

THE GUILD Reporter

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Bargaining program revamp OK'd

Exec Council briefed on possible IUE merger

Following months of work by a broadly constituted task force, the TNG-CWA Executive Council has approved a sweeping restructuring of the union's collective bargaining program. The changes eliminate a decades-long accumulation of required contract provisions, replacing them with just six items that "shall be included in all initial contract proposals."

The revised program also abandons the current use of standardized language for each core item in favor of more flexible guidelines. The looser approach, designed to be more responsive to varying needs among different locals, stresses that the core proposals should be advanced "until each goal is adequately addressed in the collective bargaining agreement."

Final approval of the revised program will be sought at the TNG sector conference, starting August 25 in Anaheim, Cal.

The executive council's action

came at its spring meeting, April 30 through May 3, at the union's headquarters in Washington, D.C. Although the council accepted virtually all of the task force recommendations without a change, it added a sixth item to the five core provisions at the urging of its Canadian members, who stressed the importance of having a seniority clause in every contract (see related story at bottom of this page).

The required proposals include:

- A union security clause.
- A requirement of just and sufficient cause for discharge.
- A grievance procedure and binding, third-party arbitration.
- Wage scales that establish minimum pay in each job classification.
- A jurisdiction clause protecting the union against loss of work.
- The incorporation of seniority and length of service in wages, hours and working conditions.

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Bill Bradbury (sitting in foreground with back to camera), Oregon's secretary of state, takes in the May Day demonstration at the Eugene Register Guard. Standing directly beyond him, in cap and

beard and with his arms folded, is state representative Floyd Prozanski. Prozanski is married to the president of the Eugene Newspaper Guild, Suzi Prozanski.

May Day—Eugene style

Some of Oregon's top politicians joined more than 200 others for a May Day rally in support of the Eugene Newspaper Guild and its attempt to win a fair contract from The Register-Guard and its would-be union-busting attorney.

Oregon Secretary of State Bill Bradbury, county commissioners and several state senators and representatives joined community

members, other labor unions, forest activists, anti-sweatshop activists and others at the rally, held in front of The Register-Guard's new \$40 million newspaper office and printing plant in a north Eugene light-industrial park.

"We're here today to tell them (the R-G) we're watching very closely what they're doing," state Sen. Tony Corcoran, D-Cottage Grove, yelled into a bullhorn

aimed at the newspaper's second-floor offices, where Register-Guard Publisher Tony Baker has a corner suite. "In the labor community, we take very seriously union busting. We don't call anybody a union buster just because we have a disagreement with them at the bargaining table."

Corcoran and the other speakers were referring to L. Michael

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Calgary strike echoes far beyond Alberta

Like a rolling pebble that kicks up an avalanche, the non-Guild strike at the Calgary Herald is beginning to reverberate throughout Canada and is raising echoes in the U.S.

More than 230 reporters, editors, photographers and graphic artists walked off the job Nov. 8, after months of company stonewalling over their efforts to negotiate a first contract. The strikers are represented by the Graphic Communications International and the Communications, Energy and Paperworkers unions. The Calgary Herald is owned by Southam, which is controlled by Hollinger International, which is run by a man invariably described as a press

Conrad Black, Canada's pugnacious press overlord, sometimes goes out of his way to antagonize anyone who stands up to him. For example, when asked by a striking reporter at the Calgary Herald why he was willing to "insult your once-valued employees" by being so non-responsive to union demands for a first contract, Black responded:

"We're not. We're amputating gangrenous limbs."

baron, Conrad Black.

From a broad journalistic point of view, the six-month struggle has sharpened concerns about media monopolies. Black, through Hollinger, controls 42% of all newspaper circulation in Canada and owns several dailies outside the country, including the Chicago

Sun-Times, the Daily Telegraph in London and the Jerusalem Post.

From a union perspective, the stand-off is important because a key obstacle to a contract is Black's opposition to a seniority clause. As explained by Herald publisher Dan Gaynor, such clauses were intended for factory assembly lines of 200

years ago, not for newspapers. For any union, however, seniority is a fundamental check on capricious management behavior—and Black, whose antipathy to unions is legendary, is no stranger to caprice.

"I think one of the troubling outcomes of the Calgary strike is that it has given some other owners and publishers a vision," TNG Canada Director Arnold Amber warned at TNG Canada's spring council meeting. (For more on Amber's perspective, see page 7.) Opposition to a seniority clause has stymied negotiations at The Leader-Post in Regina, for example, where TNG Canada is bargaining over a first contract.

Canadian sensitivities on the

subject are so heightened that the TNG-CWA Executive Council, meeting in Washington, D.C. from April 30-May 3, added seniority as a sixth mandatory provision to be included in all initial contract proposals. The addition was made amid discussions on revising the Guild's collective bargaining program, which is being streamlined to make it more responsive to local needs.

Concerns about Black and the Calgary strike have galvanized TNG Canada members in other ways. The Ottawa Newspaper Guild, for example, threw up an informational picket line at Carleton University six weeks ago when the school allowed the struck newspaper to interview students as possible strike-breakers. Seven ONG members stood with picket signs in the rain outside of Carleton's School of Journalism, where they were joined by a few students and journalism faculty members.

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Interpreters, translators learn language of unity

If there is anything like a United Nations within the ranks of American organized labor, it was on display April 15 in Chicago.

That's when foreign- and sign-language interpreters and translators from throughout the U.S. were pulled together by TNG-CWA for a first nationwide strategy meeting. Although translators and interpreters play a crucial role in an increasingly multilingual society, most are denied the basic rights afforded to other workers and have started turning to unions for help. TNG-CWA is quickly becoming the leading representative of this growing profession.

The Chicago meeting provided an opportunity to swap strategies, develop plans for further expansion and assess progress to date. Chicago Newspaper Guild Local 34071 is at the peak of its organizing drive, for example, and will

file soon for representation of approximately 100 Cook County court interpreters who work for substandard pay and without a contract.

"We intend to make our employer comply with both the spirit and the letter of the law," says Kathleen Orozco, co-organizer of the Cook County interpreters. "In solidarity with our colleagues in other states, we won't rest until pay rates and working conditions are on a par with those of our fellow professionals nationwide."

In California, the Bay Area Court Interpreters Association (BACI/Northern California Media Workers' Guild Local 39521) and the California Federation of Interpreters (CFI) have launched an organizing drive among 1,200 court interpreters. CFI will vote this month on affiliation with the Southern California Media

Workers' Guild Local 39069. And New Jersey's court interpreters (CWA Local 1034) are fighting for a fair contract and looking to organize interpreters currently misclassified as independent contractors.

But even translators and interpreters who are freelancing can benefit from unionization, as illustrated by The Translators and Interpreters Guild (TTIG/TNG-CWA Local 32100), which described some of the creative programs it uses to help its members. "This conference demonstrated that unions can help workers on both sides of the employee/contractor equation," observed TTIG President Alan Gleason. "Even freelance interpreters and translators who have not attained employee status can benefit from the resources, expertise, and solidarity that union membership provides."



Gary Guild members hold the severance checks they received from Knight Ridder; standing in the front row (l to r) are union negotiators Lori Caldwell, Joseph Conn and Karen Snelling.

Gary local wins \$575,000

Eight months after Knight Ridder sold the Gary Post-Tribune to Hollinger International, members of Gary Newspaper Guild Local 14 negotiated a severance package that saw \$575,000 distributed among 71 employees.

The settlement, achieved after

a day-long meeting last October, equaled about 55% of the total severance package Guild negotiators argued their members were due. As in other recent newspaper sales, the union maintained that because all Post-Tribune employees were required to reapply for their jobs, all were effectively severed and therefore due the payment. Knight Ridder contended that employees who kept their jobs under Hollinger should not be paid anything extra.

