

CBC talks at impasse Strike threat looms as technicians walk

In a possible harbinger of hard times ahead, hundreds of Canadian Media Guild members stayed off the job Feb. 17 in support of 2,000 technical, design and maintenance staff on strike against the Canadian Broadcasting Corp.

The striking workers, represented by the Communications, Energy

and Paperworkers Union of Canada, have been without a contract since last June and have had wage increases totaling only 2% since 1993. But the final straw came when the government-owned CBC withdrew its previous wage proposal and substituted an "offer" of 0% per year.

"There was clearly room for compromise, but CBC management was not interested in reaching a collective agreement," said Gail Lem, the CEP vice president representing media workers. "It certainly looks like CBC management is being directed to dismantle the organization so it can be sold off, bit by bit."

The walk-out disrupted radio and television programming nationwide and to an extent in the U.S., where National Public Radio carries some CBC productions. For Guild members, who are at impasse in their own negotiations with CBC, it also provided a taste of things to come. A strike vote has been sched-

uled for March 3 and 4, and CMG President Lise Lareau estimates that the two sides will be legally in a strike/lock-out position within a month.

"That obviously doesn't mean we definitely will strike," she notes, "but we're being offered the same

Continued on page 3



BILL BURKE/WASHINGTON-BALTIMORE GUILD

Two score and twelve

The latest crop of new local leaders descends on the George Meany Center for that annual "throw them in the deep end and see which ones float" exercise otherwise known as the New Local

Officers Seminar. As evidenced by this photograph, virtually all survived the President's Day weekend, in which they learned about collective bargaining, mobilization, contract enforcement, organizing, local administration, human rights, safety and health—and, of course, the importance of communicating with The Guild Reporter.

Mass layoff a smokescreen to ax one man

When the Daily Gleaner of New Brunswick announced Sept. 30 it would lay off a dozen employees, it effectively ended decades of cordial management-labor relations. More than that, however, the layoffs quickly were understood as a cynical effort to ax local president Tim Martell, one of Canada's most promising young labor leaders.

"When I look around and ask myself

who are the 10 potential leaders of the Guild in the future, Tim is certainly in that group," says TNG Canada Director Arnold Amber. "He's got a good background, he's got good instincts and he's a man of action—he goes in and does things."

Which, of course, is part of the reason Martell is now fighting for his job.

In citing "good and valid business reasons" for dumping approximately a tenth of

its workforce last fall—reasons it has never documented, despite union information requests—the Gleaner was in fact trumpeting a sea-change in ownership styles and values. All four of New Brunswick's English dailies are owned by the Irving family, as is a substantial chunk of the province's overall economic base, but historically each was run as a separate and ostensibly competitive enterprise. And, like other publishing dynas-

ties, the Irvings ran their newspapers so paternally that not a single union grievance was filed at the Gleaner between 1981 and 1997. Indeed, working conditions were so good that few employees have less than a decade of seniority.

Last January, however, the family's third generation took over—and as also has been true at other dynasties, quickly displayed more interest in the bottom-line than in the production line. Its first step was to fold all four newspapers into a new parent corporation, the Brunswick News. The second was to eliminate the press room in St. John—home of The Telegraph-Journal and the Saint John Times Globe—and to start printing both

Inside this issue



Seattle Times, PI rewrite JOA Page 2

Record number of Broun entries Page 6

TNG-CWA goes Hollywood Page 8

Continued on page 3

SLEEPLESS IN SEATTLE:

Times, P-I amend JOA; will go head-to-head

More weeks after a joint operating agreement was upended in Chattanooga, another JOA is being revised unexpectedly. But while the changes in Seattle portend some job losses, the agreement is being extended 50 years rather than being abrogated.

The surprise announcement by the Seattle Times that it will change from afternoon to morning publication, putting it in head-to-head competition with the Hearst Corporation's Seattle Post-Intelligencer, was made Feb. 2 without prior notification to the union. Officials of the Pacific Northwest Newspaper Guild responded guardedly, saying they are seeking a legal interpretation of the newspapers' actions.

Newsstand workers vote on Guild representation

Approximately 300 New York City newsstand workers may become TNG-CWA's next members, following a March 5 election in which they will vote whether to join the Newspaper Guild of New York.

The workers, largely immigrants from India and Pakistan, are employed by the Hudson News Company to sell newspapers and magazines, snacks, lotto tickets and other small items throughout Manhattan. Three previous efforts by another union to organize them failed by small margins, but a small group of the workers persevered and contacted local President Barry Lipton to discuss the possibilities of Guild representation.

"We are closely monitoring the situation in an effort to assure that our members' rights are protected and that the new agreement complies with the intent of the Newspaper Preservation Act, which is to assure the survival of competing editorial voices," said local President Gene Achziger.

The Newspaper Preservation Act carved out an exception to anti-trust laws to permit competing newspapers to share production, ad sales and circulation departments. The Times and P-I have had such a joint operating agreement since 1983, with the more dominant Times handling non-editorial operations for both newspapers and receiving 68% of revenues.

But changes in readership patterns convinced the Blethen fami-

ly, majority owners of the Times, that a conversion to morning publication was essential if the paper were to stem circulation losses. All top 20 dailies in the country are morning papers, Publisher Frank Blethen pointed out to employees, with readership surveys showing a rapidly growing preference for the Times to follow suit.

Going head-to-head with the P-I comes at a price, however: in exchange for consenting to the added competition, the Hearst company obtained a right of first purchase if the Seattle Times goes up for sale—squeezing ahead of Knight Ridder, which has a 49% stake. It also increased its slice of the economic pie to 40%, from 32%, and secured its right—previously disputed by the Times—to expand its Web content.

No timetable has been announced for the conversion to morning publication, other than an outside limit of two years.

While the P-I has assured its employees it is "unlikely" any jobs or schedules will change, editorial and production changes are obviously in store for Times employees. Less obvious is the degree of belt-tightening that will result from the revised economic split.

"The initial and ultimate effect the change will have on employees you represent is not entirely known at this time," Times officials advised the Guild. "Any change this big brings the possibility that some of the changes may lead to the elimination of certain jobs. That will become clearer as we move through the planning process."

Start planning now for conference

The TNG-CWA 1999 Sector Conference is less than three months away, but other deadlines are more imminent. Among them:

- Delegates who wish to apply for a subsidy of up to \$200 to defray the costs of registration and room reservations must do so by March 15. Subsidies are available to locals sending only a single delegate, who must be willing to share a room.

- March 15 also is the deadline for buying ads in the Sector

Conference Booklet; to order, call 613/820-6545.

- March 25 is the deadline for making room reservations at the Chateau Laurier; to do so, call 613/241-1414 or 800/441-1414. Single room rates start at (C)\$150, doubles at (C)\$170; at the current exchange rate, that works out to approximately \$100 and \$107 U.S.

- April 15 is the deadline for resolutions, to be received at TNG-CWA headquarters.

- April 19 is the deadline for credentials and the \$125 registra-

tion fee, also to be received at TNG-CWA headquarters.

The conference itself will open at 9 a.m. on Thursday, April 29 but will be preceded Wednesday by meetings of TNG Canada and of the Council of Councils. In addition, the new delegates' forum will be held April 28 at 3 p.m.

Nominations for Guild officers will be received Saturday—May Day!—and if more than two candidates are presented for a position, voting to reduce the field is scheduled for Sunday morning.

In brief . . .

Regina certified as Guild unit

Approximately 45 reporters and editors at the Regina Leader-Post, the Leader-Star news service and the Regina Sun have been certified as a bargaining unit of The Newspaper Guild Canada/CWA. The card-check drive succeeded despite management harassment that resulted in several complaints of unfair labor practices, which the unit is still pursuing.

NLRB to review de-authorization

It took the Northeast Ohio Newspaper Guild just about a decade to get a contract at the Massillon Independent—only to have a deauthorization petition filed three months later. The petition succeeded by a single vote, prompting a Guild challenge that was rejected by the NLRB's regional office. But now the national board has agreed to review the results, citing "substantial issues warranting review."

