THE GUILD Reporter

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BILL BURKE/Washington-Baltimore Guild

Communications Workers of America President Morton Bahr welcomes TNG elected officers, staff and guests to CWA headquarters on Oct. 26. Shown are, from left, CWA Secretary-Treasurer Barbara Easterling, Bahr, TNG President Charles Dale and TNG Secretary-Treasurer Linda K. Foley.

Search narrows to CWA

Silver Spring, Md.—The International Executive Board—citing the news industry's evolving technological landscape—has called for an affiliation/merger agreement with the Communications Workers of America.

The IEB voted unanimously on Oct. 25 after the board's five-member merger subcommittee recommended affiliation with the more than 600,000-member CWA.

An affiliation/merger resolution, moved by TNG President Charles Dale and seconded by Canadian Director Mike Bocking, said in part:

"Just as we evolved from a union of editorial-only employees to one representing employees in all newspaper departments to a union with members in virtually all facets of the news industry, we must now continue that evolution to become part of a larger organization representing workers all along the Information Superhighway."

More IEB coverage ... Page 5

The resolution was adopted in a unanimous roll call vote of the 17-member IEB following a 90-minute discussion. The vote narrowed the merger exploration process, which began in earnest with the 1993 Convention's adoption of a four-year Strategic Plan, to a single union.

The CWA emerged as the leading merger candidate after the subcommittee, formed by the IEB last June, conducted talks with several unions, including the International Brotherhood of Teamsters and the Graphic Communications International Union.

"There are no other unions out there that meet all the goals TNG has set for itself," Dale told the IEB.

Dale, Bocking and other subcommittee members praised the willingness of CWA negotiators to preserve Guild traditions and identity—including enhanced Canadian autonomy—in a merged union.

Dale stressed that many details remain to be worked out in an affiliation/merger agreement, which would return to the IEB for its approval.

An agreement, if adopted by the IEB, would go to the Guild's 1995 Convention in Boston. If adopted by the Convention, a proposed merger with the CWA would go on to separate referendum elections among Guild members in the United States and Canada.

Under TNG's Constitution, merger may not be implemented unless ratified by Guild members in both countries.

The IEB resolution calls on Guild activists to discuss and debate the CWA merger issue at the local and district council levels.

The Canadian District Council, meeting on Montreal on Oct. 29-30, responded by forming its own committee to study merger options for Canadian Guild members.

The Western District Council, meeting the same weekend, also formed a committee to answer locals' merger-related questions at the council's winter meeting.

Merger with the CWA also was discussed by the Midwest District Council, meeting Nov. 5-6 in Kenosha, Wis., and and by

(Continued on Page 6)

Locals make gains in strike, lockout

Related stories ... Pages 2, 3 and 8

Some 2,000 Guild members in two West Coast locals took to the streets almost simultaneously in early November and returned to work in less than two weeks' time with better contracts.

In both San Francisco and Vancouver, B.C., Guild and other newspaper union locals prevailed on the strength of joint bargaining and mobilization of members.

On Nov. 1, some 1,100 members of the Northern California Guild were among 2,600 workers who struck the San Francisco Chronicle, the San Francisco Examiner and the agency that prints and distributes the dailies under a joint operating agreement.

The strike came after more than a year of dead-end contract talks and 20 hours after the company failed to return to the bargaining table.

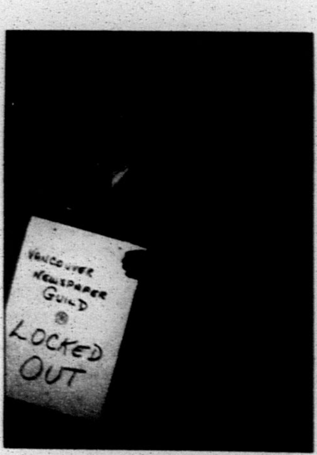
A day later in Vancouver, 900 members of the Guild along with 300 members of other unions at the Southam-owned Sun and Province found themselves locked out after more than a year of bargaining had produced no agreements.

The publisher was barred by British Columbia law from hiring replacement workers and did not attempt to publish. The company did bring in a special security force but was forced to abandon that strategy when the Guild filed charges with the provincial Labour Relations Board. The Vancouver Guild represents security workers at Pacific Press, the company that publishes the Sun and Province for Southam.

The Vancouver unions maintained a 24-hour picket line—and produced a daily newsletter to update members—while talks progressed steadily toward an agreement.

The San Francisco unions were faced with a more formidable problem as the agency attempted to publish the Chronicle and Examiner with managers and replacement workers.

The unions countered with the San Francisco Free Press, a strike paper that is believed to be the first such publication to be available worldwide via the Internet computer network.



STEVE BOSCH/Vancouver Guild

Vancouver Guild President Jan O'Brien gets a hand with her picket sign from Andrea MacBride, 2nd vice president. (Story, Page 2)

BRIEF

Members ratify at Boston Herald

Members of the Boston Guild's editorial and commercial units at the Boston Herald on Nov. 10 ratified a new contract that provides four pay increases—of 3, 3.5, 4 and 4.5 percent—over a five-year duration.

The new agreement replaces a contract that expired in July 1992 and ends a legal battle between the Guild and the publisher over jurisdiction in a newly created art department that combines advertising artwork that historically had been divided among the Guild and two other unions.

New employees hired into the department will be required to join either the Guild or CWA/ITU to maintain previous membership ratios.

The weekly reporter top minimum, which was $791.35 in the old contract, will reach $917.17 in the final year of the new agreement. The outside sales key in the commercial unit will go from $721.45 to $837.11. The two units cover some 280 employees at the tabloid.

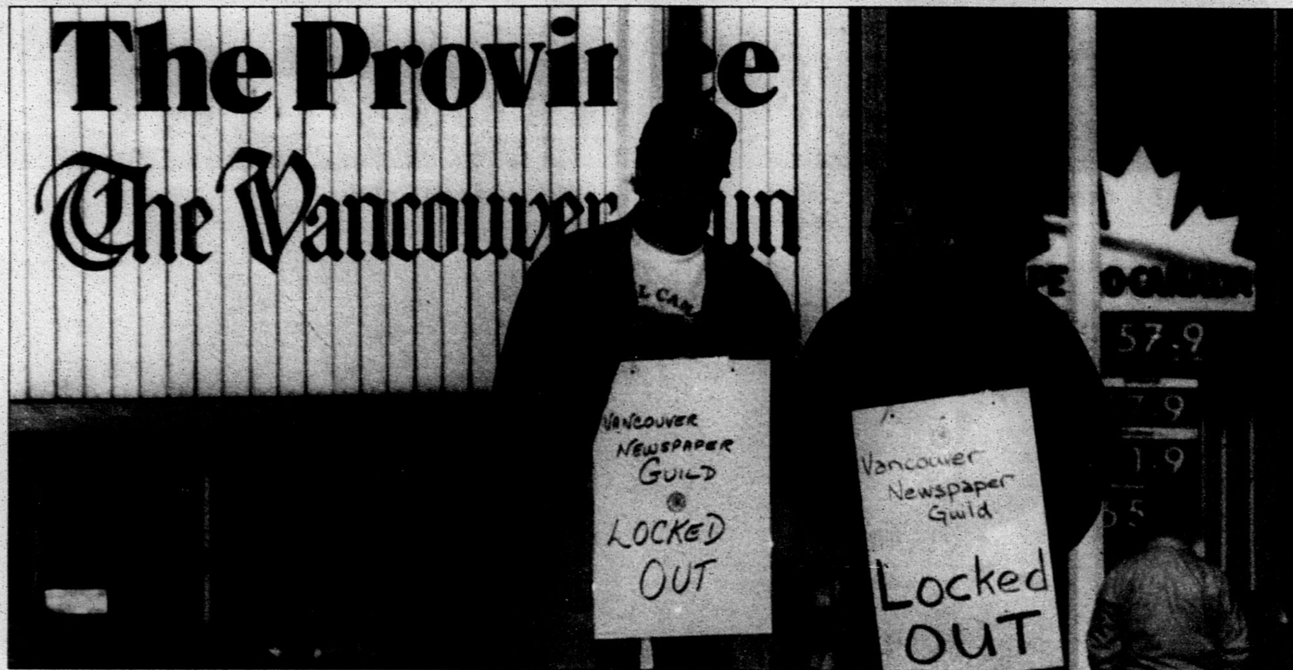
The agreement also resolves pending litigation between the two parties, including three NLRB charges, five arbitrations and a company unit clarification petition.

