



Seattle on the brink

Guild braces for Thanksgiving strike as Times, P-I stall talks



As the clock ticks down toward a strike against the Seattle Times and Seattle Post-Intelligencer,

Guild members rally Nov. 15 at Fountain Park to press their demands for an equitable contract.

With nothing to show for months of fruitless negotiations with the Seattle Times and the Seattle Post-Intelligencer, the Pacific Northwest Guild is bracing for a strike that would begin no later than Thanksgiving. The Guild's current contracts expired July 21.

Membership support for a walkout was evidenced Oct. 18 in two separate meetings, with the negotiating team authorized to call a strike by the resounding vote of 399 to 32. "These votes deliver an important message to the Times and P-I," said chief Guild negotiator Bruce Meachum. "And that is, that the workers here are fed up with contracts that lag far behind those of their colleagues in similar and smaller markets."

The CWA Executive Board has given strike approval. Support for the strike also was voted Nov. 1 by the King County Labor Council.

Over the past decade, Guild negotiators have told the two publishers, the Seattle/King County consumer price index has gone up 43.9%; contract minimum wage scales, meanwhile, have risen only 21% over the same period, driving down employees' standards of living. But the only wage increase offered by the joint operating agreement partners is 45 cents an hour in each year of a six-year pact—and for some employees, those raises would be given in only four of the six years.

The Guild bargaining team, after recovering its composure, responded by lopping 45 cents off its proposals; it is now seeking hourly increases of \$3.05 in the first year and \$1.55 in the second and third years of a three-year contract.

In seeking to move the talks forward, the Guild has withdrawn several contract proposals it said weren't important enough to strike over, including increases in employee life insurance and in photographers' liability insurance, differentials for certain jobs and two additional personal days off each year. But without movement on core wage issues—including higher scales, elimination of a two-tier wage structure, pension improvements and a 401(k) match—the probability that Guild members would be hitting the pavement grew by the day.

Sherry Grindeland, a Times columnist, and veteran P-I reporter Jane Hadley have been named as co-chairs of the strike steering committee; member assistance, picket duty, finance and fundraising committees also have been formed. Plans also are being made for a strike newspaper and web site, with Times aerospace reporter Chuck Taylor named managing editor.

"We'd emphasize content that would be missing from the papers if our members walk," Taylor explained, "so readers would have a place to turn for their favorite columnists, news and features. We intend to break stories as our members normally would, emphasizing beat expertise the managers

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Star-Bulletin staffers toast 'Black Thursday'

Black Thursday" may sound ominous—but not when the Thursday in question is Nov. 9 and the Black is David Black, Canadian publisher and now perceived savior of the Honolulu Star-Bulletin.

In an almost anticlimactic announcement that capped weeks of well-publicized negotiations, Black announced Nov. 10 that he had struck a deal with Liberty Newspapers L.P. and Gannett Co. to buy the Star-Bulletin effective

March 15. A final sales price was not disclosed.

Liberty owns the Star-Bulletin but is in a joint operating agreement with Gannett, which owns the rival Honolulu Advertiser. The sale of the Star-Bulletin was forced by a federal court after the two companies disclosed that Gannett planned to pay Liberty \$26.5 million to walk away from the paper, giving Gannett a monopoly. Once bids were solicited, Black emerged as the only qualified bidder.

But as has been true at every stage of the Star-Bulletin's saga—Liberty had planned to close the newspaper 14 months ago—even this piece of good news wasn't caveat-free. Black's purchase agreement is contingent on his ability to nail down the two biggest costs of any newspaper, labor and newsprint, by Nov. 30. Failure to do so gives him at least the option of backing out.

Contract negotiations with the

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Final days: Detroit Guild ratifies contracts

Five years and four months after the Detroit Newspaper Guild and five other unions struck the Detroit News and the Detroit Free Press, the war is over.

Meeting at noon Nov. 12, members of three units of TNG-CWA Local 22 ratified final contract offers from Gannett Co. and Knight Ridder Inc. Approximately 500 newsroom and maintenance workers are represented by the three units.

Bargaining committees for the News editorial and maintenance units had recommended acceptance of the final offers; the Free Press committee made no recommendation. Detroit Guild President Lou Mleczo urged ratification, reasoning that "although there are significant concessions in all three contracts, the alternative of having no union is worse."

The new contracts run through Jan. 15, 2004, and include an imme-

diate increase in wages of 2%, followed by 2% increases after one year and again a year later—for some employees. Those paid over scale at the Detroit News, comprising the majority of unit members, will not receive the wage increases but will be eligible for merit raises.

An additional, somewhat controversial bonus is promised if circulation at the newspapers rises by at least 100,000 over the next

year—a 13.4% jump over current Sunday sales, at a time when most newspaper circulations are declining or are barely treading water. The Free Press and News, which under a joint operating agreement produce a combined Sunday newspaper, saw a 2.7% loss of sales over the past 12 months.