Officers elected in Milwaukee . . .

Bob Helbig has been reelected president of TNG-CWA Local 51, Milwaukee. Other officers elected were Larry Sandler, first vice president; Lauria Lynch-German, second vice president; Marilyn Marchione, treasurer; and Jennie Tunkieicz, secretary.

. . . Harrisburg . . .

Mary Klaus has been reelected president of the Harrisburg Newspaper Guild. Other officers elected were Jeff McGaw, first vice president; Jim Brown, second vice president; Sandy Cullen, secretary; and Mark Warner, treasurer.

. . . and by Western District Council

The Western District Council, meeting on the Hawaiian island of Maui, re-elected Russ Cain of San Jose as president; Gary North of Long Beach as first vice president; Lucy Witeck of Hawaii as second vice president; and Steve Swenson of Bakersfield as secretary-treasurer.

More candidates announce for TNG

Larry Hatfield, of the Northern California Media Workers Guild, announced at the Western District Council meeting that he will run for re-election as an at-large TNG-CWA vice president. And Russ Cain announced his candidacy for re-election as Region 4 vice president. Both candidates were endorsed by the council, as were TNG-CWA President Linda Foley and Secretary-Treasurer Bernie Lunzer, who announced their re-election intentions at the January executive council meeting.

Separately, Connie Knox, currently an at-large vice president who also is president of the Washington-Baltimore Guild, announced she will be running for Region 2 vice president.

Endorsements flow for TNG, CWA

Other recent endorsements include that of Tony Bixler—running for another term as CWA District 9 vice president—by the Western District Council; and of Foley, Lunzer, Cain and Hatfield in their re-election bids by the San Jose Guild's representative assembly.

Hollinger fails to appeal scab ruling

Despite its request for an extended appeals deadline, Hollinger International has decided not to seek National Labor Relations Board review of a decision that greatly expands the rights of sympathy strikers.

"I was shocked," said Ken Edwards, the Chicago Newspaper Guild attorney who successfully argued the case before an administrative law judge. "I would have bet my bottom dollar that they would have appealed it because of the precedent that's been set."

As reported last month, the Chicago Guild complained to the NLRB on behalf of a non-union

employee of the Hollinger-owned Herald Palladium, Michigan, who was fired in late 1997 for refusing to be trained as a potential strike breaker. The Dec. 17 ruling found that his refusal, "albeit anticipatory, was nevertheless protected under the [National Labor Relations Act] since it was made in the context of a strike situation."

Hollinger's attorneys moved for an extension of the appeals deadline to Feb. 5 from Jan. 14, then dropped the matter, ostensibly to avoid further litigation costs. Edwards, however, believes the company was simply trying to avoid a more significant defeat before the full board.



For information about your benefits, contact Helen L. Coleman, assistant to the trustees:

1-888-893-3650
105064.3217@compuserve.com

www.newsguild.org



www.tngcanada.org

The Guild Reporter (ISSN: 00175404) is issued monthly, generally at four week intervals, at 501 Third St. NW, 2nd Floor, Washington, D.C. 20001. Periodicals postage paid in Washington, D.C., and additional mailing offices. Printed in the U.S.

Postmaster: Send address changes to: The Guild Reporter, 501 Third St. NW, 2nd Floor, Washington, D.C. 20001

Subscription: \$20 a year.
Single copies: \$1.50.

Blowing smoke in N. Brunswick

Continued from page 1

those papers in Moncton. The third was the Gleaner's staff cuts.

But the dozen layoffs were not all they initially appeared to be. Four truck drivers were dropped from the payroll—then offered their old jobs as contract workers. Three circulation employees were on the list—even though they'd been hired as temps. Of the two pink-slipped employees in advertising, one was nearing retirement and the other had already announced she wanted to be first in line for any lay-offs so she could go back to school. A reporter was dumped—then rehired into a management position.

And, finally, two composing room employees were shown the door—including Martell, with 10 years on the job.

Steamrolling a Speed Bump

Even with no other history, Martell's layoff—coming precisely one month before the contract's expiration—would have been suspect. But there were other warning flags. One was the organizing drive Martell started last March in the Gleaner's non-unionized mail, press and advertising departments—a drive that apparently led to the publisher and marketing director being fired for not adequately preventing such an insurrection. There were a couple of grievances, filed even before the organizing drive, which ended up being resolved in the Guild's favor.

And then there was the meeting at which family scion John Irving took Martell to task for wearing blue jeans and sandals to work—a long-standing practice that previously had gone unremarked.

Martell, in other words, was becoming a speed bump on the road to the new management's success—and speed bumps must be flattened out.

But all has not gone smoothly for the management steamroller.

Seven grievances and an unfair labor practice charge have been filed over the layoffs. Because the composing department was short-handed even before the layoffs, overtime claims have shot up steeply. And contract negotiations threaten to become a contentious affair, following the unit's rejection of a management offer to extend the lapsed agreement in exchange for a \$300 signing bonus.

Never mind the niggardly "bonus," says Martell: the true insult was the company's attempt to attach two side letters to the agreement, one of which would have memorialized the composing room layoffs regardless of the outcome of the ULP and grievances. Meanwhile, although the company never respond to the local's far more comprehensive contract proposals, it already has requested government conciliation.

All of which, says Martell, has only served to irritate a formerly complacent local membership. "The company sees the membership as somewhat cowed," he says, "but that's a mistake. These continued strikes by management are just making us more determined. Everyone is quite clear on what the company's proposals mean."

So the Fredericton local is hunkering down for the long haul. A third bargaining session is scheduled for early March. The ULP, after four days of hearings in January at which Martell was the only witness, has been adjourned until May "and we've got quite a few witnesses to call yet—we've got quite a substantial case to present," he adds.

And Martell, raised in a union family, is biding his time. His local has been around since 1905, so a few months here or there is of no great moment. And he himself is still young, still developing his leadership skills. The Daily Gleaner, it turns out, has simply become his training ground.



The triumphant Kenosha bargaining team includes Burrell; local president Bill Guida; and Barb Henkel, Bill Siel, Dave Engels and John Krowicz.

Kenosha, three smaller units ratify contracts

A three-year contract with the Kenosha News was ratified unanimously Feb. 8 by the Kenosha Newspaper Guild. Two Guild locals in Canada and one in St. Louis also reached new agreements.

In achieving its agreement, Kenosha's editorial-only unit repelled a determined management push for language that would have required Guild members to cross picket lines. It also defeated a challenge to existing language that prevents the company from reclassifying a position from full-time to part-time after a full-time employee resigns or retires.

As significantly, the unit took a major step toward eradicating a two-tier wage system by agreeing to a multi-step package of wage increases: the local's least senior employees will receive a 5% increase each year; employees with six to eight years seniority will get a 3% annual increase; while those with the most seniority will receive a yearly bonus of \$1,200 that includes a 401(k) option. Journeyman reporters and photographers on the overscale are currently paid \$858.50 a week.

The unit also won increased

notice, of 60 days rather than 30, of new processes or equipment that could result in a layoff; and agreed to make reporters available for occasional copy desk shifts to meet manpower shortages in exchange for premium pay and specialized training in editing and pagination.

The Guild bargaining team was led by International Representative Mike Burrell, marking the first time the unit negotiated a contract with TNG staff support—apparently to rave reviews. "Mike did a great job articulating union concerns expressed and debated in caucuses; and inviting participation from bargaining team members at the table," said local President Bill Guida. "That's something veteran unit members felt was lacking in past negotiations."

KSDK-TV

Gannett's "final offer" was accepted by Guild members at the St. Louis station by a vote of 8 to 5. The three-year contract includes a 2% wage increase upon ratification, with all subsequent increases to be strictly at management's discretion. Moreover, the work week has been increased to 40 hours from 37.5.

Duncan Citizen

A three-year agreement at the weekly newspaper, on Vancouver Island, includes a 1998 lump-sum payment of \$400 to each employee, a 1.5% increase effective March 1 and a 2% increase in March, 2000. Other features include a "reverse grandfathering" of the production manager position, which will revert to the bargaining unit when the incumbent vacates the position, and a reduction to 24 months from 30 months of the time reprimands stay in personnel files.