Ottawa Guild members have ratified a new three-year contract that provides a $500 signing bonus and a 3.53 percent pay increase. The local represents 379 workers in the editorial, circulation, business and maintenance departments at the Southam-owned Ottawa, Ont., Citizen. The top weekly key for reporters and circulation district supervisors will reach $1,043.58 in the final year of the pact, ratified by 80 percent of voting members.

Chicago Guild members on Nov. 16 ratified a three-year agreement with the Sun-Times that provides first-year increases of 4 percent with an additional 2 percent in each of the following two years. The weekly reporter top minimum will go from the previous $975.02 to $1,065.77 in the third year. The agreement was reached on the Guild's Nov. 7 strike deadline.

The Guild represents 265 editorial workers at the Sun-Times, owned by the Conrad Black-controlled Hollinger Corp.

The vote came a day after fellow local members in separate editorial and production units at the suburban Pioneer Press, also owned by Hollinger, ratified 3.5-year agreements. The 115 editorial workers will receive a 5.1 percent increase the first year. The 100 production workers, who had been under posted conditions since February, will receive first-year increases ranging from 1 to 3 percent.



CHRIS KINDRATSKY/Vancouver Guild

Guild members David Hogben, left, and Gerry Bellett, both Vancouver Sun reporters, walk the picket line in Vancouver.

Vancouver accord ends lockout of workers

Vancouver—A new five-year agreement between the Vancouver Guild and Pacific Press provides pay increases and give the Guild a wider role in restructuring of work at the Province and Sun.

The agreement, reached Nov. 10 after a marathon 21-hour bargaining session between the company and the Joint Council of Unions, ended a nine-day lockout of union-covered workers.

The pact was ratified by 92 percent of Guild members on Nov. 12. Other joint council unions also ratified their agreements with the company and work resumed in time to publish the Nov. 13 Sunday edition of the Province.

The Guild pact includes no raise for the first year. However, there will we a $500 signing bonus and a 1 percent pay increase in the second year, effective Dec. 1.

The contract calls for a 1.5 percent increase in December 1995 and 2 percent each in 1996 and 1997. The wage increase in those last two years may increase by an extra 1 percent if the Vancouver price index increases by 3 percent or more.

Other improvements in the new contract include:

- Health care benefits to domestic partners and includes sick leave improvements.
- A voluntary early retirement package featuring six weeks of pay for each year of service up to a maximum of $150,000.
- No job loss as a result of contracting out of work.
- A strengthened pension plan that provides for mandatory participation by newly hired employees.
- Increased support for employees who work at home, including access to a local Guild electronic bulletin board.
- Maternal leave of up to one year.
- A joint committee to ensure that employees' training needs are met.

Vancouver Guild President Jan O'Brien said the pact puts the Guild in a stronger position to deal with issues relating to technological change in the workplace as well as economic restructuring at Pacific Press, which has long sought to reduce work force.

The contract sets up a joint Guild-management committee to oversee restructuring. O'Brien said the committee will make certain that downsizing does not create extraordinary demands for remaining workers.

The new training language, in addition, helps the Guild to better prepare workers to position themselves for technological change.

"It's not co-management but it does give the Guild greater say in restructuring of our work," O'Brien said.

Pacific Press and the Joint Council of Unions had been bargaining for more than a year. The unions' previous contracts expired Dec. 1, 1993.

Talks were slowed by the company's demand to reduce work force. This past summer the Joint Council of Unions rejected a company demand that the union-covered workforce be reduced by 200. The unions insisted that the proposal be dealt with at the bargaining table.

The Vancouver Guild represents 900 workers in the advertising, business circulation, data processing, editorial and maintenance departments at the Pacific Press.

Guild members voted by an 85 percent margin in Oct. 30 to authorize their negotiators to call a strike.

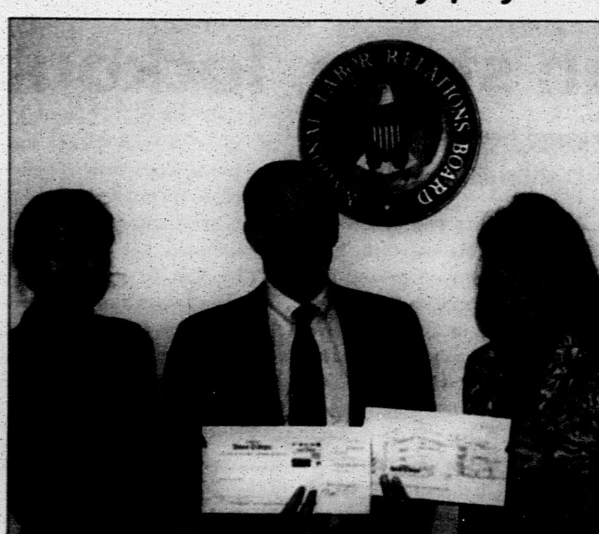
The company locked out union members on Nov. 2, after a pressmen's union study session slowed production.

The unions maintained a 24-hour picket line during the lockout, said O'Brien, who also is co-chair of the joint council.

"Picketing has been great," she said. "The new contract is a tribute to the strength of our members and the solidarity of the joint council."

Union and company negotiators met on a daily basis from Oct. 27 until the strike was settled, O'Brien said. A government mediator played a key role in the early stages of the lockout but the parties continued toward a settlement after the mediator left for another assignment.

Union-Tribune finally pays dismissal back pay



Nancy Tetrault, San Diego Guild activist fired in 1988 on trumped up charges, finally received two checks totaling $145,000 for back pay and medical expenses from the Union-Tribune, which agreed earlier in the year to pay Tetrault but continued to squabble over an amount. Shown displaying copies of Union-Tribune checks are, from left, Lea Francisco, San Diego Guild employee, Robert Petering, NLRB attorney who prosecuted the board's complaint over the firing, and Tetrault. She was reinstated in 1990 but the back pay war—waged by the employer's union-busting law firm—dragged on as the company argued it owed Tetrault only $14,000.