Contract language provided one week's pay for every 20

weeks of service, to a maximum of one-year's salary, plus notice pay. Full severance was paid to four Guild members who were not rehired by Hollinger.

Locating some former members took several months, with final checks issued just this past March.

Since the settlement, former local president Joseph Conn has been succeeded by Michael Puente, who commended his predecessors' efforts. "Because of the long hours and hard work our officers put into negotiating this settlement, our members—some of whom provided years of dedicated service under Knight Ridder ownership—received a nice benefit the non-union workers at the building will never see," he observed.

"We had a great turnout at the celebration to pass out the checks," Puente added. "We're now harnessing that energy to negotiate a fair contract with our new owners." And, perhaps, to brace for a repeat of history when Hollinger likewise sells the paper.

In brief . . .

Judges hear Detroit arguments

The saga of the locked-out Detroit newspaper workers took a significant step forward May 4, when a three-judge appeals court heard arguments on whether the dispute was caused by management's unfair labor practices—a conclusion that the NLRB already has reached, but which the Detroit News and Detroit Free Press are challenging. If the finding is affirmed, the two papers would be required to pay wages and benefits retroactive to Feb. 14, 1997, the date the strikers agreed to return to work.

Erie ratifies four-year contract

Guild-represented employees of the Erie Times-News ratified a contract that includes raises of 3% in the first, second and fourth years and 3.5% in the third. Other major improvements include an increase in night differential, language on flex time and job sharing and better severance pay benefits.

Joliet, Waukegan settle for 3%

The Chicago Newspaper Guild has ratified three-year agreements at the Joliet Herald-News and at the Waukegan News Sun, in each case agreeing on 3% full retro pay. Joliet's contract had expired last June, Waukegan's four months earlier.

ULP charges filed over jobloss.com

The battle of the dot.coms has been joined, with the San Jose Guild filing charges of unfair labor practices against Knight Ridder for illegally changing the scope of the Mercury News bargaining unit by unilaterally transferring a group of on-line workers out of the unit and into KnightRidder.com. St. Paul and Duluth are filing similar charges.

Sun sweeps top Front Page awards

Baltimore Sun employees captured all three grand prizes in this year's Front Page Awards judging, sponsored by the Washington-Baltimore Guild. J. Wynn Rousuck won the Bill Pryor Memorial Grand Prize for Writing; Andre Chung won the Bill Pryor Memorial Grand Prize for Photography;

and Shirdell McDonald won the John Albano Memorial Grand Prize for Design.

The ins and outs of organizing

Just weeks after employees of the outside circulation department at the Worcester (Mass.) Telegram & Gazette voted for TNG-CWA representation, their inside circulation colleagues voted 13 to 8 to join them as Guild members. The May 10 victory came despite the employer's captive audience meetings, held on a daily basis as the vote neared.

Shareholders vote to sell strike paper

Shareholders of The Citizens' Voice in Wilkes-Barre, PA, a newspaper started 21 years ago by striking employees of another Wilkes-Barre daily, voted April 16 to sell their publication to The Scranton Times for an undisclosed price. The sale was opposed by TNG-CWA because a condition of the sale removes Guild representation from a substantial portion of the bargaining unit; TNG-CWA is reviewing its options.

Joint organizing drive a Guild first

The fate of the first joint TNG and CWA organizing drive will be decided May 24, when approximately 120 employees of the Thomson-owned Register-Herald in Beckley, WV vote for Guild representation. The organizing campaign, which includes the newspaper's mailroom and editorial, production and circulation departments, was conducted by TNG staffer Kathy Mulvey with support from CWA Local 2276, out of Bluefield, WV.

Boston brouhaha over bank bashin'

When the Boston Herald's consumer reporter, Robin Washington, reported that FleetBoston Financial was increasing fees for the Bank-Boston customers acquired in a recent merger, he found out what can happen when you beard a tiger: he got suspended without pay and made a general assignment reporter. But thanks to Guild intervention and a public outcry, Fleet has agreed to reverse the fees. Washington is back on the consumer beat and an upcoming arbitration will resolve his suspension, which was reduced to two weeks.

The Newspaper Guild International



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

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Hilton or Hearst, an injury to one is injury to all

By Gene Achziger
President, Pacific Northwest Guild

I had my choice of picket signs and grabbed one that read, "An injury to one is an injury to all." It seemed appropriate, since it was a Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees picket line I was joining.

I'm a journalist and they are the maids, doormen, wait staffs and service employees of the major hotels in downtown Minneapolis. I labor for the Hearst Corp. they toil for Hilton Hotels.

But we are all workers.

What brought me to join the 10 or so marchers outside the Minneapolis Hilton was an ugly incident a few hours earlier when, after addressing the 200 delegates of the CWA District 7 conference, the local president of HERE was accosted by management of the hotel. HERE is in negotiations with eight major hotel chains in Minneapolis and talks have bogged down. The chains are refusing to offer livable wages and the HERE president was asking that the CWA delegates express their disappointment with Hilton management.

And since the CWA and The Newspaper Guild are negotiating with the Hilton to bring thousands of delegates to the Twin Cities next year for a convention and sector conference, who better to tell management to shape up?

Apparently not us, as far as Hilton management is concerned.

So there I was, with TNG Secretary-Treasurer Bernie Lunzer trooping back and forth in near-90 degree weather on a Friday night. TNG President Linda Foley soon joined us, as did our local administrative officer, Larry Hatfield. Before long, we were joined by more CWA delegates, and then people in formal dinner attire enroute to a function at the hotel. Union members walking past the hotel picked up signs and our ranks swelled to several hundred.

Other than posting a few security officers, management didn't seem to be getting

the message, so the Guild contingent, along with a good number of members from other CWA District 7 locals, determined to take the message into the lobby.

Hatfield and Foley were met and barred from entering by the hotel manager. The rest of us walked through the revolving door. Inside, a heated argument ensued, with a security guard threatening to evict us because "You're not guests." Hotel room keys were flashed and one of his fellow security officers ruefully remarked: "Oh yes they are."

It was kinda surreal as Foley went nose-

to-nose with the manager about the treatment of the HERE president and ended up bringing her back into the hotel.

"You can check out right now," the manager told Foley, who responded by reminding him that the CWA convention is scheduled for Minneapolis next year and that the Hilton was supposed to be the main hotel.

"I don't care," retorted the manager.

Finally, about 15 minutes later, we exited the lobby just as the Minneapolis police arrived. When told the problem was a labor dispute involving guests of the hotel, they rolled their eyes and returned to their cars as we returned to the cheers of our fellow picketers on the street.

Who won? Probably no one.

Who lost? The Hilton Hotel. Their refusal to grant their workers a livable wage was exposed and their rudeness to the union could possibly jeopardize a \$4 million convention if the CWA pulls out. Then there's the residual effect: Other unions will be notified of Hilton's actions and it could affect their decisions to hold conferences in the city—which is sure to make local businesses counting on the convention trade unhappy. Since the hotel was built utilizing public financing, the mayor and city council are not likely to be happy, either.

"I don't care," said the general manager, in his first senior Hilton hotel post.

"An injury to one is an injury to all," my picket sign read. I think a lot of people will care.



An unlikely-looking crew of hell-raisers, including (l to r) TNG-CWA Secretary-Treasurer Bernie Lunzer, TNG-CWA President Linda Foley, Pacific Northwest Guild President Gene Achziger and Larry Hatfield, the local's administrative officer.

Exec council briefed on possible IUE merger

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The Mid-Atlantic District Council has already endorsed the council's recommended program.