Agence France Press

The two-year pact approved by the two-member unit in Montreal, which runs through January 31 of next year, includes a single 4.1% increase and a signing bonus of \$500. A cost-of-living clause will kick in if local inflation—now at 0.9%—exceeds 2.3% this year or next. The unit achieved its top priority—full staff status and job security for part-timers—plus an increase in paternity leave to five days from two; job-posting; and reimbursement of public transportation fares.

SEEKING LOCAL UNION REPRESENTATIVE

A dynamic, fast-paced local of 1,600 members is seeking a local representative who is experienced in negotiations, grievance handling, organizing and union mobilization.

The successful candidate will possess excellent communications skills, a working knowledge of labor law and a demonstrated ability to work with diverse groups, including community organizations and other labor unions. The candidate should have computer skills and the creativity to handle challenges in a changing workplace. Not required but a plus: a sense of humor.

The local representative (other unions call this position a business agent) must be willing to drive to and assist our units in Delaware, New Jersey and Pennsylvania. The rep will report to the administrative officer and be a part of a seven-member staff at the local headquarters in Philadelphia.

Salary commensurate with experience. Generous benefits. Applicants should fax, e-mail or mail resume and cover letter by April 15 to:

SEARCH COMMITTEE
THE NEWSPAPER GUILD, TNG-CWA 38010
1329 BUTTWOOD STREET
PHILADELPHIA, PA 19123

FAX: 215/928-9177;

E-MAIL: FSANTAFEDE@LOCAL-10.SBS.DCA.NET

Canadian strike vote looms

Continued from page 1

horrible money [as the CEP] and a lot of the CEP's issues are our issues, too. And people aren't as fearful now as they were three years ago, which quite frankly is something I think the CBC doesn't understand. They're very angry, but they've been quiet about it."

The extent of that anger was visible last Wednesday, as Guild members—who under Canadian law were obliged to cross the CEP's picket lines—stayed home in droves. Many, Lareau says, did so without any guidance from the Guild, often in locations that previously had shown only lackluster support for the union. "Arnold [Amber, director of TNG Canada] says it's the day we became a union,

because a lot of people decided on their own to become part of the collective," she adds.

Underlying the anger in both unions are memories of 1996, when the CBC's financial difficulties convinced Guild and CEP members to accept major contract concessions in exchange for promises of repayment when times got better. Instead, the CBC wants to impose an eight-week overtime averaging system for Guild members, is trying to eliminate the Guild's jurisdiction clause and wants to reduce the salaries of so-called "hybrid" positions—such as video-journalists and director-switchers—by more than \$5,000 a year.

Meanwhile, CBC wages—Guild scales have been frozen since

1992—are at or near the industry bottom. The top minimum for reporters, for example, is \$1,051, compared with \$1,204 at the Toronto Star, \$1,218 at the Globe & Mail and \$1,243 at Reuters. CBC receptionists make between \$20,625 and \$26,498, compared with a range of \$25,789 to \$33,915 at CFCF Montreal. And top scale for CBC's computer analysts is less than the starting scale at CFTO-TV.

The CBC, on the other hand, is financially strong enough to have given its president a pay increase last year of at least 19%. Against that backdrop, says Guild representative Kathy Viner, the CBC's offer of a zero-zero-zero wage increase "was incredibly contemptuous."

[For more, see www.cmg.ca.]

A tale of two economies

To determine whether the glass is half full or half empty, find out whose glass it is

By Andy Zipser
Editor, The Guild Reporter

The economy, it would seem, has never been rosier. Last year's numbers are out and plump as marshmallows. Unemployment and inflation are at or near post-World War II lows, factories are humming at near-capacity and home ownership is hitting all-time highs. The future is so redolent with promise that Congress is facing the virtually unprecedented quandary of deciding how to dispose of trillions in anticipated tax surpluses.

Nor is the newspaper business any less favored, following two years in which record numbers of newspapers have been sold at record prices. And no wonder. Although characterized as being part of a "mature" industry, and therefore with limited room to increase revenues, no major newspaper chain will admit to seeking profit margins of less than 20%—and 25% is more like it. And with newsprint prices, the industry's most volatile balance-sheet variable, expected to rise only slightly in 1999, while ad revenues are projected to climb by 5% or so

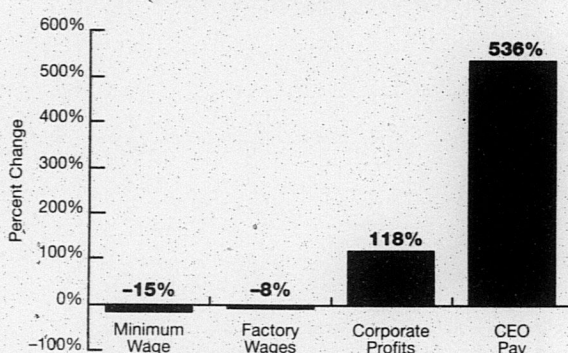
over last year, there's every reason to think such expectations will bear fruit.

Life is good—right? So how come it doesn't feel that way for more people? Why are stock investors so skittish (as witness continued market volatility), our global trading partners so irate with us, our employers so reluctant to agree to modest wage increases? Why, when you come right down to it, does all the Pollyanna hype about the economy sound too forced and contrived?

Maybe because, as with the story of the blind men and the elephant, the economy can have as many descriptions as there are observers. And maybe because "the economy" is a statistical abstraction that has little to say about the economic conditions of any one person. Or as Ralph Nader observed at the Labor Party convention a couple of months ago, "If we don't control the yardsticks by which our economy is judged, we lose control over the nation's agenda and turn ourselves over to big business."

Judging by the yardsticks with which we are most pummeled, these are good times indeed.

While corporate profits and executive salaries soar, wages fall behind



Percentage change between 1980 and 1997. When adjusted for inflation, minimum wage and average factory pay fell.

Sources: Business Week, various issues, U.S. Dept. Of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics

While much of the world is in recession or economically stagnant, the U.S. gross domestic product rose 5.6% in the fourth quarter, unemployment hovers around 4% and inflation is approaching zero. Poverty rates are down and wages are up—indeed, over the past two years, wages have risen at the fastest rate in more than a decade. And history's most consumer-driven economy continues doing what it does best, as Americans last year increased their spending by 5.7% over 1997.

But there are some other numbers worth noting, too. More than half-a-million Americans were

laid off in 1998 or told their jobs will soon be eliminated. Although virtually all found new work, the great majority had to settle for less pay, shorter hours or fewer benefits. For example, more than four million part-timers (of 21 million total) say they want full-time work but can't find it, according to the Dept. of Labor. Similarly, more than 10 million Americans have lost their health insurance in the past decade, a number that grows by more than 100,000 a month and now totals more than 43 million.

While the optimists are prone to citing the enormous number of jobs created in the U.S. as proof of economic health, a job becomes

indentured labor when it doesn't pay a living wage—and fully 74% of the jobs with the most growth won't enable a family to pay its bills, according to a recent report by the National Priorities Project and Jobs With Justice. Worse, nearly half of those jobs (46%) pay less than half of a livable wage, which means even a family with two such wage-earners would be slipping backwards—and never mind how a single mother with two children would cope. (See map, facing page, for a state-by-state breakout.)

Those recent wage gains, meanwhile, have only begun reclaiming the losses of the previous two decades, as inflation-adjusted income has yet to recover from a swoon that started in 1973. And while the poverty rate has declined (most notably among blacks, whose poverty rate is at an all-time low), the income deficit—the amount by which the incomes of the poor fall below the poverty line—has widened. Which is to say, the poor are getting poorer while the middle class is struggling to regain ground.

Indeed, the direction taken by the numbers at the bottom of the economic ladder simply mirror what's happening at the top, where the rich are getting richer. Corporate chief executives are the poster boys for pigging out at the trough, of course, but they're

Continued on page 5

The ultimate privatization—of censorship

By Moshe Negbi

Traditionally, the struggle for press freedom has been waged against the state. Publishers, editors and journalists alike have fought to prevent, modify or abolish legislation which gave the government power to censor publications.