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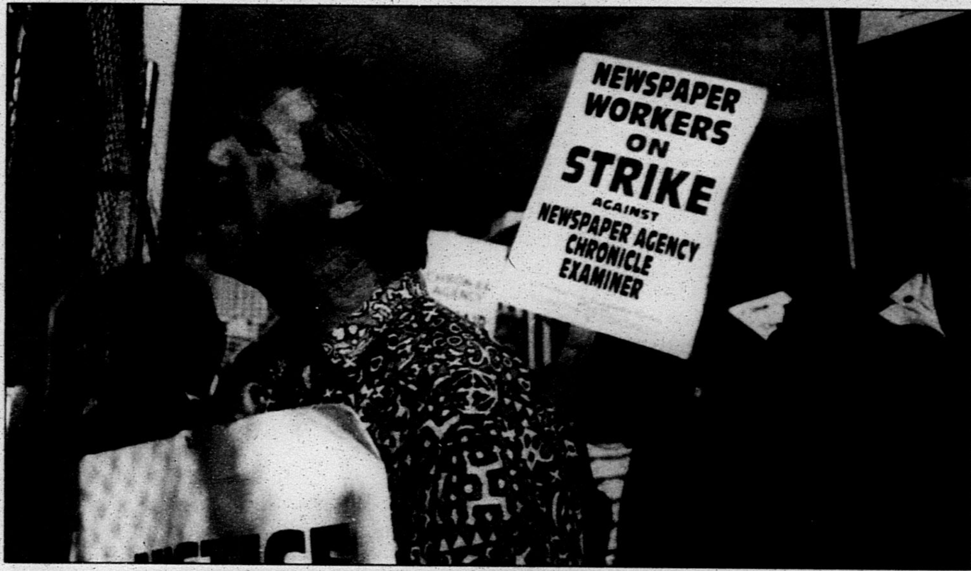
San Francisco strike ends with five-year pacts

San Francisco—Guild members here unanimously ratified a new five-year contract in an emotional meeting on Nov. 13, ending a dramatic, 11-day strike that featured an unsuccessful company demand that union members return to their jobs.

The other seven locals in the Conference of Newspaper Unions followed suit, ratifying five-year contracts with the San Francisco Newspaper Agency.

The accord that put union-produced San Francisco Chronicle and San Francisco Examiner editions back on the streets was announced early Nov. 12 by Mayor Frank Jordan.

The agreement includes amnesty, allowing stickers to return to work without threat of discipline.



NORTHERN CALIFORNIA GUILD

An unidentified striker addresses scab workers on the picket line in San Francisco.

The agreement also allowed for one more edition of the Free Press, the Conference of Newspaper Unions' strike paper, to explain terms of the proposed settlement to the 2,600 union members. The Northern California Guild covers 1,100 workers in three bargaining units at the dailies and the agency, which prints both papers under a joint operating agreement.

The Guild contract includes 3 percent annual pay increases, which would bring the weekly top reporter minimum to $980 in the final year of the contract.

Although there will be no increases in employee contributions to health insurance in the foreseeable future, Guild negotiators said a portion of the monetary settlement will be set aside to cover future increases in health and welfare and also for pension improvements.

The pact features additional raises for librarians of $38 a week, or roughly 7 percent. Examiner and Chronicle negotiators refused, however, to agree to give librarians pay parity with reporters. The Guild kept the parity issue on the table until the end of the strike and vowed to raise it again in future negotiations. Other features include:

- Upgrades for eight Guild-covered employees at the agency.
- Benefits for employees' domestic partners.
- Pro-rated benefits for part-time employees and limits on the publishers' ability to replace full-time jobs with part-timers.

"We worked long and hard to hammer out a fair settlement that would give workers a living wage and grant them better protections and benefits," said Doug Cuthbertson, unity conference chair and executive officer of the Northern California Guild. "The success of this strike will be looked upon as a rallying point for unions across the country."

One key strike issue turned on the company's demand to eliminate 150 Teamsters-covered drivers' jobs.

The agency's agreement with the Teamsters provides for changes in the distribution system without loss of jobs.

The agreement also protects Teamsters seniority rights.

The ability the unions to maintain a 24-hour picket line outside the downtown headquarters of the San Francisco Newspaper Agency and at 10 satellite sites was a deciding factor in the unions' dramatic strike victory.

Union solidarity, buoyed by widespread community support, forced publishers' negotiators to back away from a threat to replace striking workers who had not returned to their jobs by 5 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 9.

Only eight Guild members—two of whom were slated for exempt jobs under agreed-to language—were reported to have crossed picket lines during the strike.

The unions, assisted by the AFL-CIO, had produced an impressive array of community support in the months leading up to the strike and were on the verge of launching an advertising boycott campaign against the agency when the strike was settled.

The unions walked out Nov. 1, the fist anniversary of the expiration of their previous contracts. Jordan called negotiators from both sides to his City Hall office on the fourth day of the strike for talks with a federal mediator that eventually produced the agreement.

A Teamsters member was killed Nov. 6 as he attempted to cut power lines to one of the agency's printing plants. It was reported that several replacement drivers were hospitalized during the strike.

It was the first newspaper strike in San Francisco since a 52-day work stoppage in 1968.

Strike paper goes on-line

San Francisco—In what may be the first time a strike paper has gone on-line, newspaper workers put their San Francisco Free Press on the Internet, the worldwide computer network, in a virtual heartbeat.

Northern California Guild members, Bruce Koon and Marcelo Rodriguez, got the idea while walking the picket line on the first day of the strike. In less than 24 hours the strikers had accomplished a technical feat that the employer had been planning for months.

The on-line Free Press scooped the working press in California with a report that an alleged illegal alien had been employed by U.S. Sen. Dianne Feinstein in the early 1980s.

The strikers were criticized by Democrats for breaking the story but Larry D. Hatfield, TNG Region 4 vice president who served as Free Press publisher, said Guild members felt a need to establish credibility.

The story netted the strike paper wide publicity as other media, from the New York Times to CNN news, credited the Free Press with breaking the Feinstein story.

Feinstein won a six-year Senate term against U.S. Rep. Michael Huffington, a wealthy GOP businessman, in the Nov. 8 election.

"We're getting calls from Europe and the Far East," Hatfield said. "We're getting the first look at what unions can do on the information highway."

"It was fascinating in that the Examiner had been planning to get on line for months," Hatfield said. "It took us literally a day to get it up and going."

In addition to the daily updated electronic version, the Free Press was being produced twice weekly on newsprint with a hastily patched-together network of computers in makeshift quarters around the corner from the Guild office.

JUDI PARKS

Northern California Guild members Ed Epstein, right, and Ed Rachles take a look at a story in the Free Press newsroom.

Courtenay unit's Independent picks up readers, ads

Courtenay, B.C.—The Independent, a weekly strike paper formed in September by Guild and GCIU members, is going strong as the unions head into a final round of hearings Nov. 21-23 before the British Columbia Labour Relations Board.

An optimistic Dave Wilson, chair of the Victoria-Vancouver Island Guild's Courtenay unit, says ads are flowing in and that circulation has reached 8,000. "It took 103 years for the Comox District Free Press to reach 13,000," Wilson notes. "It's taken us only 11 weeks to get to 8,000."

Says Wilson, "We've got a great team putting out a fantastic product."

The Guild, which represents 37 advertising, circulation and editorial employees, and some 85 GCIU production workers struck the Thomson-owned Free Press July 21 when talks bogged down over job security issues. Four weeks later, the company made good on its threat to close the twice weekly Free Press, as well as the companion Sunday North Island News, when union members refused an return to their jobs.

Thomson has since started a new Sunday paper called The Wrap in Campbell River, 25 miles north of Courtenay.

Litigation to date has kept the Wrap out of the Independent's circulation area and Wilson says the Guild is hoping that the labour board will grant union members the right to picket the Thomson plant in Campbell River.

The Guild is arguing that the Wrap is an ally publication to the defunct Free Press. "All they've done is push Courtenay down and our work is popping up elsewhere," Wilson says.

A labour board decision is expected in December.

IEB urges Reich to act on ergonomics

Silver Spring, Md.—The International Executive Board has urged U.S. Labor Secretary Robert Reich to expedite an ergonomic standard for VDT users in the workplace.

The board, in a resolution adopted unanimously, said that Guild members are in need of a standard "as quickly as the rule-making process permits."

The IEB also called on U.S. Guild locals to send a similar message to Reich.

David J. Eisen, TNG research and information director, told the IEB that failure to publish a proposed standard in the Federal Register by the end of December could jeopardize efforts to put VDT regulations in place during President Clinton's first term in office.