Separately, the council was briefed by CWA Executive Vice President Larry Cohen on merger talks between CWA and the IUE. IUE—the union's full name is the International Union of Electronic, Electrical, Salaried, Machine and Furniture Workers, which explains why you almost never see more than a three-lettered acronym—represents approximately 113,000 workers, almost all of them east of the Mississippi and a large number of whom work for General Electric.

Although the talks are continuing, Cohen said he believes there's a better than 50-50 chance an agreement will be reached. Providing impetus for the negotiations, he added, was a realization by the IUE leadership that GE is transforming itself from a manufacturing firm to an information systems company—and that the union would likewise have to

change if it is to survive. If Cohen's expectations are borne out, the IUE executive board would vote on the merger in July and CWA delegates would take up the issue at the August convention.

In other business, the TNG-CWA Executive Council discussed the TNG Defense Fund, which has a balance of approximately \$2.2 million and is expected to grow by another \$500,000 from net proceeds from the sale of the Guild's former headquarters building—but which has no other source of income. The Guild, at a striking local's option, historically has provided benefits after the first week of a strike, whereas benefits from the CWA's Member Relief Fund start only in the third week. How then, asked the council, can the Guild continue providing first-week benefits from a fund that isn't being replenished?

The answer—prompted in part by an increase in CWA benefits after the fourth week of a strike, to \$300 from \$200—amounts to a

loan drawn against future benefits. In strikes lasting less than four weeks, locals choosing to receive a first-week strike payment would be required to reimburse the Guild \$150 per striker from the Member Relief Fund check that would be mailed a week after the strike ended. For strikes lasting more than four weeks, such locals would be required to rebate \$100 per striker from the Member Relief Fund payment issued in the fifth week—reducing the \$300 benefit to \$200, as in the previous three weeks—and make up the additional \$50 from the final post-strike payment.

The council also received several reports, including the following:

- In the six months ending April 24, the Legal Services Program received 56 new requests for help. Three were rejected, three were being reviewed, 45 had gone to

The TNG-CWA budget for the next fiscal year, as submitted by the Finance and Administration Committee and approved by the full Executive Council at its spring meeting, is as follows:

Budget 00-01	Budget 99-00
\$70,000	Part-time Salaries \$67,000
\$462,105	Full-time Expenses \$450,000
\$69,185	Part-time Expenses \$67,000
\$158,600	Supplies and Printing \$168,500
\$98,408	Postage and Freight \$85,000
\$17,593	Rental of Equipment \$17,593
\$800	Equipment Maintenance \$800
\$22,200	Contract Services \$0
\$65,500	All Other \$10,000
\$7,200	Furniture (n/a)
\$25,050	Info Systems (n/a)

arbitration and five were being litigated. Over the three-year life of the program, TNG has received a total of 192 requests for help, has rejected 11 and has taken 145 to arbitration and 33 to court. The vast majority of the arbitrations, and roughly half of the lawsuits, are settled through negotiations.

- Half-a-dozen TNG-CWA locals—including San Jose, the

Wire Service Guild, Philadelphia, Twin Cities, Northern California and Canada—are developing proposals to take advantage of a new CWA program that will pay up to 75% of the salary of a full-time local organizer. As a prerequisite, the locals must have established organizing programs that include an organizing committee, a plan and dedicated local funds.

May Day brings out the Guild in Eugene

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Zinser, the Nashville, Tenn., lawyer the owners of the newspaper hired nearly 18 months ago. The Eugene Guild has been negotiating against Zinser since February 1999, with virtually no movement by the company on about a dozen anti-worker changes it wants to insert into the contract.

May 1 was the one-year anniversary of the expiration of the Eugene Guild's contract with

Guard Publishing Co., owner of The Register-Guard. Guild members wore black clothing to work on May Day for what was termed the "death of reason."

Among other contract language proposals, the company wants to eliminate a guarantee of equal pay for equal work, put an end to equal hourly pay for part-timers, eliminate the Guild's jurisdiction over work and job assignments, gain complete control over Guild bul-

letin boards, cut circulation district managers' pay by 8.5%, freeze the pay and commissions of advertising salespeople for four years, impose a sweeping no-distribution rule that would bar Guild contact with employees in work areas, implement a three-page "management rights" proposal and impose "work assignments" that would allow the company to replace full-time workers with part-time, temporary or subcontracted workers.

The Eugene Guild has represented news, advertising, circulation and business office workers since 1946.

The May Day rally also was attended by more than a half-dozen Eugene police officers, who responded to "rumors" that some of Eugene's now-notorious anarchists might take part in the rally. The company issued a warning to all employees just prior to the rally, telling them they could go

home early if they wanted.

None of the phantom anarchists showed up for a rally that proved to be peaceful and informative. Police stayed on company property and made no attempt to interfere.

"This is a heartening story about a bunch of union workers who are saying, 'No, you can't treat us that way,'" former Guild president and R-G columnist Don Bishoff told the crowd. "You can't treat our union that way."

Labor round-up

Fewer blacks in newsrooms

Here's a shocker—not: the percentage of journalists who are African-American declined last year, to 5.31% from 5.36%. The news comes courtesy of the the American Society of Newspaper Editors, which each year gnashes its teeth about the industry's overall pallor—and each year admits it won't meet its latest, revised goals for minority hiring. There is one bright note, however. The percentage of all minority journalists—including Asian-Americans, Hispanics and Native Americans—did increase last year ... to 11.85%, from 11.55%.

Canadian unions beef up organizing

While John Sweeney has received much notice for renewing the AFL-CIO's commitment to organizing, a similar but less acclaimed renaissance is sweeping through Canada. And with good reason. According to the Conference Board of Canada, while total union membership has been constant at about 3.6 million, growth in the workforce eroded the union "density rate" from 30.7% in 1998 to 30.1% in 1999. Canadian unions have responded by stepping up organizing drives in non-traditional sectors of the economy, notably trade, finance and the hospitality industry.

NABET-CWA fills its Cleveland card

In its biggest organizing victory since affiliating with CWA, NABET won the right to represent 110 television technicians at Channels 19 and 43 in Cleveland. The 62-39 vote means all major Cleveland TV stations are now unionized.

Do you own Bell Atlantic stock?

When Bell Atlantic shareholders meet May 24 in Denver, CWA plans on speaking loudly—with the help of tens of thousands of proxy votes from its members who own stock in the company. Anyone willing to have CWA vote its proxies is asked to mail the cards to the District 2 office, at 8611 Second Ave., Silver Spring, MD 20910. Before mailing, cross out the names of the Bell Atlantic representatives on the front, in the sentence "The undersigned hereby appoints ...," and write in "CWA Representative." Leave all proposal boxes blank, and sign the card where indicated.

Bid to change IBM pension gets 28%

An IBM shareholder proposal backed by CWA and major pension funds that would have restored the company's former pension plan was defeated but drew a respectable 28% of the votes cast, opening the door for further reform efforts. The former defined-benefit plan was changed by the computer maker last year to a so-called cash-balance plan, which penalizes long-term employees who are approaching retirement. CWA has seized on the issue, as has the IBEW, as an organizing tool.

Euros urged to nix MCI-Sprint merger

Unions representing more than 7.5 million telecommunications and information technology workers—including the CWA—descended on the European Commission in mid-April to oppose MCI-Worldcom's proposed \$130 billion merger with Sprint. The unions were to meet this month with the Commission's Merger Task Force to further press their concern that the combined company would effectively monopolize Internet access.

More union-bashing in the House

Railing against the evils of "compulsory unionism," GOP members of Congress have introduced a bill (H.R. 792 and S.424) to repeal provisions of the National Labor Relations and Railway Labor acts that allow union shops. The so-called "National Right-to-Work Act," which does not include a right-to-have-a-job provision, was the subject of recent hearings before the House Education and the Workforce Committee's subcommittee on oversight and investigations.