However, in well-established democracies where reasonable safeguards for protecting the press from official intervention were achieved, it has become evident that the state is not the only menace threatening the uninhibited flow of information and ideas to the public. Sometimes the state is not even the major menace. It seems that the all-powerful censors in such advanced democracies are no longer politicians or government officials, but rather "the enemies within"—the people who own the media and consequently enjoy tremendous power to control its editorial contents and the access to it.

Some may object to the use of the term "censorship" in this context. For them, this term means a complete, brutal suppression of dissenting voices, coupled with severe punishment entailing loss of liberty and even life. But let me submit that is not the only type of censorship. Although Freud observed there is a profound moral difference between burning dissenters or "just" burning their books, in both cases those dissenters are censored. If you assume that Freedom of Speech means not only the

ability to speak but the ability to communicate—not only to utter a dissenting voice but also to make it heard by others—then reducing it to an inaudible whisper can be fairly termed "censorship."

Moreover, this "private censorship"—even if it is not inhumanly brutal—is often more effective and restrictive than government censorship. When a state organ censors, the press can protest and mobilize public opinion. It also can try to combat the censor in court, and in extreme cases can even decide to break the law by publishing the censored information ("publish and be damned"). However, when censorship originates within the media themselves there usually is no one willing or able to protest, and no forum upon which to stage the protest.

The older and better known type of private censorship is the one that is motivated by ideology, i.e. if a publisher believes that publishing a certain news story or opinion may harm the "public good" or the "national interest," publication is suppressed. But this argument makes sense only if you forget that the very notion of a pre-determined "national interest" or "public good" runs contrary to democratic premises. Actually it is a Leninist notion, and Lenin advocated neither democracy nor freedom of the press. Indeed, he complained he did not understand the idea of a free press: "Why should a government which is doing what is right and just allow criticism? It would not have allowed the use

of lethal weapons against it, and ideas are far more lethal than guns."

But most private censorship does not even pretend to be responsible and patriotic. It is instead commercially motivated, involving the suppression or distortion of stories or opinions which the publisher feels would diminish profit or make him or her lose money. This censorship is especially effective and pervasive because while an intelligent reader may discern the ideological bias of a publisher, almost no one can be aware of his or her business interests at any given time, and therefore of the possible bias which colors news and views in his or her paper.

Private censorship can be motivated by the financial interests of the publisher both inside and outside the communication medium she owns. If, for example, the publisher is interested in buying real estate in a certain region, she might censor stories which "would cause prices in that region to go up."

Then there are the financial interests of the communication medium itself, which is dependent mainly on advertising and circulation (or ratings). As A. Roy Megary, publisher of the Toronto Globe & Mail rightly predicted in the eighties, "By 1990, publishers of mass circulation daily newspapers will finally stop kidding themselves that they are in the newspaper business and admit that they are primarily in the business of carrying advertising messages."

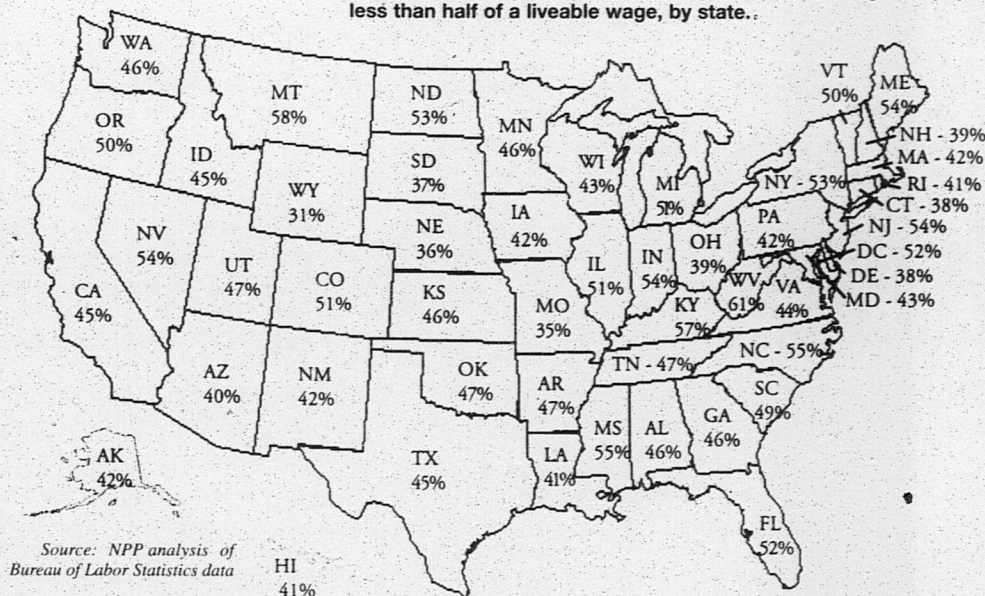
The effectiveness of private censorship

is clearly multiplied as the number of media owners diminishes. The concentration of the media in fewer hands makes censoring much more tempting to the owner and much more harmful to the public. If owners know that material they intend to suppress is likely to surface and reach their readers through other media, they would probably have second thoughts about suppressing it. But in a concentrated media market—especially where there is cross ownership of print and broadcast media—a great number of people may get almost all their information and ideas about public affairs and issues from media sources which are all controlled by the same owner. Such a situation makes it more tempting for advertisers and other interested parties to apply pressure on the owner to censor his or her journalists.

As much as fifty years ago, The Commission on Freedom of the Press noted that "protection against government is now not enough to guarantee that a man who has something to say shall have a chance to say it. The owners and managers of the press determine which persons, which facts, which versions of the facts, and which ideas shall reach the public."

[Adapted from "The Enemy Within: The Effect of Private Censorship on Press Freedom and How to Confront It—An Israeli Perspective," published by the Joan Shorenstein Center on the Press. The author is an Israeli newspaper columnist and anchorman.]

Percentage of new jobs in 20 fastest growing job categories paying less than half of a liveable wage, by state.



Continued from page 4

hardly alone. In 1967, for example, the wealthiest fifth of the U.S. population claimed 43.8% of all personal income; by 1997 that proportion had increased—at the expense of all other income brackets—to 49.4%. U.S. income inequality, in fact, is at its highest point since the official U.S. Census numbers began in 1947, and by some other measures now rivals the early 20th century.

This income redistribution is exacerbated by consumer credit practices that would have made Shylock blush, but which have allowed much of the middle class to maintain a pretense of growing prosperity. In two of the last three months of 1998, Americans' personal savings rate for the first time sank into negative territory, continuing a decades-long trend in which we have gone from net savers to net spenders. No surprise, then, that household debt as a percentage of after-tax income has climbed at an accelerating rate since 1973 and is nearly at 100%, or that personal bankruptcies have sky-rocketed even more dramatically.

Put it all together and you have an economy that's severely out of whack but which, like a madly spinning top, maintains the illusion of balance—until centrifugal forces pull it apart.

What's really going on? At least three converging trends.

familiar to anyone who keeps up with the news, are destructive to individual workers:

• **Globalization.** This works on several levels, including ready access to cheap overseas labor and the international flow of capital. While conventional thinking tends to stereotype overseas labor as blue-collar, manual work (chiefly textiles and manufacturing), information processing can be done by anyone, anywhere, via the Internet—which is why, for example, some U.S. companies have hired accountants in India and Pakistan. Conversely, highly trained technical workers are being “imported” into the U.S. on work visas and plugged into jobs that once would have gone to Americans.

The global flow of capital, meanwhile, has grown so huge it outstrips the ability of virtually any nation to control it. The result, as seen throughout southeast Asia, in Russia and now in Latin America, is that private interests set the rules—invariably designed to maximize profits—and governments hasten to obey or risk economic chaos. Nor is this trend confined to the Third World, as seen in the withering away of U.S. laws designed to separate the banking, insurance and investment industries, recent efforts to tighten personal bankruptcy laws and the push to privatize Social Security.