The U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration unveiled a summary of a proposed standard this summer [GR, July 29, 1994]. The OSHA document did not contain a section specifically dealing with VDTs but Eisen said that judgment should be reserved until the final draft was made available.

The IEB resolution notes that a federal team of ergonomic experts had made progress in drafting a standard to be submitted for review by the Office of Management and Budget and published in the Federal Register by the end of the year.

"But suddenly delay has set in—not inside OSHA nor in OMB, but within the Labor Department itself—and ominous reports of tentative moves to abandon the standard or fatally delay it under industry pressure have emerged," the IEB said. "This must not be allowed to happen."

The IEB said that controversial provisions in the standard could be debated in public hearings to follow publication—and altered or eliminated if necessary. "But the rulemaking process must not be paralyzed by unconscionable delay," the board emphasized.

Eisen pointed out that the Guild and other unions representing VDT workers have waited more than a decade for an ergonomic standard while the repetitive strain injury toll has mounted.

The urgent need for a standard was finally recognized even under the Reagan administration, first when OSHA Administrator Gerard Scannell initiated action to develop one and then when Labor Secretary Lynn Martin, in response to 31 unions petition for a temporary standard, acknowledged widespread RSI hazards and cited OSHA's proposed ergonomic rulemaking as evidence of its intention to deal with them.

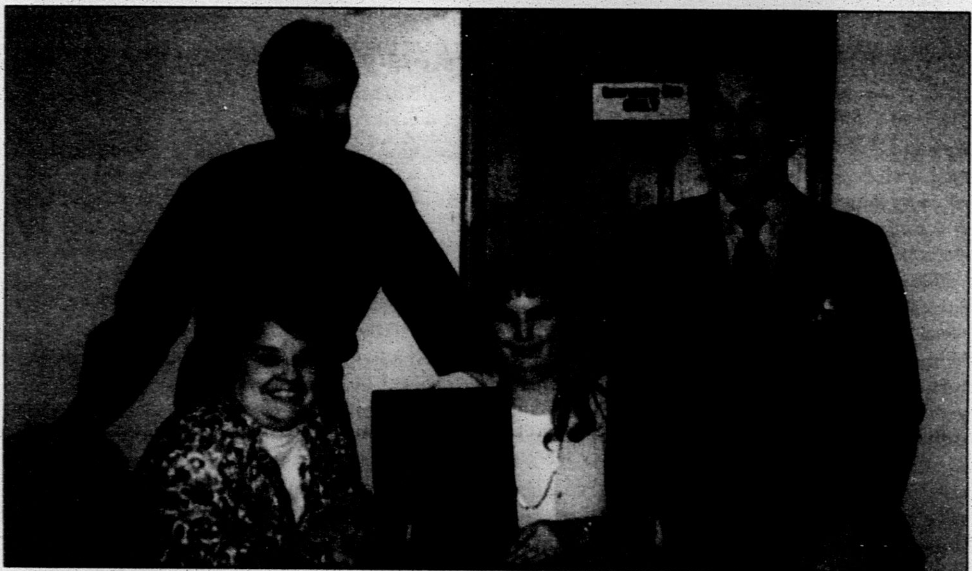
On the basis of data TNG has gathered to date, an estimated 35 to 40 percent of Guild members working on VDTs have been injured—some so badly that they can no longer continue in careers.

From all indications, the toll in newspaper pressrooms and mailrooms is even higher.

OSHA Administrator Joseph Dear, responding to the board's resolution, said "we firmly believe that work-related musculoskeletal disorders cause tremendous pain and suffering for millions of Americans" and promised that OSHA would publish the standard "as soon as possible."

Putting safety in focus

Pottstown unit wins upgrades



Guild safety and health committee members at the Pottstown, Pa., Mercury display a plaque citing progress in making workplace improvements. Seated are, from left, Helen Chappie, committee chair Kim Toth and Mike Comfort. Standing at left is Paul Grubb, Guild unit chair.

Pottstown, Pa.—Health and safety improvements in Guild-covered departments at the Pottstown Mercury have resulted in a citation from the Philadelphia Area Project on Occupational Safety and Health.

PHILAPOSH, a non-profit coalition of some 200 area unions, honored the Pottstown Guild unit's health and safety committee at an Oct. 28 awards dinner.

Jim Moran, PHLAPOSH director, said that Pottstown was the only committee among the six award-winners in this year's competition.

"The committee got functional real quick and got management to make changes," Moran said. "Their good, solid work stood out as the best among committees."

"We see it (the award) more as encouragement than as recognition," said Paul Grubb, chair of the Philadelphia Guild's 115-member Pottstown unit. "It says to our members, 'You're doing the right thing and hang in there.'"

The work of the health and safety committee, chaired by shop steward Kim Toth, resulted in 60 new chairs being purchased this past summer.

That was just one of a number of recent improvements, brought about after activists in all Guild-covered departments—business, classified and display advertising, circulation, editorial, mailroom and maintenance—joined in what has been a year-and-a-half effort to improve health and safety conditions at the 30,000-circulation daily.

Preliminary results from a unit membership survey this summer reveal that 45 percent of employees complained of symptoms that could lead to RSI disorders. Guild leaders discussed survey findings with the publisher in a continuing effort to achieve improvements.

"It was a pretty positive meeting," Grubb said. "The publisher agreed to immediately fulfill some of the recommendations we made."

Among them: headsets for the Mercury's telemarketers, who are still using regular telephones.

Meantime, committee members surveyed the plant and made a list of needed improvements. The contract requires the company to furnish a clean, healthy and properly ventilated, lighted and heated workplace.

At first, the company was slow to recognize the Guild committee and even formed a committee of its own, seeking volunteers from among the bargaining unit.

"They actually has some meetings before the Guild said, 'Hey, this is our ball game," Grubb said. "The company committee fell apart when people realized the real power was with the union."

As more Guild members became involved, management changed its attitude and recognized the Guild committee.

In recent months the company has been testing new equipment—such as wrist rests and telephone headsets—among Guild-covered workers before making purchases.

"We're giving the company feedback as to what's good for us," Grubb said.

The unit's health and safety push got started when a long-time maintenance worker developed a serious pulmonary condition that could lead to emphysema.

The worker is a non-smoker who handled a lot of chemicals.

"We went to the company and started demanding that the guy get the info he needed to his doctor so he could get treated," Grubb said. "In the course of looking at the chemical data sheets, we learned that the training just wasn't there."

That episode set off a series of events, Grubb said.

"People were fed up with the condition of the workplace," he said. "It had gone downhill fast the past several years."

Grubb credits Mike Fagan, Local 10 representative, along with the PHILAPOSH staff for helping the unit address safety and health issues.

"It's helping to bring our people together and get them organized," Grubb said. "We're gearing up for contract talks next March. This is a great way to bring our people together."

Other recent improvements:

- A massive, old and broken air conditioning unit suspended above the dispatch department has been removed.
- In response to a temperature survey conducted by shop steward Jeff Moses and other committee members, the company agreed to install roof vents and make rear windows operational in all company delivery vans.
- Fire exits have been unblocked and clearly marked and more fire extinguishers have been added.
- Following a long struggle, air conditioning has been installed in the mailroom.
- New machinery has made bundling and other mailroom tasks easier.
- Lighting in all restrooms has been upgraded.

IN BRIEF

Release report, Free Press told

A National Labor Relations Board judge has ruled that a company executive's report on safety and health problems at the Detroit Free Press is no private matter.

Rejecting the company's argument that the report was confidential, Administrative Law Judge Martin J. Linsky ordered it be turned over to the Detroit Guild.

Management claimed that it should be able to withhold the report by Ernest King, Knight-Ridder's top safety and health expert, because it was a "self-critical" document whose disclosure would have a chilling effect on future self-criticism.