Coast-to-coast bargaining pays off

A coordinated, nationwide campaign by the Service Employees International Union on behalf of janitors began bearing fruit, as two strikes were settled on the West Coast and pressure was turned up elsewhere. Los Angeles and San Diego agreed to three-year contracts that boost wages as much as 90 cents an hour, and tentative agreements were reached in Portland and New York.

'Seattle two' takes battle to D.C. streets

A week of protests in Washington, D.C. against the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund were only an echo of the fury that gripped Seattle last November—but then again, neither of those organizations has the clout or cachet of the World Trade Organization. And while the turnout, as expected, was perhaps a third of the number that paralyzed Seattle, the same superficially disparate coalition of union members, environmentalists and social justice activists was on display.

The result, as described by The Washington Post, "looked like a spring festival, with wildly costumed protesters on stilts mixing with saxophonists and banjo players." Or as summarized by Richard Trumka, secretary-treasurer of the AFL-CIO, "We are Teamsters and turtle-lovers, students and steel workers, and we are protesting together!"

For all the giddiness, however, the clash between those favoring the unfettered global flow of capital and those demanding rules to protect workers and the environment had its casualties. Several hundred protesters were arrested, with many claiming they were beaten, denied food, water and medical attention and stripped of their legal rights. The Washington, D.C. police department, apparently intent on avoiding the criticisms that were levied at its Seattle counterpart, raided meeting places and confiscated anything that had even a remote possibility of being used in a civil disobedience protest, such as chains and pipes.

Among the victims of police zealotry were two Associated Press journalists, with photographer Heesoon Yim knocked unconscious and radio reporter Ross Simpson clubbed in the back by police. UPI photographer Joel Remnick reported being pepper-sprayed by police as he was obeying a police order to disperse, while Pulitzer Prize-winning photographer Carol Guzy of The Washington Post was arrested for "parading without a permit."

In trade, as in anything else, the proof is in the pudding

Amid all the back-and-forth on world trade issues, what's frequently lost—especially in a relatively affluent society—is any perspective on the true dimensions of the problem.

A frequently cited argument on behalf of unfettered trade, for example, is that everyone benefits—that eliminating all trade barriers ultimately raises everyone's standard of living. Yet there's scant evidence to support the notion, while available statistics are at least suggestive of the opposite.

By one set of estimates, recently published by the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, the gap between rich and poor countries in 1820 was 1 to 3. Over the next two centuries, as the global economy flourished, the gap increased to 1 to 11 in 1913, 1 to 35 in 1950, 1 to 44 in 1973, 1 to 192 and an unimaginable 1 to 727 in 2000.

As such statistics indicate, wealth distribution has grown ever more skewed. So it may not come as a surprise to learn that the assets of the world's three richest men today is equivalent to the gross domestic product of the world's 26 poorest countries. Or that the income of the world's 200 wealthiest individuals is equivalent to the income of more than a third of the world's population. What may be surprising is that the trend has infected a whole managerial class, with the average chief executive of a major U.S. corporation making \$11.9 million in 1999, or 476 times the average U.S. blue-collar wage.

(For some really egregious examples of pigging out at the trough, visit the AFL-CIO website www.paywatch.org.)

Skewed wealth distribution might be acceptable if those at the bottom of the economic pile had reasonably decent incomes. They don't. And while there are numerous statistics to drive home the point, the most telling may be this: decades after the Western world

The demonstrations went beyond mere protests, however, and included a massive lobbying effort April 12 in which an estimated 10,000 union members thronged Congressional corridors to oppose the granting of permanent normal trading relations with China. The White House is pushing for a vote on the issue the week of May 22 and has signaled cautious optimism it will prevail, but the union lobbyists stressed China's deplorable record on human and religious rights, labor conditions and the environment to justify maintaining the current system of annual reviews.

And while the protesters failed to shut down the April 16 and 17 meetings of the IMF and World Bank—as some had hoped—there's evidence they were successful in shaping the agendas of two bodies that historically have been aloof from working class concerns. As observed by reporter John Burgess in a Washington Post analysis, "without the people on the street, it's unlikely that the word 'poverty' would have cropped up quite so often" at the meetings.

Both institutions now go to great lengths to stress their commitment to overcoming global poverty, with World Bank President James Wolfensohn especially stressing anti-poverty initiatives—and expressing consternation that the protesters outside his door haven't gotten the message. World Bank critics, on the other hand, contend that while the rhetoric may have changed, the reality is that unchecked globalization is a root cause of poverty, not its cure.

ON A RELATED NOTE, TNG-CWA staffer Larry Smoot was featured in the May Day issue of The Nation for his participation in the demonstrations. The magazine's lead editorial led with Smoot's declaration, "This is not your father's labor movement!" as he hoisted a "Cancel the Debt Now" placard in support of a movement to cancel Third World debt. One of the hats Smoot wears is as a leader of Pride at Work, a gay rights group.

outlawed child labor, the International Labor Office estimates there are still 250 million children worldwide between the ages of 5 and 14 who are forced to work.

If economic life in the U.S. and Canada is less tragic than that, it is becoming more severe. While Congress dickers over a \$1 increase in the minimum wage, for example, the National Low-Income Housing Coalition reports that a family living on minimum wage can't afford a standard apartment in any major U.S. city. Indeed, some 59% of renters spend more than half of their incomes on shelter. The Canadian Center for Policy Alternatives, meanwhile, reports that Canadians are working longer hours at more precarious jobs for less pay than a decade ago.

The free global flow of capital doesn't ameliorate such conditions; it exacerbates them by moving jobs from one low-wage producer to another, and by threatening the stability of those jobs that aren't moved, thereby driving down wages. One result is a growing army of global vagabonds: the International Labor Organization reports there an estimated 120 million migrant workers around the world—75 million more than in 1965—with 67 countries serving as their hosts.

Intervention by such international groups as the International Monetary Fund is aimed more at preserving wealth—by fighting inflation, for instance—than at helping the working class, with predictable results. The Development Group for Alternative Policies calculates that unemployment increased in nearly three-fourths of the 43 countries that were forced by the IMF to restructure between 1978 and 1995. Moreover, the real minimum wage (adjusted for inflation) is lower today than in 1980 in 17 of the 19 nations with IMF programs for which there are figures.

Ink-stained wretches visit the ivory tower

Intellectual sparks should fly June 9-11, when TNG-CWA and the American Association of University Professors cosponsor a conference on an issue of primary importance to both groups of professionals: Intellectual Work and Freedom.

"Freedom of the press and academic freedom in the classroom should be unassailable rights, yet both are threatened," points out Eric Geist, TNG-CWA's head of organizing and a key developer of the conference agenda. "Faculty members and reporters have a lot in common in terms of protecting the confidentiality of sources and retaining possession of intellectual property, so we think the two can benefit from each other's insights and expertise."

Held at the Omni Shoreham Hotel in Washington, D.C., the joint conference will begin Friday with a reception at 6:15 p.m., followed by a banquet at which Nadine Strossen, a professor at New York Law School and president of the American Civil Liberties Union, will give a keynote address. Plenary presentations, starting at 10:30 a.m. Saturday, include former CBS and NBS newsmen Marvin Kalb on "The Changing Structure of Intellectual Work"; and David Rabban, of the University of Texas Law School, on "The Differential Application of the First Amendment to Journalists and Academics."

Saturday afternoon, following a luncheon speaker on diversity issues, will be devoted to three concurrent panels, on the changing structure of intellectual work; intellectual property rights in the new environment; and collective bargaining and intellectual work. CWA President Morton Bahr will be the evening banquet speaker, and a Sunday morning wrap-up session—to end in a joint statement on the future of the two professions—will be addressed by TNG-CWA President Linda Foley and AAUP President James T. Richardson.