• **Consolidation.** Aside from forcing governments to their knees, the global flow of capital also is hastening rapid consolidation among all industries, including the mass media. One catalyst is greater competitiveness: it's a jungle out there, and only the biggest and strongest will survive. But a greater driver is the search for ever higher profitability: combine two former competitors and you can extract savings by dumping redundant personnel (Fortune 500 companies erased more jobs than they created over the past decade), consolidating facilities and gaining enough market clout to more easily dictate prices and wages.

The latter has been especially evident among U.S. and Canadian newspapers, including Conrad Black's recent success in taking Southam private, giving him full access to that newspaper chain's considerable cash flow with which to finance still more acquisitions. That may be good for Conrad Black's bottom line, but the price is greater job instability and increased threats to employees' wage and benefits levels—not to mention the threat such oligopolies pose to more traditional journalistic values (see sidebar on preceding page).

- **Cooptation.** The most troubling of the three, this is the trend—accelerated by access to the aforementioned Internet, the erosion of regulatory oversight and the displacement of defined-benefit pensions by IRAs and 401(k) plans—that has 43% of all adults “invested” in the stock market, more than double the 1990 percentage.

At first blush, widespread market investment sounds like the ideal combination of labor and capital—sort of what you'd expect from a marriage of Karl Marx and Adam Smith, with the workers of the world owning a piece of the means of production. But the truth is that the great majority of "investors" have little understanding of the market, that the market is in any case more and more a casino—and, worst of all, that the game is rigged against small investors. And while even lotteries produce winners—sometimes

Big bucks net little that's newsworthy

By Marvin Kalb

In 1935, Leo Rosten, a graduate student at the University of Chicago, determined that roughly 50% of the Washington press corps had college degrees, but less than 50% of the national press corps had finished college, or even attended college. These numbers immediately suggested that journalism was a profession or a craft that required a high degree of educational training.

By 1971, almost 60% of all journalists had college degrees, 75% of the national press corps had college degrees, and a third of them had even obtained advanced degrees. By 1992, more than 82% had college degrees, and a significant number of them had advanced degrees.

But it's a good thing that many journalists still profess an allegiance to the old adage, "We're not in it for the money," because a higher education has not necessarily produced a very high salary—at least for those reporters who work for small or modest-sized newspapers with a circulation between roughly 30,000 and 70,000 readers. They are earning, on average, \$23,000 a year. US News & World Report warned graduating college seniors in 1997 that journalism majors were starting their careers with salaries as low as \$22,000 a year.

Between a local newspaper and a local TV station, salaries were about the same—the average salary for a local TV reporter in 1995 was \$21,915 a year. Major newspapers and networks pay a lot more. For example, in April, 1997, if you were a reporter with two years of experience, the [Guild-represented] New York Times would start you at \$67,000 a year. With five years of experience, the [Guild-represented] Boston Globe and the [Guild-represented] Chicago Sun-Times would start you at \$61,000 and \$57,000 respectively.

And if you were an experienced reporter in Washington, D.C., where many star journalists work, you'd be doing quite well indeed—especially if you were working for a network, where salaries for a beat reporter could range from \$100,000 to \$350,000 a year, depending on the beat. But even if you worked for a newspaper or a magazine but somehow managed to break into the television talk-show circuit, you would also be in six-figure terrain because you'd be open to such additional benefits at television contracts and lecture fees. In other words, you'd earn very handsome salaries indeed, comparable to those of U.S. Cabinet secretaries.

For example, Howard Fineman earns a reported \$160,000 a year from Newsweek, where he is a senior political reporter, but he also has signed a new \$65,000 contract with MSNBC. In the old days, such moonlighting was discouraged; now it is encouraged by Newsweek [and other print publications] because it believes that it benefits from the free publicity generated by Fineman's appearances on television.

A quick survey suggests, therefore, that journalists these days tend to reflect Lippmann's elitism much more than Dewey's populism. They are among the best educated and best paid in the land, more powerful as an institution than at any other time in American history. And yet, in their daily and hourly product, they produce, for the most part, not an elitist formula for better government, not a detailed analysis of Social Security or Kremlin intrigue, but rather an increasingly fluffy, sexy and sensationalist vision of society, in which vice among our leaders can be (and has been) converted into profitable enterprises.

The cream of the crop has produced a harvest of shame.

[Excerpted from "The Rise of the 'New News': A Case Study of Two Root Causes of Modern Scandal Coverage," published by the Joan Shorenstein Center on the Press; the author, a broadcast veteran, is the center's director.]

very big ones—there's an enormous difference between gambling at a casino and owning a piece of one.

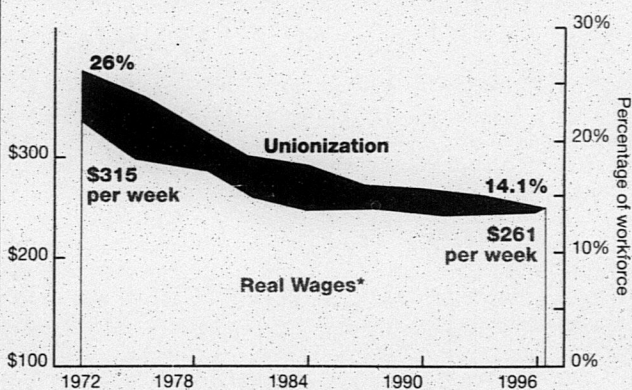
Workers who fancy themselves capitalists, however, also find themselves trapped between conflicting values. It's great when a stock you own spurts in price because the CEO announced another round of layoffs, but not so great when you're working for the company where the ax is swinging. And while it's comforting to see one's retirement portfolio grow by leaps and bounds, it might be disconcerting to learn much of that growth is fueled by hot money that

could readily flow elsewhere—as happened with junk bonds in the 'Eighties—kneecapping today's high stock valuations.

Having an ever wider segment of the public participate in the stock market serves the monied class well, however, because such participation helps swell market valuations—one significant reason behind Wall Street's push for privatizing Social Security. Higher stock valuations feed the consolidation frenzy, which in turn accelerates layoffs and cost-cutting, which drives valuations higher, which attracts still more investors to the

Continued on page 8

When union membership declines, living standards decline along with it



*Average weekly earnings in private nonagricultural industries, in 1982 dollars

Sources: Economic Report of the President 1998; Bureau of the Census; U.S. Dept. Of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics

Labor round-up

Screen actors reject AFTRA merger

Only 46.5% of voting Screen Actors Guild members supported a proposed merger with the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists, apparently driving a stake through the heart of a merger the leaders of both unions have pursued for decades. AFTRA members supported the move by a margin of two-to-one, but with 60% approval needed from each union's rank-and-file, prospects for conubial bliss seem all but vanished.

NABET/CWA, NBC shake hands

The broadcast engineers and technicians of NABET/CWA have reached a tentative, two-year contract agreement with NBC—two months early, and without the rancor that marked the last several negotiations with the network. Ratification ballots are to be counted March 5. At ABC, however, NABET members rejected the company's latest offer less than a month after enduring an 11-week lockout. The offer included raises totaling about 13% over four years, but also would have allowed the network to increase its use of temporary daily hires to 45% of the work force, up from approximately 14% today.

Unions to coordinate Disney strategy

Disney-owned ABC's labor troubles are about to start affecting the parent company, as several of the unions representing its employees—including CWA, SAG and the Teamsters—begin discussing ways of creating a single bargaining committee to handle all contract talks with the media giant. A media campaign is also under discussion.

Maryland governor gets behind unions

Maryland's recently reelected governor, Parris N. Glendening, has proposed a collective bargaining bill under which all state employees covered by labor contracts could be required to pay a fee to the union that negotiates their wages and working conditions—even if they won't actually join the union. The bill also would extend collective bargaining rights to approximately 18,000 nonfaculty employees of state universities.

Good news, bad news on union growth

The good news is that union membership increased in 1998, rising more than 100,000 to 16.2 million; the bad news is that this increase failed to match the growth of the overall workforce, reducing union membership to 13.9% of all workers, the lowest level since World War II. On the other hand, federal statistics showed median weekly earnings for full-time unionized employees to be one-third higher than the median for nonunion workers.