The Guild said it needed the information in order to bargain effectively on safety and health.

Linsky agreed.

"Turning the King report over to the union is not the functional equivalent of the United States turning over to the German high command the details of Operation Overlord prior to June 6, 1944 [the Allied invasion of Western Europe]," Linsky said. "The fact is that when it comes to the health and safety of the employees, the respondents [Knight-Ridder] and the union are on the same side."

Copy editors at the Star Tribune in Minneapolis will be getting massages and hourly rest breaks to help fend off repetitive strain injury.

The 10-minute breaks, which are mandatory, were negotiated in an effort to reduce an outbreak of RSI that has led 16 of 53 copy editors to file Workers' Compensation claims. The rest periods are in addition to a pair of 15-minute breaks already provided in the Guild contract.

The massages will be paid for out of a fund established under the contract to compensate the copy editors for understaffing.

IN BRIEF

Chisholm leaves IEB for local post

Georgia Chisholm has resigned as TNG's Canada West vice president, effective Dec. 20, to become administrative officer of the Vancouver Guild. Chisholm was elected by acclamation to the IEB post at the 1993 Convention. In her new local role, Chisholm replaces Jan O'Brien, who defeated Chisholm earlier this year in a special election for local president. TNG's Constitution provides that no IEB member—with the exception of the president and secretary-treasurer—shall be a Guild employee either at the local or international level. The IEB post will remain vacant until regular TNG officer elections are held following the 1995 Convention in Boston next June.

The proposed General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade has been criticized in a resolution adopted by the International Executive Board.

Comparing GATT with the North American Free Trade Agreement between the United States, Canada and Mexico, the IEB called on the U.S. House and Senate "to halt the pell-mell rush to judgment on a bill that will affect the lives of millions of Americans for decades to come."

"Like NAFTA, the GATT would undermine domestic laws protecting labor, consumers and the environment by subordinating them to trade considerations," the board resolution said. The measure was adopted in a voice vote with At-Large Vice President Dave Mulcahy casting a lone "no" vote.

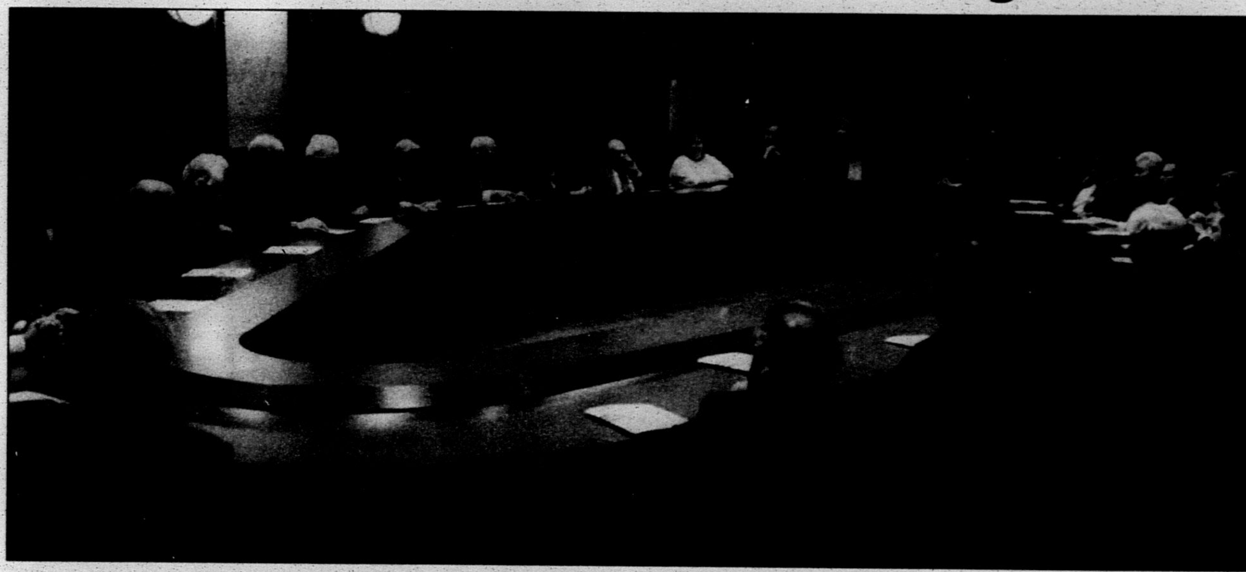
The IEB noted that GATT would constitute a "supergovernment" that would be closed to the press. "There would be no outside appeal of the tribunal's decisions," the IEB said.

In another resolution, the IEB called on U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno to step up the investigation into the murders of several foreign journalists.

"From 1981 to 1990, five Vietnamese journalists have been shot down in communities across the country. Since 1991, three Haitian radio hosts have been assassinated in Miami," the board said.

"The cold-blooded assassination of U.S. journalists would never be tolerated," the unanimously adopted resolution added. "No more should the murder of immigrant journalists who have sought the First Amendment's protections."

TNG, CWA leaders share vision of merged union



BILL BURKE/Washington-Baltimore Guild

TNG International Executive Board members, staff and guests join Communications Workers of America officials in a get-acquainted session at CWA headquarters on Oct. 26, a day after the IEB selected the CWA as the Guild's preferred merger partner.

Total membership reaches record high

Silver Spring, Md.—Guild membership reached an all-time total membership high of 35,032 during the first half of fiscal 1994-95, TNG Secretary-Treasurer Linda K. Foley told the International Executive Board.

In her report during the Oct. 26 board session, Foley said the surge in membership contributed to a $174,000 general fund surplus for the six months ending Sept. 30.

According to audited figures, full-time Guild membership in good standing for the six months ending Sept. 30 was 28,139. That represents an increase of 4,645 in full-time members since the March 31, 1993, end of the preceding fiscal year.

The overall membership figure of 35,032—which includes part-time and retired members and agency fee payers—is up by more than 6,000 over the 28,963 total for the preceding six-month period.

Foley attributed the membership increase primarily to organizing gains in the United States and Canada.

"This is very good news," Foley said. "It's the most ideal situation that we could find ourselves in as we move toward merger," Foley said, referring to the IEB's decision to seek an affiliation/merger agreement with the Communications Workers of America.

Other factors are a near doubling of unemployed-retired members and improvements in membership record-keeping at TNG headquarters.

General fund expenses for the first half were $2,524,400, with income of $2,698,486. The IEB had budgeted $2,628,512 for the first half of the year, meaning that actual general fund expenses were $104,112 under budget.

The IEB adopted a second-half fiscal 1994-95 budget of $2,493,814.

Audited figures also put total assets in TNG's defense fund at $6,792,344 on Sept. 30, compared with $6,672,367 as of the March 31, 1994, end of the preceding fiscal year.

Local 35 gets green light to organize Teamsters

Silver Spring, Md.—The Washington-Baltimore Guild won approval to organize professional employees at the International Brotherhood of Teamsters in a 10-7 vote of the International Executive Board.

The decision reversed TNG President Charles Dale's earlier refusal to grant the local's organizing request. Locals are required by TNG Constitution to receive international approval for organizing drives.

Local President Connie Knox, who is also a TNG at-large vice president, appealed the matter to the full board after the IEB's Organizing Committee supported Dale.

Knox argued that the Teamsters employees approached the Guild because of its history of representing union workers.

"They settled on us because they know our track record," Knox said. "They know that the Guild is a good union."

"We should not be organizing the Teamsters when the Teamsters are so vital to our collective bargaining efforts in so many locals," Dale countered.

Dale noted that he had just phoned the Teamsters with the news that the IEB had decided to pursue merger with the Communications Workers of America.

"I think the board will be making a very, very serious mistake if it allows this to go forward," Dale said.