TNG-CWA will pay the \$50 registration fee for all Guild members attending the conference; the additional cost is \$155 for the Friday and Saturday banquets, lunch on Saturday and breakfast on Sunday. To register for the meals, call AAUP at 202/737-5900 and press "O"; for information about airline discounts and lodging—including dormitory rooms on local campuses—see the AAUP web site at www.aaup.org

Unraveling JOAs a messy business

Want to spark a slow news day? Just start poking at publishers' efforts to unwind a Joint Operating Agreement, wherein you're likely to uncover a pile of unsightly laundry.

While the Chattanooga JOA was terminated—and the Seattle JOA amended—without a peep from the Justice Dept., the trust busters' greater show of interest in Hawaii and San Francisco has forced the publishers in both cities to jump through unaccustomed hoops. Now those gyrations have been laid open in San Francisco, where Hearst's planned "sale" of the Examiner to Ted Fang—if a \$66 million subsidy to the buyer can be called a "sale"—have been exposed in a court challenge filed by Clint Reilly, a failed suitor and former political consultant.

Among the revelations: that Examiner publisher Ted White offered editorial support for San Francisco Mayor Willie Brown if he supported the sale. That the president of Chronicle Publishing didn't know the two newspapers' operating costs, even though the Examiner has been widely described as a "failing" newspaper. That Ted Fang's personal cut from the \$66 million subsidy would include an annual salary of up to \$500,000 and a \$500,000 bonus. That Hearst was getting "intelligence" from the Chronicle's board of

directors that helped it formulate an offer that beat out the competition.

There's more, all similarly tainted with venality, and more undoubtedly to come. All of it is being closely watched in Honolulu, where Gannett and Liberty have decided that the best way to reach their objective—a Gannett monopoly—is likewise to find a newspaper buyer. But the terms under which the Star-Bulletin is being offered make it unlikely they'll succeed: a "qualified bidder" must have the managerial, operational and financial capabilities of publishing a daily. But the sale won't include the JOA and therefore won't include any advertising, printing or circulation support. The buyer also would have to find new quarters.

And while Gannett would be allowed to enter into a contract with the buyer for use of its printing presses, such a deal could be struck only if the Star-Bulletin remained an afternoon publication. A change to morning publication, in which the Star-Bulletin would go head-to-head with The Honolulu Advertiser, would necessitate finding another press.

The court-approved sales effort suspends the antitrust suits that have been filed against the two publishers, but if no buyer is found within a couple of weeks the legal dust-ups will resume. Can Gannett prove any less entertaining on the stand than Hearst has been?

Effects of Calgary strike keep rippling out

Continued from page 1

As Andre' Foucault, national CEP rep, observed: "We don't think that beginning a career as a strikebreaker is going to be in the students' best interest in the long term. Working people still expect universities to teach students the ethics and morals of the workplace, as well as how to get a job, and that shouldn't be at any cost to anybody."

Beyond issues of job security, the strike also is seen as a rebellion against monopolistic media efforts to make news more palatable to business and political interests. The striking journalists contend, for example, that they've been instructed to lead news stories with government points of view or to cut short potentially embarrassing investigations of influential politicians or business leaders. One frequently cited instance of the Herald's conflicts of interest was a \$250,000 donation the newspaper and Southam contributed toward a locally organized bid to host the 2005 World's Fair, coloring subsequent coverage of Calgary's competition for the site with Nagoya, Japan.

A broader critique of the Canadian press—with special attention paid to Conrad Black—was issued early this year by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives. Analyzing the findings of an independent, six-year project funded primarily by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, "The Missing News" found systematic under-



Braving a downpour to support striking CEP members at the Calgary Herald, seven Ottawa Newspaper Guild members—all editors and reporters at the Ottawa Citizen—protest a scab-recruiting effort. From left to right the sign holders

are: Rob Bostelaar, Steve Jonescu, Deborah Richmond, Jacquie Miller, Pauline Tam, Doug Yonson and Janice Kennedy. (National CEP rep Bob Huget is standing without a sign in the rear, third from left.)

reporting of stories on corporate activities with adverse social impacts and on government tax breaks for the wealthy. It also found scant coverage of the vested interests and biases of media owners themselves.

Robert Hackett, one of the study's authors and a professor of communication at Simon Fraser University, subsequently drove the point home in a paper titled, "Checks and Balances: Why the Calgary Herald Strike Matters."

"Canadians who care about democratic diversity in their daily newspapers should support the striking journalists at the Calgary Herald," Hackett wrote, because

their struggle "for reasonable job security and against managerial interference in news decision-making has much more than local significance." All the traditional checks and balances on monopolistic media—competition from other newspapers, the relative strength of public broadcasting, fears of government intervention—have eroded over the past couple of decades, he claims, leaving journalists "in the front lines of defending the integrity of their craft."

"Today," Hackett concludes, "the Calgary Herald journalists are in the forefront of that struggle."

Ironically, although last month's sales announcement by Hollinger

International might suggest the consolidation trend is being reversed, the Canadian government is considering whether to relax its restrictions on foreign ownership—which could end up accelerating the process. With 88% of Canadian newspaper circulation controlled by just four companies, some government officials want to invite fresh capital by dropping a restriction that limits foreigners to a 25% ownership stake. But with American publishers—including Gannett and Knight Ridder—welcoming the development, a more likely outcome is an international (rather than merely intranational) consoli-

dation of the industry, with newspapers going down the same oligopolistic path already traveled by telephone companies.

The strike itself, meanwhile, shows little sign of unraveling—indeed, the rhetoric and passion on both sides has only escalated over time. The Herald's production workers, who have been unionized for the past 80 years, joined the fray a couple of weeks ago by voting 96% in favor of a strike. The vote gives GCIU negotiators the power to serve management with a 72-hour strike notice, the first time in the unit's history it has adopted such a position.

"It's almost as if having two bargaining units on strike wasn't enough for this company," said local President John Webster. "They don't just want to win a battle or two, they want to annihilate every union in the building. It won't work. We're standing up for what is right."

Meanwhile the man who sets the tone for such dust-ups, Conrad Black, keeps demonstrating why he has a reputation for being thin-skinned. After the Roman Catholic Bishop of Calgary publicly defended the strikers, Black wrote in the Herald: "In the Leninist terminology which would be familiar to the strike leaders, [the bishop] has made himself a perfect 'useful idiot' to them."

Indeed, Black opined, "If your jumped-up little twerp of a bishop thinks I'm not a very good Catholic, I think he's a prime candidate for an exorcism."

THE ROLE OF A FREE PRESS:

Speaking truth to power

By Bill Kovach

Chairman, Committee of Concerned Journalists

In 1979, when I became chief of the Washington Bureau of The New York Times, we had no personal computers, no fax machines, no cellular phones and the Internet was an instrument of the Cold War called ARPANET, used exclusively by the military-industrial-scientific community.

All of that and more is now part of a revolution which, as an agent of change, has had few equals in its impact on the social, political and economic organization of the world.

Consider the impact on politics: The spread of ideals such as human rights and freedom of expression—and the efficiency and benefits of other forms of government—was the solvent which dissolved an empire which it took the communist government of Russia 70 years to build. At a conference in Prague shortly after the Berlin Wall came down, a journalist from Poland said it was the images pouring into the country through satellite video and fax newspapers, more than anything else, that created the public opinion behind the broad popular support for the Solidarity movement that ended Communist rule there.

"It was," he said, "when we could finally see for ourselves that countries like Japan and Korea and even Singapore had moved so far ahead of us that we knew our system was a failure."