More grad students start organizing

Hard on the heels of a statewide job action by graduate students at the University of California, the Graduate Student Organizing Congress has filed for union representation at the University of Minnesota. More than 2,000 signatures on authorization cards were collected from graduate students, who teach classes and conduct research and counseling but who historically have been treated by universities as a cheap labor pool. A vote is likely in April or May.

Do as I say, not as I do

Mere months after forcing CWA-represented employees at U.S. West out on strike, company CEO Solomon Trujillo has been awarded pay, stock options, bonuses and other benefits that amount to a 62% raise, to \$4.3 million. The company's 1999 budget boosts compensation for all of its top officers an average of 35%—compared to the annual increases of less than 4% won by the striking workers.

Banking at Wells Fargo/Norwest? Don't

The United Steelworkers of America is asking TNG-CWA members to fight union-busting by moving any accounts they presently hold with Wells Fargo/Norwest to another bank. Wells Fargo is the lead partner in a consortium that is providing Oregon Steel with a revolving line of credit that has enabled it to withstand a strike by approximately 1,100 steelworkers for more than 15 months. Since October, Wells Fargo has twice amended its credit agreement to keep Oregon Steel from defaulting.

SBC card-check agreement reached

CWA has signed a card-check agreement with SBC (formerly Southwestern Bell) covering the wireless telecommunication company's cellular properties in New York, Maryland, Illinois, Washington D.C., Massachusetts, Virginia, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Indiana and Delaware—a potential addition of 3,000 new members.

Guild receives record number of Broun entries

A record 238 entries have been submitted in the Heywood Broun Awards competition, or roughly double the number entered last year. And while a relative handful came from magazine and radio and television stations, it was newspapers that once again provided the greatest volume of entries.

Some clearly were assembled by specialized departments that each year fire a shotgun salvo of contest entries at the growing number of awards waiting to be plucked: The New York Times, for example, submitted 23 items, ranging from stories and series about welfare, immigrants and the elderly to the fortune amassed by Benazir Bhutto and her family. Not to be outdone, the New Times family of alternative weeklies chipped in just as many, albeit on a far more wide-ranging selection of topics.

Judging this vast array of journalistic output will be a five-member panel chaired by Chuck Dale, retired former president of The Newspaper Guild. Also on the

panel are: Bob Davis, White House correspondent for The Wall Street Journal and co-author of "Prosperity: The Coming Twenty-Year Boom and What It Means to You"; Bill Eaton, a past Pulitzer Prize winner now teaching at the University of Maryland; Geneva Overholser, past ombudsman and current columnist for The Washington Post; and Jonathan Whitten, a reporter for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation.

Transplant Troubles

Meanwhile, the subject of last year's winning entry—a series exposing flaws in the nation's system of allocating organs for transplants—continues to make news.

The Cleveland Plain Dealer series, by Ted Wendling, Joan Mazzolini and Dave Davis, documented how a nationwide network of parochial transplant centers results in gross inequities in the length of time critically ill patients must wait for live-saving organs. The series helped prompt Donna Shalala, U.S. secretary of health and human services, to impose

new organ allocation rules that were supposed to go into effect last October, but a furious response by turf-conscious transplant centers has delayed their implementation.

In a historically ironic twist, however, the opposing coalition's most visible congressional ally, Rep. Robert L. Livingston, was unhorsed by the impeachment scandal just as he was about to become Speaker of the House. "I actually think there's now reason to hope the rules will be implemented," says Wendling, who continues to cover the issue.

Indeed, a recently completed report by the United Network for Organ Sharing—which had been sharply critical of the Plain Dealer's conclusions—only underscores the severity of the problem. For example, Iowa patients in need of a liver transplant have, on average, a 46-day wait for a replacement organ; in neighboring Nebraska, the average wait is 596 days. In Baltimore, the average wait is 439 days; in Washington, a mere 60 miles to the south, it's 147 days.

"The UNOS report is just devastating," Wendling observes. "It makes the government's case."

American Airlines, pilots create a sickening mess

American Airlines fought its way to a Pyrrhic victory over the Allied Pilots Association last week, securing a federal court order that held the pilots in contempt for failing to end a sickout. But the estimated \$75 million lost by the airline during the 10-day disruption was roughly twice the amount it would have cost to meet the union's demands.

While thousands of grounded passengers vented their frustration at the pilots—and hapless gate attendants—the source of their discomfort goes back to the early 1990s, when American closed three of its hubs, furloughed more than 600 pilots and pulled out of West Coast service. But once Reno Air filled the void, American established so close a marketing relationship with the regional carrier that union officials labeled it an alter-ego—albeit one that paid markedly lower wages.

Compounding the ill-will American's pilots feel toward Reno Air was the airline's failure to inform the union it had bought the upstart just before Christmas—a development APA says it discovered accidentally in a regulatory filing. Although the union knew acquisition talks were taking place, American was predicting the sale wouldn't close before January or February.

When management then said it wouldn't raise salaries for Reno's 300 pilots to American's scales for another 18 months, that proved to

be the last straw. Although APA was contractually constrained from calling a strike, federal regulations make pilots responsible for determining if they're "fit to fly"—and with APA's encouragement, many decided they were too upset by the Reno deal to do so.

Ironically, the federal court order that ended the sick-out was issued under the authority of the Railway Labor Act, which was adopted in 1926 (and later extended to the airlines) to prevent interruption of interstate commerce. Initially it was used only sparingly, but as illustrated by the experience at American—which has no lack of competitors—has become an increasingly sought-after tool

against some unions.

Nonetheless, the sick-out at American suggests airline unions will become increasingly assertive in pressing for their share of the spoils after agreeing to huge wage concessions in the early 1990s, when airlines were struggling for profitability. And the high profile achieved by the APA's job action is sure to attract support for sick-outs as an alternative to strikes among unions not affected by the Railway Labor Act. Although the tactic is not without risk—employers are allowed to discipline workers they can prove weren't actually ill—for many union members it will be preferable to a full scale walk-out.

Avondale shipyard under more pressure

The years-long stand-off at Avondale Industries—the Louisiana ship-builder that has refused to recognize NLRB certification of a 1993 election for union representation—may be lurching toward a finish, albeit not with good grace. Chief catalyst for change: the announced purchase of the company later this year by Newport News Shipbuilding, which is unionized.

Meanwhile, pressure on the company keeps growing. Sen. Edward Kennedy recently asked Secretary of the Navy Richard Danzig to investigate working

conditions at Avondale. And a federal court ruling is forcing the shipyard to provide the Occupational Safety and Health Administration with documents it had fought to withhold.

Early this month, a scheduled tour of the shipyard by the House Committee on the Environment was canceled after Avondale announced it would not permit reporters to accompany the legislators. "We are a private business," explained an Avondale spokesman, who then added without apparent irony: "We're a national defense contractor."

LOOKING AHEAD

In the real world, little things add up



By Linda K. Foley,
President

The Feb. 6 Washington Post was quite newsy for a Saturday.

The front page foretold the death of an ailing King Hussein of Jordan.

The latest Monica video was about to be released as the U.S. Senate searched for an impeachment trial "exit strategy." Five people were killed in a local 24-hour murder spree, and boxer Mike Tyson was sentenced to a surprise jail term after an altercation with two area motorists.

But it was the news on page 3 that caught my eye: "Students' Probe Ends 16 Years on Death Row for Illinois Man." The man, Anthony Porter, had been declared innocent and set free just 48 hours ahead of his scheduled execution. An investigation by a group of college journalism students had led another man to confess to two 1982 murders for which Porter had been convicted. Great story.

The accompanying photo was equally compelling. The former death row inmate was lifting the students' professor off his feet as he engulfed him in a bear hug outside the prison. Great photo.

I was even more intrigued when I learned that the students were from my alma mater, Northwestern University. (I still can't believe the football team actually made it to the Rose Bowl in my lifetime.) I thought about those students all day long and have to admit, I was envious. They had achieved the dream of every budding journalist. They had made a difference. A real difference.