Joining Dale in opposing the organizing drive were Region 5 Vice President Richard Brandow and at-large vice presidents Dave Mulcahy, Russ Cain, Eugene Jones, Carol Przybyszewski and Patricia Nuttall.

Joining Knox to allow the drive were International Chairperson Carol D. Rothman, Secretary-Treasurer Linda K. Foley, Canadian Director Mike Bocking, Region 1 Vice President Thomas Thibeault, Region 2 Vice President Lela Garlington, Region 3 Vice President Jack Norman, Region 4 Vice President Larry D. Hatfield, Canada-East Vice President Pat Bell and Canada-West Vice President Georgia Chisholm.

Los Angeles OK'd for loan

Silver Spring, Md.—The International Executive Board has authorized TNG loan assistance to the financially strapped Los Angeles Guild.

The IEB set several conditions for granting financial assistance, including a written commitment from the local that it shall not re-employ departed administrative officer Jim Smith.

Smith was terminated by the local executive board in early October as mounting financial difficulties, including an Internal Revenue Service claim for unpaid payroll taxes, forced the local to seek financial help.

The IEB also authorized TNG officials to set other appropriate conditions, including a loan repayment schedule that would come back to the IEB's Finance and Administration Committee for its approval.

TNG has committed to assign international representatives to the local to assist with ongoing collective bargaining and organizing.

Also, the local has agreed to retain Charles Kurtz, accountant who performs TNG financial audits, to help straighten out local finances and settle the IRS claim.

In other financial business, IEB has selected Alliance Capital Management Corp. of New York to replace W.R. Lazard as one of two manager of the TNG Commingled Pension Fund.

The IEB, at its June meeting, had requested Segal Advisors Inc., which administers the fund, to seek alternatives after pension fund investments yielded a disappointing 1.5 percent return during 1993.

Alliance Capital was one of three investment services firms to make a presentation to the IEB on Oct. 25. TPK Asset Management Inc. also manages Commingled Pension Fund investments.

Guild at 'critical juncture,' IEB resolution says

Following is the text of an "affiliation/merger" resolution adopted unanimously by the International Executive board on Oct. 25:

The Newspaper Guild finds itself at a critical juncture as a union representing workers in the news/information industry. Our union is growing, both in numbers of members and in activism and participation. We have made and will continue to achieve more self-determination and control of Canadian affairs by our Canadian members.

At the same time, the changing nature of the news industry and the convergence of various information technologies throughout North America make it imperative that we continue to evolve as a viable force and strong representative of workers who are at the heart of those industries.

Just as we evolved from a union of editorial-only employees to one representing employees in all newspaper departments to a union with members in virtually all facets of the news industry, we must now continue that evolution to become part of a larger organization representing workers all along the Information Superhighway.

The IEB's continuing exploration of merger is being conducted in this context. The committee appointed by the IEB in June has conducted numerous discussions with potential merger partners. The investigation and discussions have lead the IEB to several conclusions.

First, in any merger/affiliation, the identity, purpose and unique character of The Newspaper Guild must be preserved. Any merger with another union must be one in which the Guild has its own division or sector, with control over its contracts and collective bargaining operations. Our locals must continue to exercise the great degree of autonomy that has been a hallmark of our international union.

It is equally important that TNG-Canada, now being proposed to Canadian Guild members, not only be preserved, but that the Guild continue on its way to becoming the leading media union of Canada.

We also must seek a merger that will fulfill our mandate to forge stronger ties with unions in broadcast as well as other areas of the media industry.

It is also clear that we must have a period of time in which we can prepare ourselves to become full partners of a larger union. An affiliation period in advance of a merger is critical to the success of the Guild as an independent component of a larger organization. We must have time to prepare ourselves and position our resources, and we must have time to allow TNG-Canada to get established and operate effectively.

In addition, because we want to ensure that our members continue to get the best possible benefits out of their association with the Guild, there should be a way, even after an affiliation period, to opt out of a merger if we find the "marriage" just isn't working.

As the committee has reported, the IEB concludes that of all the unions being considered as potential merger partners, the CWA has emerged as the leading candidate to meet the goals and concerns we consider essential in a merger/affiliation agreement.

CWA seems willing to recognize our needs on both sides of the border. Their attempts to address the onrush of technology convergence are close, if not on target, with where the Guild would like to be.

The CWA is very supportive, in fact enthusiastic about TNG-Canada and the prospect of the Guild as Canada's media union. They have indicated they would commit to TNG-Canada financially and would commit additional organizing resources to our efforts north of the border.

The inclusion of other unions in our industry, the former ITU and the National Association of Broadcasting Employees and Technicians (NABET) within the CWA umbrella make it an even more attractive eventual home for The Newspaper Guild.

The IEB therefore instructs it merger subcommittee to continue to pursue merger/affiliation with the CWA with the goal of presenting an agreement for recommendation to the convention at a future meeting.

In the meantime, the IEB strongly encourages every district council, Guild local, leaders and members to discuss and debate this issue. The IEB requires input from Guild members throughout our union as we develop a merger agreement that will benefit all Guild members and keep our union on its established course of growth, strength and effectiveness.

Guild leaders plan merger with CWA

BILL BURKE/Washington-Baltimore Guild

Communications Workers of America Secretary-Treasurer Barbara Easterling, left, greets TNG International Chairperson Carol D. Rothman at CWA headquarters on Oct. 26, a day after the International Executive Board voted unanimously to negotiate a merger agreement with the CWA. In the background are Thomas Thibeault, TNG Region 1 vice president, and Carol Przybyzsewski, TNG at-large vice president.

CWA signals commitment to Guild goals in Canada

(Continued from Page 1)
the New England, Middle Atlantic and Southern District Councils meeting jointly the same weekend in New York.

All district councils received a merger report from either Dale or Secretary-Treasurer Linda K. Foley as well as TNG vice presidents attending their respective district council meetings.

"It's going to be a difficult sell because our members are attached to TNG as it now stands," Dale said as he wrapped up the IEB's debate on the merger issue. "I want this to happen because I think it's absolutely essential to the future of The Newspaper Guild."

Most questions raised by board members dealt with the Guild's tradition of local autonomy. Dale and other merger committee members assured that continued local autonomy will be a feature of the merger agreement.

Dale said the Guild would operate as a separate division within the CWA and would retain the Guild seal.

Merger would be preceded by an affiliation period during which time TNG would remain at its headquarters in Silver Spring, Md., and would begin harmonizing record-keeping and dues collection functions with the CWA. The duration of the affiliation period has not been determined but likely would be around two years.

The merger agreement would include an escape clause should the arrangement not work out, Dale said.

Guild locals would have the option of merging with existing CWA locals. Those locals that do not merge would still be able to tap into CWA resources for contract enforcement, research and other services.

"Locals would keep their funds and assets," Dale said. "We would keep our per capita structure. We are not talking about a dues increase in this merger. We are talking about maintaining our present system."

The Guild would keep its district councils, would retain its own legal counsel and would continue to publish The Guild Reporter, Dale added.

Dale raised the prospect of a "reverse merger" in Canada, with remaining CWA/ITU locals possibly joining with Canadian Guild locals in TNG-Canada, an emerging blueprint for enhanced Canadian autonomy within the Guild. A number of larger CWA/ITU locals voted earlier this year to leave the CWA and affiliate with a Canadian union.

"They (CWA leaders) have indicated full support for our goals in Canada and indeed have gone even farther," Dale said. "Their commitment to it is very, very strong."

Bocking noted that CWA/ITU locals could help to extend Guild presence to Canada's Maritime and Prairie provinces.

"They have a lot of backshops in Canada," Bocking said. "We would be able to use our expertise in editorial, advertising and circulation to build wall-to-wall units."