Consider the impact on economics: With the movement of information at the speed of light has come a new economic order in which currency traders and commodity markets exert more influence on a nation's economic policy than the national government. The nation-state is eroding as advanced nations struggle to build regional and multinational alliances to moderate the disruption of these new buccaneers of the marketplace.

The impact on journalism has been at least as disorienting. The most obvious impact has resulted from two fundamental changes:

First, the mixing of media by digital technology, which merges all forms of communications—voice, pictures and print—on the World Wide Web, which creates new platforms to attract readers and advertisers.

Second, the fragmentation of the means of production and the choices available, which means anyone, anywhere, is a potential competitor to traditional news organizations—and anyone, anywhere, is a potential customer.

As a result, journalism appears in an atmosphere that erases the boundaries between advertising and editorial, in which it is difficult to distinguish journalism from commerce or to recognize the value of journalism among all the other information pumping through the system.

Recent polls in the United States that show a public increasingly frustrated and alienated by "the news media" have made this point with depressing force. The "media," they say, are part of the problem. The "press," they say, more often hinders than helps find solutions to social problems.

The reason for this loss of confidence in the press as an institution is that the public can no longer distinguish between a journalist attempting to produce a disinterested, balanced presentation from a self-serving political line or tabloid sleaze.

We saw this emerge clearly during the

first days of coverage of the Clinton-Lewinsky affair, when the elite Washington press corps' competitive drive for a mass audience made it subservient to its sources. Being first was more important than being right. The resulting reports were shrill with hyperbole, speculation, prediction, gossip and argument. During the first nine days of that coverage, a content analysis by the Committee of Concerned Journalists found that 41 percent of the assertions broadcast or published were not factual statements at all. They were, instead, speculation and prediction based on little more than suspicion or gossip. Furthermore, the study found that 40 percent of all statements of fact were from a single anonymous source—at a time when there were only two sources of information: Kenneth Starr's office or the White House, both with a special interest in how the story would be presented to the American people.

This confusion is aided and abetted by the economic organization of the news industry in response to the development of the new communications technology.

The logic of the new marketplace is drawing journalism into a horizontal organization of communications conglomerates that exploit talent across media, making no distinction between the values which inform journalism and entertainment and commerce; and into a vertical reorganization that brings together corporations with vastly different cultures, goals and values—entrepreneurs from industries like General Electric, Disney or AOL—to ingest entire news organizations.

These emerging mega-corporations and their journalism divisions threaten to make the whole notion of conflict of interest by journalists an antiquated idea. The theory of the free press that emerged out of the enlightenment was that there would be an independent voice that could monitor and comment on the influence of those with power in society. We must all question today whether we can rely on a handful of behemoth corporations to monitor themselves—or the other centers of power with which they do business.

Consider, for example, Michael Eisner, CEO of one such corporation, when he describes ABC-TV by saying he thinks it inappropriate for Disney to be covered by Disney. In the mind of the CEO, ABC's identity has been altered—it is Disney, not ABC News, covering Disney. In the mind of Michael Eisner, ABC News, by becoming a part of Disney's commerce, has lost its independence. Will ABC News eventually lose its purpose as well?

As Robert W. McChesney, a media historian, has said, "[O]n balance, the system has minimal interest in journalism or public affairs except for that which serves the business and upper-middle classes. . . . Even at its best, the entire system is saturated by a hyper-commercialism, a veritable commercial carpet-bombing of every aspect of human life."

Witness the breath-taking speed with which the major television news networks

dismantled the bureaus they had established worldwide in the previous 30 years and have virtually gone out of the business of reporting on world news and events. And this at a time of greatest need for an independent world press. Here's how James D. Wolfensohn, president of the World Bank, sees the need after he studied a survey that involved interviews with 20,000 people in underdeveloped countries around the world:

"What differentiates poor people from rich people is lack of voice. The inability to be represented. The inability to convey to the people in authority what it is they think. The inability to have a searchlight put on the conditions of inequality . . . a free press is absolutely vital to that objective."

"Freedom of the press is not a luxury. It is not an extra. It is absolutely at the core of equitable development . . . if there is no spotlight on corruption and inequitable practices,

you cannot build the public consensus to bring about change."

Inexorably, it seems, the power of profit offered by the new opportunities for commerce threatens the ability of journalists to maintain the independence necessary for their survival as reliable monitors of those who exercise political and economic power.

In the most recent example—the acquisition of Time-

Warner-CNN by AOL—Steve Case didn't even mention the journalism represented by Time, Inc. and CNN when he described the importance to the public of the newly merged corporations. What he mentioned was on-line shopping, entertainment and person-to-person communications. That, and the promise that in the first year the newly merged companies would produce an extra \$1 billion in pretax profits beyond the \$10 billion expected by the separate companies.

How can he make this promise? As AOL's marketing director suggested to The New York Times, it could come from integrating editorial and advertising content. AOL, the Times reported, "has long argued that the complete separation of editorial content and advertising is not applicable online. New media, they argue, call for integration of commerce and content."

In other words the editorial content is not to be determined by its importance to the audience as members of a self-governing society so much as it is for the commercial interest of the organization itself.

But slowly—as the emerging economic organization of news companies marinates journalism in this mixture of entertainment, commerce and promotion of self interest—journalists are beginning to react. Nearly three years ago, a group of 24 journalists met at Harvard at the invitation of the Nieman Foundation to organize the Committee of Concerned Journalists. The organization has engaged some 3,000 people in public forums to examine, articulate and promote standards of journalism and independence from self-interest communication and from commercial exploitation—an independence that would regain public trust and justify the

continued protection provided by the First Amendment.

In a statement of shared purpose the Committee has circulated, here is what these journalists say defines their work: "The central purpose of journalism is to provide citizens with accurate and reliable information they need to function in a free society."

Over time, journalists have developed the following nine core principles to fulfill that purpose:

1. Obligation to the truth;
2. Serve public interest first;
3. Monitor the powerful and offer voice to the voiceless;
4. Provide a forum for comment, criticism and compromise;
5. Employ an ethical method of verification;
6. Maintain independence from faction;
7. Make news engaging and relevant;
8. Keep news comprehensive and proportional
9. Remain true to personal conscience.

To the extent journalists themselves can articulate, practice and defend these principles; and to the extent the public supports these principles and considers them important—to that extent only can the concept of independent journalism in the public interest (a concept that has been evolving for nearly 300 years) safely migrate onto the new web of instantaneous, interactive, multimedia communications spinning out around the world.

We all have a stake in the outcome of this process. Whatever your feelings about the press, it is, as Walter Lippmann once said, at the core of the way a society comes to know and understand the world. It is, as John Dewey said, our only means of continuing education for everyone. It is a system that attempts to systematically make transparent—to all of society—the workings of the forces and the institutions and the people which wield power over our lives; to do so with reliability; and to note the activities of citizens and organizations which catalyze public affairs.

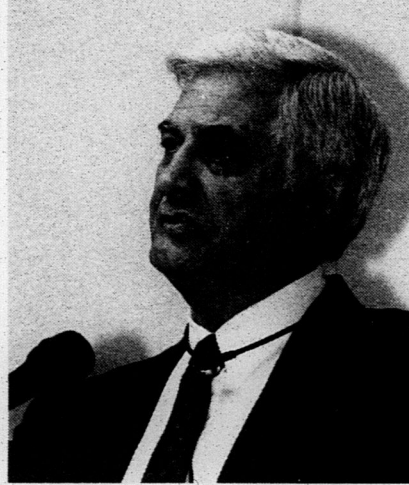
This is to say nothing of its role of monitoring the state of public life in all its myriad forms; its hopes, its dreams, its accomplishments.

