solidarity,

The Lafayette Area IWW

then it's only "academic." We've got to force the college and university affiliates to complete their disclosure process with licensees and respond to WRC investigations. By and large—this is not happening. When it does, it is the exception, when it should be the rule.

We've got to use the leverage of an "academic" standard as a model for government and private industry. The colleges and universities speak endlessly of collaborations with local government and how much they have to offer governmental policy-makers. They should be directly involved in collaborations with local governments who are struggling to enforce local "SweatFree" procurement policies.

The strength of the collegiate campaigns is the communities of students/alumni/workers that identify with the university logos and are rightfully horrified that schools ignore sweatshop working conditions. The impact of the WRC—the Civil Rights Bridges we are building from our communities to the floor of the global sweatshops—need to have A LOT more leverage over the industry. This is the context in which I ask my

Fellow Workers to consider the efforts of "SweatFree Baseball" and our campaign targeting our home team—the Pittsburgh Pirates. No Sweatshops Bucco!

Sincerely Yours,
Kenneth Miller

To reach the new Freight Truckers Hotline, call 847-693-6261 or email mtw530@iww.org

World Labor Solidarity

A COLUMN BY THE INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY COMMISSION

The IWW formed the International Solidarity Commission to help the union build the worker-to-worker solidarity that can lead to effective action against the bosses of the world. To contact the ISC, email solidarity@iww.org.

By Adam Lincoln

New ISC for 2009

Justin Vitiello, Adam Lincoln and Michael Ashbrook have been elected to the 2009 ISC. This promises to be an exciting year for the ISC as the three members are based in Philadelphia, London and Luxembourg. We are all planning to participate in solidarity delegations throughout the year.

ISC Resolution on Gaza

The first act of the 2009 ISC was to pass a resolution condemning the invasion and bombing of Gaza by the Israeli state:

"The International Solidarity Commission (ISC) of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) condemns in the strongest possible terms the military attack by the Israeli state and IDF on the 1.5 million Palestinian people living in the Gaza strip. This attack has included sustained indiscriminate aerial bombing of urban population centers, schools, mosques, hospitals and other civilian infrastructure. Hundreds of civilians have been killed and injured, and homes have been destroyed. This attack is a form of collective punishment by the Israeli state against the people in Gaza. This attack on the people in Gaza is barbaric and represents an attack on the working class in all countries.

"The ISC condemns the 18-month siege against the population in Gaza which has prevented food, electricity, medical supplies, and other basic necessities from reaching the people of Gaza and crippling the economy. This form of collective punishment against the people of Gaza is barbaric and represents an attack on the working class in all countries.

"The ISC condemns rocket attacks fired into southern Israel by various factions in Gaza. These attacks have killed and injured Israeli civilians. This form of collective punishment against the people of southern Israel represents an attack on the working class in all countries.

"The ISC recognizes the urgency and massive scale of the current attacks and mass murder against the people of Gaza by the Israeli state.

"The IWW is a revolutionary international industrial union that works to build unity of workers and working class people across all borders, occupations, industries, religions, races and nationalities. The IWW stands, and has always stood against all wars. Wars are caused by capitalist governments, and anti-working class leaders and movements, for the economic and political benefit of the ruling elites. We the working class are made to fight each other against our own interests.

"The working class and the employing class have nothing in common. The working class have no borders. An injury to one is an injury to all. "The ISC extends our total and unflinching support to the people of Gaza and will work within and without the IWW to organize

and mobilize support against this military aggression. The ISC will do all in our power to find ways to provide practical assistance to the people of Gaza.

"We extend our hands of class solidarity to all our brothers and sisters in the region in occupied Palestine, Israel, and everywhere.

"The ISC will continue to build links of solidarity across the region so that we may all help each other in our local struggles. Only when we unite together, and shake off the chains of oppression and injustice that divide us from each other, can we build a world with no bosses and no masters.

"All wars are bosses wars. Victory to the workers and people of the world!"

ISC delegation to Palestine

The ISC is planning to send a delegation of workers from North America (and possibly the United Kingdom and Europe) to visit Palestinian labor unions and workers organizations in September or October 2009, for about 10-15 days. The purpose would be to learn about and document the struggles of workers in Palestine, strengthen our contacts in the Middle East, and lay the groundwork for a strategic relationship of solidarity between the IWW and Palestinian unions.