The CWA's aggressive posture in organizing the communications industry played a key role in the IEB decision.

"They are looking at organizing all the way up the communications industry," said TNG Secretary-Treasurer Linda K. Foley. "That's why they are interested in the Guild. They see this as a strategic merger."

CWA President Morton Bahr underscored that point as he welcomed Guild leaders in a joint meeting on Oct. 26 at CWA headquarters in Washington, D.C. He called merger a "win-win" proposal for both unions.

"I am personally not only elated but somewhat humbled," Bahr said. "We're moving into the multi-media age. The Guild, being the prestigious union that it is, lends an enormous potential to the combined union."

Sector leaders: Merger is best of both worlds

By Larry D. Hatfield
TNG Region 4 Vice President

It hasn't been all roses but the heads of the two media unions that already have merged with the Communications Workers of America say it's the smartest thing their unions ever did.

"There is a downside," says Ken Moffett, assistant to the president of the National Association of Broadcasting Engineers and Technicians (NABET) Sector, which became part of CWA when it merged in January this year. "We were a good little union of 10,000 members and now you're in a bureaucracy of a union that has more than 600,000 members.

"There are various layers for everything. It's not that we can't get quick action on things, but we're not used to that. But it's the best thing to happen to us. If we're going to grow this union, this is the way to do it."

Adds William J. Boarman, president of CWA's Printing, Publishing and Media Workers Sector, which was created when the old International Typographical Union merged with CWA in 1989: "I'm not going to tell you there hasn't been any downsides because there have been. Part of it is the sheer enormity of CWA — it's so huge. But the good side of that is all the resources, the research capability, legal assistance, strike benefits and so on. That has a big impact on the local level."


Boarman

Both Boarman and Moffett said there have been problems in melding the financial operations of their relatively small unions into the big and sophisticated financial operation of the CWA, problems that Guild and CWA negotiators, benefiting from NABET's and the ITU's experiences, hope to avoid in devising a formal CWA-Guild merger agreement.

"On the financial side, CWA wasn't used to dealing with small employers like ours," Boarman said. "They were used to dealing with corporations like AT&T, Bell Atlantic, Pacific Telesis and the like. But we're working through the problems. There have been some glitches but if you're going to have problems, that's the side to have them rather than on the service side."

Moffett, former deputy director of the U.S. Federal Mediation & Conciliation Service before joining NABET, described his independent sector's problems as "just bugs," adding, "Any problems we've had have been worked out."

Working out such problems with minimum discomfort to either side is the goal of CWA Secretary-Treasurer Barbara Easterling. "Some problems are inevitable," Easterling said in a meeting with the Guild's International Executive Board on Oct. 26. "But that's what we're here for—to solve them."

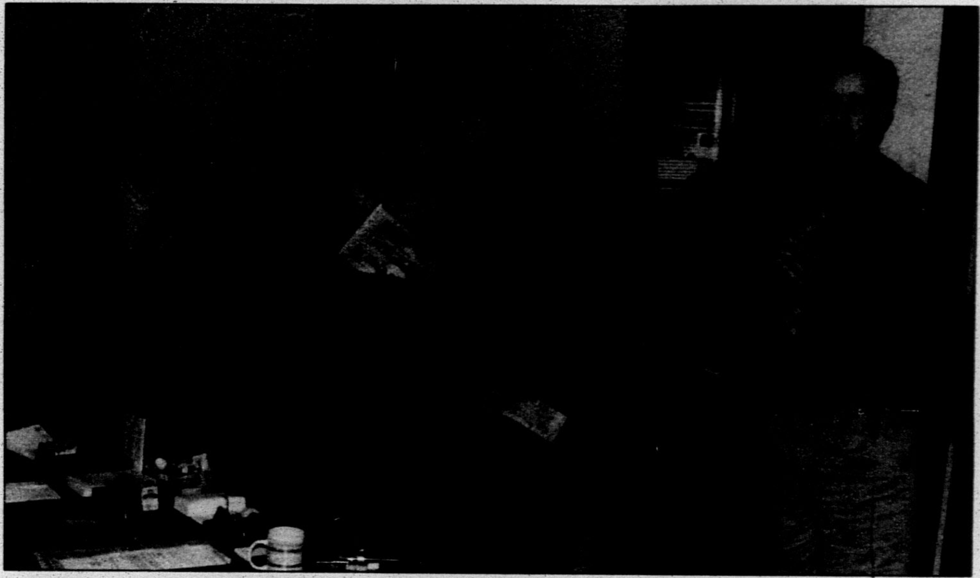
Added CWA President Morton Bahr: "There are no problems that are insurmountable. We belong together and little problems shouldn't stand in the way of that."

The upsides of merger totally overshadow the minor problems, say Moffett and Boarman.

"I know that what a lot of people fear in a situation like this is that their union will lose its identity in a merger. Well, in some mergers, the little union does get swallowed up. But what (CWA President Morton) Morty Bahr has done with the sectors is to save the identities of the ITU and NABET. It's the best of all possible worlds, we've maintained our identity and our traditions and we've had full access to the tremendous resources of CWA," Moffett says.

"The Guild and NABET are a lot alike. We have the same kind of people and the same kind of goals. This (Guild-CWA merger) could be a good deal for all of us. For one thing, it will help organizing, not only for you, but for us. We all have to get back on the organizing bandwagon and organizing has one of the biggest budgets within the CWA."

Boarman notes that the ITU was the oldest trade union in North America when he discusses concerns about losing identity and tradition. "Losing your identity—someone would have to qualify what that means. We're a union within a union, that's true. If it meant that many of the historical things the Guild does for its members would disappear, yes, it would be losing your identity. But that's not true. The ITU has become the Printing Sector of the CWA but we still operate a lot like we always have. We still have our history and traditions."


BILL BURKE/Washington-Baltimore Guild

Ken Moffett, right, assistant to the president of CWA/NABET, greets Guild representatives during a tour of CWA headquarters on Oct. 26. From left are Connie Knox, TNG at-large vice president; Linda K. Foley, TNG secretary-treasurer; Dave Mulcahy (partially hidden), TNG at-large vice president; Lela Garlington, TNG Region 2 vice president; Cindy Olney, executive secretary to CWA President Morton Bahr, and Anna Padia, TNG human rights director.

Both leaders suggested that the question of merger involved to some degree a choice between altering your traditional identity or risking your survival.

"The old ITU had the proudest history in the labor movement," Boarman said, "but the fact is that our membership kept dropping. We were not able to grow as a union. As good a job as we did, we weren't growing as an organization.

"But you have to focus on what people want. The bureaucracy has changed but we still rely on ITU tradition in how we serve our members. Some of the (old) bureaucracy eventually will go away and some of the redundant superstructure will disappear but the members don't care about that. They care about what service they're getting. And the things that duespaying members care about in relationship with their employers will continue."

Moffett agrees, arguing that members care far less about how their union's administration is arranged than how that administration is delivering services at the local level.

"Take organizing for example," Moffett says. "In the nine years before merger I was with NABET, we may have organized nine people—max. Currently, we have six active organizing projects (including at CNN and NBC). All of a sudden, we—I mean NABET—don't have enough people to answer all the calls from people who want to be organized. But we're getting lots of help from CWA."

He also says his union relies heavily on other CWA services, such as their aggressive research, public relations and other departments. "These various departments have helped us a lot. We're doing things we never had the wherewithal to do. The research department, for example, has given us help on corporate campaigns that has just been remarkable."

Although he admitted his sector had not taken enough advantage of CWA's successful organizing department, Boarman said his sector "now has more (organizing) targets than ever."

Neither would even consider unmerging with the CWA. It's both practical and philosophical.