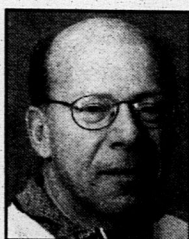
Such a press institution is a pervasive and central factor in every phase of our lives as individuals, in the shape and nature of our communities, in the character of our governments and of ourselves as a people.

The contribution of such a press in the interest of self government needs and deserves more thoughtful care and attention—from all of us. But it must begin with journalists themselves. That care and attention will not come from journalists whose highest aspiration is to be first with the most shocking or titillating scandal. It will not come from the marketplace, which values only quarterly earnings. It will not come from those who see the press only as a tool to manipulate public opinion for political or commercial purposes.

That care and attention will come only from journalists who are deeply and passionately committed to an independent press in league with an enlightened public which values such a press.

Excerpted from an acceptance speech given by Kovach March 9, on being presented with the Goldsmith Career Award for Excellence in Journalism.





LOOKING AHEAD

Dark Prince slips into the twilight

By Arnold Amber, Director, TNG Canada

Okay, so we know that some dynasties last a lot longer than others. The Sun King, for example, ruled France for 72 years. On the other hand, the domination of the Prince of Darkness over the Canadian newspaper industry lasted less than four. Louis the 14th had a good reason for relinquishing the French throne. He died. Conrad Black's reasons, on the other hand, are a lot more difficult—as they say in Royal circles—to divine.

If you believe last month's obfuscating announcement from Black's Hollinger Corporation, the company wants to dump \$5 billion (U.S.) worth of newspapers in Canada and the United States to get into the internet industry, to drive up the price of Hollinger's lousy performing stock, and to reduce the company's debt load.

If you believe the skeptics, Black's newspaper rivals, and some media watchers, Black bailed out because his grand design—which led him to take over almost 60% of Canada's daily newspapers with about 43% of the country's circulation—just wasn't working.

Take your choice between a masterful strategic repositioning of Hollinger into the "new economy" or, as the headlines on two comment pieces in the Globe and Mail put it, "Hollinger selloff smells of panic" and "Conrad Black admits defeat."

No matter where you stand, it was impossible to figure out much from the announcement of the sale. Even what Hollinger intended to sell was in question. The company referred to all its "community newspapers." Only those who understand Hollingerese knew at first look that all of the chain's North American newspapers except for its eight major dailies were up for sale. In fact, one Hollinger executive later explained that any paper with less than 50,000 circulation was in the package. In Canada, that means about 50 daily newspapers are on the block. Hollinger also indi-

cated it was prepared to take any of its major papers into partnerships with other corporations interested in internet operations. All this after Black had become the darling of the newspaper world for pouring money and effort into an industry from which others were withdrawing.

But despite the murkiness about Black's intentions, there are some things we do know about his startling turnabout and its aftermath:

- **Hollinger's stock** has been in the doldrums. At the time of the announcement it was around \$12, not far off its price five years ago and down from a 52-week high of nearly \$20.

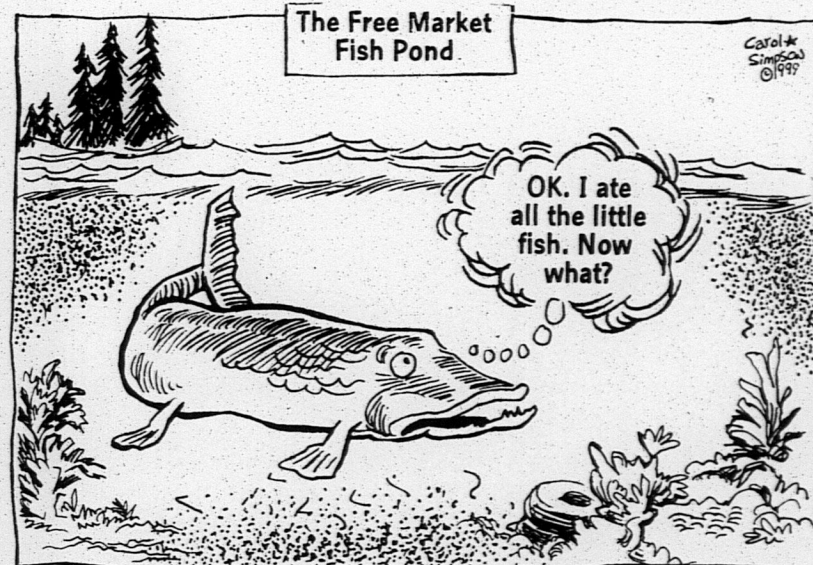
- **On the debt side**, the company owes more than \$1.5 billion (U.S.) and announced sharply lower profits for the three months that ended March 31. Standard and Poor's put it on a credit watch following the announced sale.

- **Canadian buyers:** already nearly every other major Canadian newspaper chain, including Quebecor and the Toronto Star, have expressed interest in acquiring some of the Hollinger newspapers. Smaller, local buyers and one television network are also taking a look.

- **American buyers:** both Knight-Ridder and Gannett also have expressed interest in buying some of the papers but are restricted by Canadian law to only 25% ownership of any one newspaper. Both companies have called for a repeal of that law.

- **Foreign ownership:** within days of the Hollinger announcement, there were demands that the government remove the 25% foreign ownership restriction. The federal government has announced it will launch a full review of newspaper ownership and concentration. The inquiry could end, or change, the limits on foreign ownership of Canadian newspapers.

Other than already shaking the roots of the Canadian newspaper industry, the long-



term effects of Black's pullout are not yet known. Staff in his "For-Sale" properties are full of anxiety about what will happen to their newspapers and themselves. It is possible that not all can be sold and that some smaller ones may either have to be retained by Hollinger or closed.

For TNG Canada, the situation is mixed. We represent about 700 editorial, production, circulation, and commercial employees at the Montreal Gazette and Ottawa Citizen, which Hollinger says it is keeping. We have another 1,100 members at 18 papers from coast-to-coast that are up for sale. Although

the situation is unsettling, the Guild will continue to represent our members to the full extent of our power, as we have in the past, whether it be with Hollinger or any new owner.

As for Conrad Black, his unhealthy era of so much domination of the Canadian newspaper industry will soon be over, long before anyone thought it would be. One of the legacies and lessons he leaves is that under no circumstances should any one owner be allowed to control so much of Canada's daily press. Newspapers must be a public service as well as a business.

LETTERS

To the Editor,

When I was an officer in my local, a retiree was just a retiree. But now that I'm retired I realize the importance of staying active in my local's TNG-CWA Retired Members' Club (RMC).

Our local, TNG-CWA Local 38010, is very interested in helping retirees reach their potential in solving problems and concerns they have about benefits, pensions, Social Security, Medicare and—especially—prescription drugs. Where is the country going with these issues? Are your readers aware, for example, of the U.S. federal government's debt to Social Security?

Our RMCC holds bi-monthly meetings to have lunch, meet old friends and hear speakers who are willing to discuss our concerns. Our May speaker, for example, will be Marty Berger from the Philadelphia AFL-CIO Retiree Council, the PA State Senior Citizens' Council and the National Senior Citizens' Council.

When I was on the executive board of my local, retirees were never considered a part of the local's activities. But these days we volunteer to staff ballot tables during union elections, picket at Knight Ridder's shareholders' meetings when they're in town, and participate in phone banks to express the local's feelings about Knight Ridder's union-busting tactics.

By being involved we remain active, enjoy seeing old friends and learn what better benefits can be obtained for retirees. We realize our union obtained better wages,

working conditions and benefits for us when we were working, and we in return are supporting our union now that we're retired.

—Bernice Strange
Newspaper Guild of Greater Philadelphia

[Editor's note: Strange was elected last fall as an at-large alternate board member of CWA's Retiree Members' Club, becoming the board's first Guild member.]