For all the stories in the rest of the paper on Feb. 6, for all the talk and opining during the weekend preceding the end of Bill

Clinton's impeachment trial—none of it mattered as much as what these students had done. Their story was of righting a wrong, causing a tangible result and directly contributing to social justice.

"My students certainly feel that they've contributed to saving a life," the professor, David Protes, told a news conference after Porter's release. The investigation was the second successful project overturning a miscarriage of justice by a Protes class. In 1996, his students played a pivotal role in the release of four innocent men accused of rape and murder.

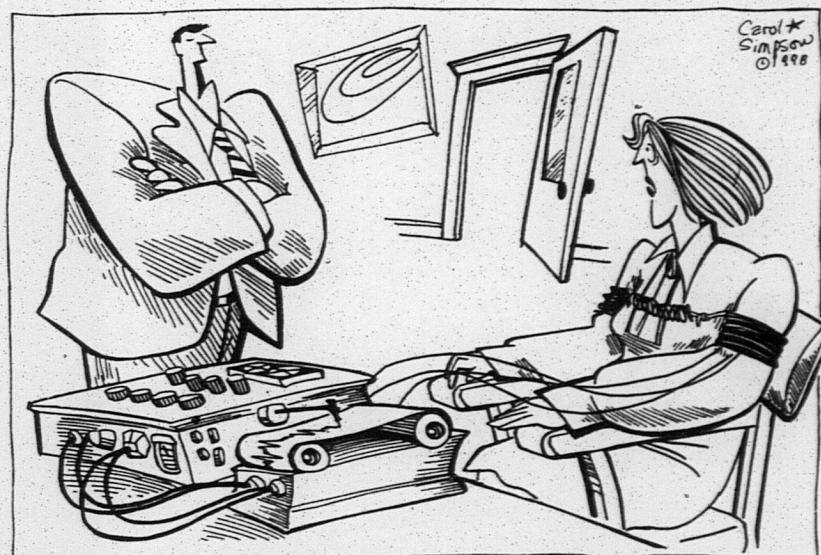
"Our profession needs to spend more time outside newsrooms and government office buildings talking to real people," Protes said in a recent Northwestern alumni magazine article. "We have to stop simply reporting what officials tell us."

"I understand that takes resources and time," he continued. "While this case became our obsession and our priority, it wasn't as if we weren't doing other things."

There's a lesson somewhere in there for today's corporate news operations that devote resources and time to their only obsession and priority: bottom line profits. But there's also a lesson for those of us who want to right wrongs, get results and achieve social justice.

We can get concrete results if we work on achievable goals. In the Guild, we do that every day. We fight for the unjustly dismissed employee; we protect a sexually harassed co-worker; we bargain for vision care; we end a discriminatory hiring practice.

We can't stop the explosion of information technology—but we can gain contract protection for seven on-line jobs at the Providence Journal. Thompson Newspapers Inc.'s plan to regionalize its newspapers has resulted in consolidation and job loss—but we have a contract at the Sheboygan Press that maintains the work-



"You MUST be stealing from the company. You're raising a family on what we pay you."

ers' job security. Microsoft abuses hundreds of "permatemps" (full-time employees classified as "temps" so as not to qualify for fringe benefits)—but TNG-CWA members of WashTech have filed suit challenging the job classification system.

And no, we can't shut down a multinational corporation like Murdoch or Hollinger—but the Chicago Newspaper Guild successfully fought for Dwight Biermann's right to say "no" to scab training at Hollinger's Sun-Times.

New technology, the global economy, job loss, the future of Social Security, impeachment, crime, inequality. . . . Most of today's world problems are—pardon the expression—too global for us to solve. Too

daunting to tackle and bring down. But that only means we must focus our energies where they can make a difference, because if we make a difference in just one person's life we've changed the world. Ask Anthony Porter.

I thought of the Northwestern students once more that Saturday, as I was watching Steven Spielberg's movie "Saving Private Ryan." As individuals, we don't have to win a war to accomplish our mission.

Saving the life of a young soldier, helping an innocent man avoid the gas chamber, vindicating a wrongfully fired reporter for sticking to his principles—it all makes a difference. It all makes the world a better place.

Recognizing phony prestige

The earliest and most complete organization of a white collar industry was achieved by the American Newspaper Guild.

"Professional newspapermen and women decided early that professional prestige was phony when it served only to conceal job insecurity, substandard wages and working conditions far worse than those

prevailing in a unionized auto plant or electrical machine shop.

"Today, the nation's newspapermen and women have one of the strongest and most effective unions in the entire AFL-CIO."

—James Carey, president of the International Union of Electrical Workers, addressing an AFL-CIO, white-collar conference in Washington, D.C. in 1956

LETTERS

Editor:

Sometimes, I fear, we're our own worst enemy when it comes to organizing. Witness the Jan. 29 article: "Amazon.com: high-tech sweatshop."

With that inflammatory headline, I was expecting to read about Amazon.com employees chained to their desks, working 18-hour days for minimum wage or less in a hazardous work environment. Instead, we get softball complaints from one or two unidentified customer-service reps who sound, at best, mildly disgruntled.

Their chief complaints sound awfully familiar: no clear career paths, a "top-down management style," mandatory overtime and lack of heat in their building on weekends. Some workers with "advanced degrees" complain about being paid only \$10 to \$11 for entry-level customer-service rep jobs. Later on, we learn that Amazon workers "for the most part" enjoy their jobs "and like working at the company," which issues 100 shares of its (increasingly valuable) stock to new employees.

The point: Is this really the Guild's definition of a modern "sweatshop?" If so, you could probably find a lot of workers around the country—including newspaper customer-service reps long

represented by The Guild—willing to show up and start sweating.

Don't cheapen the word by using it to describe an employer whose most abusive tactic seems to be providing entry-level jobs—at a fair entry-level wage—to overqualified workers who can't quite get comfy in their office chairs.

—Ron C. Judd

Local 37082, Seattle

Editor:

In The Guild Reporter's "Labor Roundup" in the Dec. 18 edition, two of the brief "blurbs" had an interesting connection. The first reported on the election of James P. Hoffa as president of the Teamsters and quotes his criticism of the AFL-CIO as "too cozy with the Democratic party." The second reported on the Labor Party's 1st Constitutional Convention, then stated, "but despite the support of nine international unions, as well as numerous local unions, as well as other groups, much of mainstream labor maintains that a third party only dilutes whatever influence it has in a two-party system."

That's a fairly accurate description of the debate inside organized labor. But the more complete story is that the AFL-CIO has been married to the Demo-

cratic Party for decades and its influence in that relationship is questionable. In that sense, labor's role in this marriage is one of suffering from spousal abuse. Like many abused spouses, we are still in denial on this point.

My local sent me as an official delegate to the Labor Party Convention. Our union needs to learn more about the Labor Party, so that each local can have an intelligent debate over a two-party system owned by corporate America and what it is we should be doing about it.

—Jim Moran

Executive Board Member
TNG-CWA Local 38010

Editor:

As I retire, I would like to thank the many Guild members and friends who worked with me over the years in our struggle to defend our contract at Time Inc.

I am currently involved in the fight to free Mumia Abu Jamal, the only journalist in American history to be put on death row. We are seeking a new trial to prove his innocence and organizing a massive "Millions for Mumia" march in Philadelphia for April 24th (also in San Francisco, San Juan, Puerto Rico, Paris, Hamburg, Tokyo, and many other cities).

I have interviewed Mumia on Pennsylvania's death row and believe him to be innocent, to be a victim of a politically motivated frameup. We are seeking labor and community endorsements (1199 in New York and San Francisco Labor Councils have endorsed) and have a 7-minute Labor for Mumia video designed for union audiences.

I am also working on a weekly TV program, Labor's Untold Stories, broadcast on university and public access channels around the country.

I can be reached at keymartin@hotmail.com and hope to remain active in the Guild and to stay in touch with the many brothers and sisters I have worked with over the years.