"If we hadn't merged, we'd still be a good little union struggling along with what we had and not growing," Moffett said. "We're still a good little union but one with a much larger future."

Adds Boarman: "My vision is that all the unions in the communications industry should be in the same union. It is so natural that we ought to be working together sooner rather than later on the information highway. We have so much in common: we have the same employers and what we do, the industries we work in, are converging. Our employers are converging the technology of publishing, broadcasting, telephone and cable and we need one big union that reaches across the borders of technology and the borders of nations.

"The Guild has a big part to play in this and with its own sector in CWA, along with the Printing Sector and NABET, we'll move more quickly toward those goals."

The way they see it

Silver Spring, Md.—The following quotes are from observations made by the International Executive Board's merger committee on Oct. 25 during the IEB's discussion of the committee's recommendation to seek an affiliation/merger agreement with the Communications Workers of America.

"I think we will be able to win people (Guild members) over. ... We'll be able to keep all the things we want to keep and we'll be able to do the things we have been hampered from doing."

—International Chairperson Carol D. Rothman

"I want this to happen because I think it's absolutely essential to the future of The Newspaper Guild."

—President Charles Dale

"They (CWA leaders) see this as a strategic merger. They are very excited about us. They are not into controlling us and I think that's important."

—Secretary-Treasurer Linda K. Foley

"There are some synergistic benefits to the merger in Canada. They have some locals in the Maritimes and the Prairie. Both unions would benefit from the combination of where they are with Guild expertise in editorial, advertising and circulation."

—Canadian Director Mike Bocking

"TNG's commitment to human rights, health and safety and research and information is a very important part of who we are. They (CWA leaders) are committed to those things as well."

—Field Operations Director William McLeman

PHOTO BY LEA SUZUKI/Northern California Guild

Guild negotiator Susan Sward shakes hands with Matt Wilson, executive editor of the San Francisco Chronicle, as Chronicle unit Guild members return to their jobs on Nov. 14th, a day after ratifying a contract that ended the 11-day newspaper strike in San Francisco.

S.F. Guild members express renewed sense of strength

San Francisco—More than 600 Northern California Guild members, buoyed by their strike victory at the San Francisco Newspaper Agency and the Chronicle and Examiner, conveyed a renewed sense of commitment to their union at an emotional Nov. 13 contract ratification meeting.

"The mood of the members was not only one of jubilation but one of rededication to being tough-minded union members," said Larry D. Hatfield, TNG Region 4 Vice President and Examiner reporter. "It was a standing, raised-fists vote."

"The mood bordered on happiness and ecstasy," said Carl Hall, chair of the Guild unit at the Chronicle. "It was a positive experience. There was a lot of congratulations and thanks all around."

The following morning, Chronicle editorial workers returned to the newsroom en masse after meeting outside the building. Top editors shook hands with Guild members as they filed in.

"The company said 'We want you back.' That really made a difference," Hall said. "There were hugs and tears, there was a bottle of champagne. We were all elated to be back at work."

The welcome mat for the Guild units at the San Francisco Newspaper Agency and the San Francisco Examiner was not as much in evidence.

Guild and other union workers were being returned to their jobs in phases and, in some departments, scab workers remained on the job as recently as Nov. 16.

Doug Cuthbertson, Northern California Guild executive officer, was at work resolving that problem with management at presstime.

Hall said it will take a great deal of time to thank members of the community who supported the Conference of Newspaper Unions in their 11-day strike that began Nov. 1.

For example, Joe Ortiz, who runs a barbershop at the newspaper agency's downtown building, renewed his commitment to his union customers. "He stayed out during the strike and he stayed out in 1968," Hall said.

Among Guild members, there were heroes too numerous to count.

Among them were some of the dailies' best-known columnists—including Herb Caen, Art Hope and John Carman of the Chronicle and Rob Morse, Stephanie Salter and Ray Ratto of the Examiner—who informed the company in writing that they would quit if the publishers hired permanent replacements.

Also, there was veteran Guild member Roger Conlan. A motor messenger who joined the Guild in 1950, Conlan did virtual around-the-clock picket line duty at the agency's garage, often in heavy rainfall.

All day long Nov. 9—the day union members faced an ultimatum to return to work or be replaced—pickets encircling the agency's downtown headquarters blared noise at the would-be strike breakers inside.

Strikers made use of bass drums, air horns, whistles and any device they could lay hands on. A number of Teamsters truck drivers pitched into the effort by blaring their horns.

It was that day when union members realized they were winning the strike. "There were some real high moments, even though it rained almost all day," Hall said. "The mood shifted."

"It was good for morale," agreed Ed Epstein, Guild member at the Chronicle. "The scabs inside were really getting pounded."

A key Guild noise maker was Stephen Schwartz, who directed a steady stream of creative verbal abuse at scab workers inside the newspaper building. Said Hall, "The police were so impressed by his poetic rantings that they asked to have their shifts changed so they could be there during Steve's picket-line duty."

Throughout the strike, the unions maintained a 24-hour kitchen operation, serving up food donated by sympathetic restaurant and store owners. "We ate like kings and queens," said Hall, crediting Guild members Carole Vernier and Deborah Neal with organizing the food effort. "All the best restaurants in town donated food."

"They (publishers) have nothing to show for their investment in King and Ballow," Epstein said, referring the the union-busting law firm that had been retained by management. "We're still here and we'll probably be stronger than ever."

DAYBOOK

Western District Council, winter meeting, Jan. 28-29, Honolulu.
Middle Atlantic District Council, winter meeting, Feb. 4-5, Philadelphia.
Midwest District Council, winter meeting, Feb. 4-5, Milwaukee.
International Executive Board, spring meeting, April 24-26, TNG headquarters.
2nd Biennial Convention, June 19-23, Sheraton Boston, Boston.

EDITORIAL

Guild advances in computer age

THIS EDITION of The Guild Reporter contains more good news for the Guild than has occurred in a good many years.

First, the strike and lockout wins this month in San Francisco and Vancouver demonstrate convincingly that organized workers in the communications industry can prevail in the age of computer technology. Northern California Guild members applied their knowledge and skills to a high-tech strike paper that was a key element in the union's ability to negotiate a relatively quick—and favorable—strike settlement.

The old conventional wisdom that technology favors the publisher isn't necessarily the case. Knowledge and training Guild members are acquiring on the job is making advertising, circulation and editorial workers more difficult to replace than at anytime in Guild history.

Old-fashioned union solidarity, as was evidenced in the Vancouver lockout as well as in San Francisco, combined with state-of-the-art skills possessed by workers in Guild jurisdiction appears to be a difficult combination for regressive employers to overcome.

Another key factor in both instances was unity between the Guild and unions representing craft workers. To quote Carl Hall, chair of the Guild unit at the San Francisco Chronicle: "This was a Conference of Newspaper Unions strike. We showed that you can win with straight-ahead planning and advance work. People from all segments of the work force came through."

Vancouver Guild President Jan O'Brien also praised the role of other unions in the lockout at the Province and Sun.

For the Guild, another encouraging recent development: TNG's most recent six-month audit shows average overall Guild membership at an all-time high. This comes on the heels of one of the best organizing years in Guild record books.

Finally, the International Executive Board has formalized ties with the Communications Workers of America, putting the Guild on track for a merger that would provide organizing and research resources the Guild needs to fulfill its mission in the news industry in both the United States and Canada.

CWA leaders are not only willing but eager to preserve Guild traditions and identity in a merger that would give both unions added clout in the rapidly changing communications industry.

At a time when the political climate does not look encouraging for workers—with the Republican Party emerging form the Nov. 8 mid-term elections with control of both the U.S. House and Senate—it bears reminding that the Guild has a great deal of potential in the ongoing struggle to improve working conditions in the news industry.

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