To the Editor,

Editor Andy Zipser is to be commended for his union democracy commentary [The Guild Reporter, April 14], and The Guild is to be commended for being a union democratic enough to allow its publication.

The problems posed are real and serious, and the author does a yeoman's job of detailing the dilemma faced by unionists:

1) there is an embarrassingly obvious need for more democratic participation and control in many unions, at all levels of administration;

2) those interests that want to see (and actively work toward) the destruction of working peoples' ability to stand together for their common good take virtually any worker's public sentiment to that effect and direct it toward their own despicable agenda.

There is no easy answer to this conundrum, but the fight for democratic unionism must not be abandoned for fear of how our enemies will use our differences against us, no more than organized labor should have avoided any association with the protests against the IMF and the World Bank in April because our enemies—of course—would say we were part of an anarchist mob.

The issue of union democracy won't go away by ignoring it. Congratulations again to the author, The Guild Reporter and the Guild itself for recognizing it and fomenting debate.

—David Prosten, Washington-Baltimore Guild and editor and publisher of Steward Update newsletter.

How many of these myths sound familiar?

By Tim O'Brien
President, Albany Guild

Myth 1: My boss says I cannot have a merit raise because salaries are set by the contract.

Your boss needs to read the contract. The contract sets minimum salaries for each position. The company can and does pay people more than the salaries specified in the contract, and that's fine by us. Once a merit raise is given, however, it cannot be taken away. It is a raise, after all, not a bonus.

Myth 2: The union is a group of outsiders.

No. The local is run entirely by employees of the Times Union. Decisions are made by a seven-member executive board, elected every two years, that meets the first Tuesday of each month. The whole membership can decide to discuss any issue it chooses and vote on what to do.

Myth 3: I think it might be better if I were not involved in the union. I don't want

to be considered a trouble maker. I'm afraid I won't get a promotion.

The Guild is here to solve problems, not cause them. Last year, for example, we filed a mere five grievances; 20 years ago, that number was more than 100. It is also illegal to be denied a promotion for being a union member. You have a legal right to a say in your workplace. The company has promoted many union members—including into management ranks. Ninety percent of your co-workers are in the union.

Myth 4: I am concerned that my dues money is being spent on political candidates or causes.

The Newspaper Guild of Albany does not make contributions to political parties or candidates. Our parent organization, the Communications Workers of America, does, but does not require that we do so. Our members have adopted a policy that we do not wish to be involved in politics.

[Excerpted from the April issue of The Guildier]

By TNG Convention action, letters to the editor 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: June 2.)



Boo bags Broun

Katherine Boo of the Washington Post, above left, discusses her award-winning entry in the annual Heywood Broun Awards competition with CWA President Morty Bahr and TNG President Linda Foley. The conversation occurred May 2 at the National Press Club, when Boo was presented with the award at a luncheon attended by more than a hundred journalists and union members, including the TNG executive council.

Below, Ellen Schultz of The Wall Street Journal chats with Jason DeParle of The New

York Times; both were recognized with special commendations for their entries.

In a short but moving acceptance speech, Boo said the subjects of her stories—the mentally retarded wards of Washington D.C.—“challenged my prejudices and taught me some truths.” She also confessed to having been raised on the AFL-CIO song book and, in an ironic twist, attributed her decision to get into advocacy journalism to the inspiration she received from DeParle 11 years earlier, when both worked for Washington Monthly.

DeParle replied that if that were true, it was the best thing he'd done in those 11 years.



PHOTOS BY BILL BURKE/WASHINGTON-BALTIMORE GUILD

In Detroit, all the news that's fit to print may have to wait a few weeks

Susan Watson, for more than three decades a bright star at the Detroit Free Press, was inducted into the Michigan Journalism Hall of Fame in April—but it took almost two weeks for the news to make it into her former newspaper.

“Former” because Watson—who was cited during her induction for being “talented, committed, courageous and humane”—went on strike in 1995 and subsequently was fired by the Free Press, ostensibly for participating in a sit-down protest in mid-1996. Although a National Labor Relations Board judge ruled earlier this year that Watson's firing was illegal, the decision is being appealed and Watson is busy, anyway. She's now editor of Detroit Teacher, a publication of the Detroit Federation of Teachers.

But the lingering labor dispute apparently still challenges the Free Press' sense of what's newsworthy. When the newspaper's former theater critic was inducted into the Hall of Fame last year, coverage was never in doubt; this year, a management memo to the staff explaining why there would be no story about the award claimed that “our single-copy sales leave us no room for self-congratulations.” Heated staff response to the slight apparently forced a belated reversal.

Under any other circumstances, it's doubtful the Free Press would have hesitated to blow its own horn. A former reporter, city editor and columnist for the paper, Watson received Knight Ridder's news-editorial Award of Excellence in 1993. She also won—with Paul Magnusson—the 1978 Heywood Broun Award, becoming the first woman to receive or share the award in its



Susan Watson

38-year history.

(Poetically, given this year's winner, the Watson-Magnusson series delved into the abuse of patients at Michigan's Plymouth Center for retarded children.)

But Watson also was a mainstay of the 1995 strike, most notably in her leadership at the Detroit Sunday Journal strike paper, and so the Free Press was loath to embrace her most recent honor. Curiously, Michigan State University's journalism school, which bestows the award, also was circumspect in describing her strike activities. Instead, its emphasis was on Watson's achievement as “one of the first women columnists and the first woman editor” at the Free Press.

“During the past 35 years,” the citation observed, “she has become a leader in gender and race issues in journalism, serving as a role model to women who wanted to be journalists in a male-dominated industry.”

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Human Rights Director:
Anna M. Padia

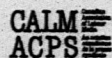
Membership Coordinator:
Bruce R. Nelson

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

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

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

Administrative Staff:
Marjoline Botsford,
Joanne Scheel



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DAYBOOK

New England District
Council, May 20-21,
Portland, ME

Joint TNG-AAUP meeting,
June 10-11, Washington

CWA National-Legislative
Political Conference,
June 18-21, Washington

Tri-Council (Midwest, Great
Lakes, Southern) meeting,
June 23-25, Cleveland

Jobs With Justice national
convention, July 20-23
U. of Mass at Dartmouth

TNG Sector Conference and
CWA Annual Convention,
Aug. 25-29, Anaheim, CA

CWA Occupational Safety
and Health Conference,
Sept. 17-20, Philadelphia

CWA Women's Conference,
Sept. 21-24, Las Vegas

FROM THE MORGUE

Fifty years ago this month:

Canadian Press, escalating its union-busting campaign, fires 27—leaving itself without any full-time employees in three provinces. . . . The NLRB rules for the first time that employers must supply full payroll data to unions requesting the information for collective bargaining. . . . New York typos celebrate their union's 100th anniversary—and note that a century earlier, the average age of a printer at death was 28.

Twenty-five years ago this month:

More than 260 striking Guild members close the San Juan Star after nearly six months of deadlocked contract negotiations. . . . Feminist newswomen clash with the editors of MORE, sponsors of the fourth A.J. Liebling Counter-Convention, over sexist discussion titles (“The Boys on the Next Bus,” “Why the Working Man Hates the Media”) and too few female panelists. . . . The U.S. Senate ponders the Federal Criminal Code Reform Act—which would allow prosecution of reporters for disclosing the contents of any government report without permission.

Ten years ago this month:

The Guild and three other newspaper unions win significant support for two shareholder proposals at Knight-Ridder's annual meeting. . . . TNG's executive board recommends scrapping the Guild's “Lily White Publisher Award”—designed to single out employers with the worst records for hiring minorities—because there are too many candidates. . . . More than 1,500 Guild-represented employees report they have repetitive strain injuries.