—Key Martin
Retired Chairperson,
Time Inc. Guild Unit

By TNG Convention action, letters shall be limited to 200 words and shall avoid libel and subjects detrimental to the Guild. Members subjected to personal attack shall be given opportunity to reply in the same issue, but publication of either attack or reply shall not be delayed longer than one issue. Deadline: Friday before publication. (Next deadline: March 12.)



Dolores Kong



Genia McDonough

Lights! Camera! Action!!

Yes, this is still the Newspaper Guild—but since this also is the MTV age, what could be more appropriate than a couple of professionally produced videos to spread the TNG-CWA message?

So it was, recently, that a TV production crew descended on Consumer Reports, The Boston Globe and other locations to shoot the Guild's first flickering images of life from the union's perspective. "The whole reason I got into journalism was to address issues about justice, to make sure that people's rights weren't trampled upon, and I think the union in many ways represents the same thing," the Globe's medical reporter, Dolores Kong, told the camera.

Added Genia McDonough, a Globe classified ad supervisor: "I have a contract. I know what my life is going to be like. I know somebody can't take away a benefit I'm counting on, my pension's safe, my 401(k)'s safe—all those little things add up."

"The Newspaper Guild-CWA, The Union for the Information Age" is 10 minutes long and suitable for introducing the Guild to prospective members and the public; "More Voices, More Choices" is a bit shorter and designed for screening at minority journalism conferences and other specialized events. Both are available from TNG-CWA headquarters for \$15 apiece, or \$25 for the pair. TNG-CWA is considering filming a third video to highlight TNG Canada.



A bemused Claudia Watkins, an inside sales rep at the Boston Globe, becomes the focus of a TV crew.

Tale of two economies brings century full-circle

Continued from page 5

market—and on and on, in a heady but ultimately destructive spiral.

Meanwhile, the lure of quick wealth has been potent enough not only to trash potentially competing values, but to transform vulnerability into apparent strength. Witness, for example, the recent Newsweek cover story titled "Your Next Job," with the tagline "Workers of the world, unite." Those most likely to thrive in the new world order? According to Newsweek, "freelancers" and entrepreneurs," otherwise described as "savvy, self-directed folks." Those falling short of that lofty mark have a bleaker outlook,

of course, but the Newsweek piece doesn't focus on them.

Ironically, many of the fastest growing jobs—such as home health aides and medical assistants—cited by Newsweek wouldn't attract "savvy, self-directed" folks, anyway. But Newsweek's statistics aren't especially helpful, in any case, because they focus on percentage increases in jobs, not on numbers of new jobs. And as the National Priorities Project study makes clear, the greatest number of new jobs over the next decade will be among cashiers, waiters, janitors, sales clerks—and, yes, home health aides. All these jobs pay less than half of what the NPP con-

cludes is a liveable wage, or \$32,185 a year for a family of four, an amount which is enough to push that family into the bottom layer of the middle class but which is half of what the average American family of that size spends each year.

Newspaper employees don't make either the Newsweek or the NPP list, and for good reason: journalism is not a growth industry, as already observed, and indeed can be described as a contracting one. But thanks to the omnivorous appetites of the likes of Michael Eisner, Robert Welch, Conrad Black, Robert Jelenic, Rupert Murdoch and Dean Singleton, wages in the news business also fall below the liveability standard: for example, average base pay for reporters and producers at mid-sized newspapers and television stations is less than

\$25,000 a year. Other media jobs—in sales, marketing and production—offer similarly slim remuneration. Small wonder, then, that fewer young people are entering the business and more working journalists are looking to get out.

Yet if the economic climate at the end of this century is starting to bear a disconcerting resemblance to its beginning—oligopolies and monopolies, increased speculation and market volatility, few effective government controls, enormous and growing disparities in wealth—it's worth remembering two things. First, economic systems that become unbalanced eventually collapse. And second, each economic collapse bears the seeds of a stronger successor.

The Great Depression gave birth to the union movement in general and to The Newspaper Guild in particular, and as a result, all working people improved their pay, their working conditions and their job security. There can be little surprise, therefore, that when union membership and involvement started to decline, so did living standards. Today, less than 10% of the non-government workforce is unionized, and The Newspaper Guild has likewise seen a drop in membership as a percentage of the journalistic workforce.

The route to reversing that trend is equally clear.

[Next month: what unions stand for—and what stands in their way.]

THE GUILD Reporter

Volume 66, Number 2

February 19, 1999

Official publication of
The Newspaper Guild-CWA (AFL-CIO, CLC)
501 Third St., NW, Suite 250
Washington, D.C. 20001-2797
Telephone: (202) 434-7177 FAX: (202) 434-1472
E-mail: azips@cwauion.org

President: LINDA K. FOLEY
Secretary-Treasurer: BERNIE LUNZER
International Chairperson: CAROL D. ROTHMAN
Director, TNG Canada: ARNOLD AMBER

At-Large Vice Presidents:
Percy Hatfield
Larry D. Hatfield
Connie Knox
Beverlyann Morris
Lesley Phillips

Regional Vice Presidents:
Region 1—Thomas J. Thibault
Region 2—Lela Garlington
Region 3—Jane Snow
Region 4—Russ Cain
Region 5—Peter Szekeley
Region 6—Jack Norman
Canada East—Larry McInnis
Canada West—Scott Edmonds

Director of Field Operations,
Administrative Assistant:
Eric D. Geist

Administrative Assistant:
Kathleen Mulvey
Editor: Andy Zipser
Executive Secretary,
Contracts Committee:
Marian V. Needham

Collective Bargaining &
Research Associate:
Deborah W. Thomas
Director of Research,
Information & Technology:
Larkie Gildersleeve

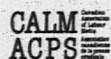
Human Rights Director:
Anna M. Padia
Membership Coordinator:
Bruce R. Nelson

International Representatives:
Michael R. Burrell,
Darren Carroll, Linda Cearley,
Janet David, Leo J. Ducharme,
Bruce Meachum,
Jim Schausenbil

Administrative Staff:
Scott Bush,
Gwendolyn Doggett,
Malinka Franklin, Larry Smoot,

TNG Canada
Representatives:
David Esposti, David Wilson,
Dan Zeidler

Administrative Staff:
Marjoline Botsford,
Joanne Scheel



Printed by Mount Vernon Printing Co.

DAYBOOK

Midwest, Great Lakes,
Southern tri-council meeting,
Feb. 20-21, Minneapolis

New England District Council,
Feb. 27-28, Providence, R.I.

Jobs with Justice annual
meeting, Feb. 26-28,
Louisville, Kentucky

TNG-CWA sector conference,
April 29-May 2, 1999, Ottawa

Int'l Federation of Journalists,
May 13-17, Boston

Unity '99, July 7-11,
Seattle Convention Center

CWA Nat'l Convention,
July 12-14, Miami

CWA Equity Conference,
Sept. 8-12, New Orleans

Great Lakes District Council,
Nov. 5-7, Buffalo, N.Y.

FROM THE MORGUE

Fifty years ago this month:

News and editorial employees of the Baltimore Sunpapers vote 141 to 52 to join the American Newspaper Guild . . . ANG declares the "complete organization of all bureaus of the Associated Press" as its "first and foremost objective" . . . Elias McQuaid of the New Hampshire News wins the Broun Award for exposing \$700,000 in state contracts awarded without bids and under questionable circumstances . . .

Twenty-five years ago this month:

TNG's International Executive Board warns of a "crisis in bargaining" caused by runaway inflation and "sharply deteriorating wage increases" . . . Philadelphia Inquirer reporters Donald Barlett and James Steele win the Broun Award for a series exposing broad patterns of discrimination by judges and prosecutors . . . TNG files a lawsuit to bar newspaper mergers under the Newspaper Preservation Act without prior approval by the U.S. Attorney General . . .

Ten years ago this month:

TNG formally joins the Jobs With Justice campaign . . . A federal judge orders the new owner of Puerto Rico's El Mundo to recognize Guild representation of his employees and to bargain in good faith . . . Union members at the Citizens' Voice in Wilkes-Barre, PA vote to convert the daily they had started 10 years earlier as a strike newspaper into a permanent, for-profit operation . . .