If any IWW members are interested in participating please get in contact with the ISC.

International Day of Action for education workers

Following the meetings of education unions at the I-07 syndicalist conference in Paris, an international day of action against union-busting and for a liberated education system will take place on Apr. 4, 2009. This date was chosen as a tribute to Carlos Fuentealba, an Argentinian teacher and unionist, shot dead by the police, with a flashball at point blank range, on a picket.

South African Dockworkers refuse to unload Israeli ship

South African dock workers announced their refusal to offload cargo from a ship carrying goods from Israel scheduled to arrive in Durban on Feb. 8. It follows the decision by dock workers there to strengthen the campaign in South Africa for boycotts, divestment and sanctions against "apartheid" Israel, a statement said.

Workers struggles grow in France

Trade unions in France (CGT, CFDT, FOR, FSU, CFE-CGC, CFTC, UNSA and CNT-F) called workers in the private and public, the unemployed and pensioners in France out for a general strike on Jan. 29.

The national general strike was a resounding success for the unions, left political parties and many other groups who called it, with some two million workers in the streets, equal to the largest of recent mobilizations.

Asian Guest Workers in Occupied Iraq Riot Against US KBR Construction Company

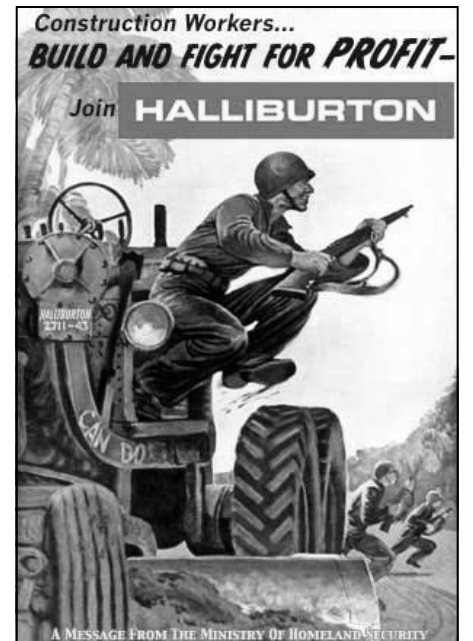
By John Kalwaic

Back in December 2008, security guards fired on 1,000 South Asian guest workers for rioting against the US construction company Kellogg Brown & Root (KBR) in Baghdad. The guest workers worked for a Kuwaiti company, Najlaa International Catering Services, which is one of the many subcontractors to Houston-based KBR.

KBR is a spin-off company of Halliburton, long associated with former U.S. Vice President Dick Cheney. KBR is the largest non-union construction company in the United States, as well as being the largest contractor in occupied Iraq. KBR has come under fire many times from Iraqi trade unions for attempts privatize oil, and also has an impending lawsuit against it over human trafficking.

The guest workers, who were primarily from India, Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka, included laborers, clerks, chefs, nurses and doctors. Each had to pay \$3,000 to a middleman so they could get to their promised jobs in Baghdad. However, Najlaa failed to secure enough contract work inside US military bases in Iraq; when their promised jobs fell through, the workers were detained in three large warehouses in a walled compound at Baghdad Airport.

When Iraqi immigration officials



Graphic: [http:// digitalseance.wordpress.com](http://digitalseance.wordpress.com) visited the compound, the workers began throwing water bottles and stones at them. The compound's security guards fired on the workers, which prompted Iraqi police to intervene. The workers then called on the US military to meet with them, only to be told by a spokesman that they were looking into the situation.

KBR has denied holding the workers at the compound.

Workers Occupy Crystal Factory in Ireland



Crystal Factory workers wait at the front desk.

Photo: Unite Union

By John Kalwaic

Workers at the Crystal Factory, which produces glass in Waterford, Ireland, are occupying their factory after a decision to stop production. The factory is owned by Waterford Wedgwood, which went into receivership on Jan. 5.

The decision, which made 480 of Crystal Factory's 670 workers redundant, was made by receiver David Carson of finance company Deloitte Ireland. The

Unite union, which represents the workers, has met with management, the receiver and the Irish government to work out a deal for the workers, while waiting for one of two companies to buy the factory. Carson claims that the halting of the factory's production is not permanent. The workers, however, are determined to keep their factory open, and are occupying its lobby until the receiver agrees to meet with them.

Wobbly Art Corner: "Drechos" by Tom Keough



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