Meeting the 100,000 mark would give full-time employees a \$1,000 bonus.

The new contracts also elimi-

nate the agency shop provisions that were won more than 60 years ago, replacing them with open shops that make union membership voluntary—albeit with a provision that anyone joining the Guild must remain a member until the contract expires. But dues checkoff is being resumed, the grievance procedure has been restored, binding arbitration will be used to resolve allegations of contract violations and the just-cause provision for discipline and discharge also has been restored.

Other contract features include maintenance of previous health coverage, with monthly premiums fully paid by the employer; maintenance of existing pension plans,

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Zinser zipped

Albany settles despite threat, several other stand-offs end

Despite a show of Zinser-rattling by management at the Albany Times-Union, the Albany Guild has won a four-year contract with 3% raises each year, retroactive to August 1. The new collective bargaining agreement was ratified Nov. 5 by a vote of 93 to 3.

Other gains include upgrades of \$10 to \$20, depending on classification, for 20 to 25 employees; the addition of a "floater holiday" in honor of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.; a reduction of one year for each vacation anniversary step; a week's paid leave for births or adoptions, and the addition of domestic partners to funeral leave. On the flip side, the contract includes higher insurance premium co-pays, to be calculated as a rising percentage of the premium instead of a flat dollar amount.

The two sides also agreed to non-binding re-openers on the pension and eye care plans, as well as on the "senior reporter" classification.

Although the settlement repudiated management's initial hardball tactics of designating union-busting attorney Michael Zinser as its lead negotiator, it did not resolve outstanding charges of unfair labor practices against the company. One of those complaints was filed when management stopped dues check-off for a unit member who claimed the contract—in language describing her "private right and conscience"—allowed her to withhold such payments. Although the NLRB's regional board ruled against the Guild at an initial hearing on procedural grounds, the board's Office of Appeals has reversed that decision.

"This decision drives home to the employer that it cannot play games with dues checkoff by seeking an employee's claim to 'private right and conscience'—and maybe it will dissuade the employer from buying into Michael Zinser's dirty little game," commented TNG-CWA attorney Barbara Camens.

Milwaukee

Other recent contract ratifications include a four-year agreement in Milwaukee, approved in early October by an 86% "yes" vote. Pay increases include 2% across the board each Jan. 1 and an annual 1.5% minimum average discretionary raise, plus higher weekend and night-shift differentials. The agreement also creates a new \$5 holiday differential and increases call-back pay to \$7 from \$6, with an additional step up to \$8 in 2002.

Among other gains: a lifting of the cap on the share of proceeds earned by photographers, artists and cartoonists whose work is reprinted; an increase in pay for part-timers, from 80% of the full-time minimum to 100%, over the next two to three years; a

lifting of the cap on part-timers' vacation; an increase in bereavement leave to five days for parents, children and spouses, including domestic partners; and a requirement that management enter discussions with the Guild prior to sale or merger of the company.

The one unresolved issue was health care, with both sides agreeing to maintain the status quo pending new talks, which are to start before May 1. Continued deadlock will move the issue to arbitration.

Fall River

Members of the Fall River unit of the Boston Guild ratified a three-year agreement Nov. 2 by the lop-sided margin of 54 to 4. The conclusion of the five-year marathon, during which the Herald News brought in new publishers on an annual basis, includes 2.5% increases in each year plus a \$250 signing bonus for full-timers and a pro-rated one for part-timers.

Knoxville

Another seemingly interminable set of contract negotiations has been wrapped up, in this case in Knoxville, with 3% wage increases in each of the pact's three years and a signing bonus that averages \$1,900 per unit member. Other gains include a 50% company match for a 401(k) plan and an 2-cent increase in mileage allowances, to 31 cents per mile. Unit members also gained the option of working a 10-hour, four-day workweek.

Givebacks include a loss of sick-leave carryover, which was exchanged for a short-term disability plan. More significant losses include a 45-day limit on grievance filing, new management rights language and a substance abuse policy.

Maui

Members of three unions at the Maui News, including the Hawaii Newspaper Guild, ratified a four-year contract extension that includes 1.75% wage increases in April, 2001 and April, 2003—and establishes a two-tiered wage scale under which new hires will be paid significantly less. For example: the previous entry-level wage for reporters and advertising sales reps of \$773 is now the rate for five years' experience. New hires in those positions will start at \$500, a 35% cut.

Bargaining came midway through the previous contract because the paper was sold by its family owners to Ogden Newspapers of West Virginia.

Other features of the new pact include a 2.25% lump sum bonus now, plus 2% bonuses in April of 2002, 2004 and 2005; bonuses of 0.5% will be given in 2001 and 2003, when the 1.75% wage increases kick in. But the bonuses aren't free money: they must be applied either to the pension plan or 401(k) plan.

In addition, the employer will pay 100% of the medical plan premium.

Woonsocket

Members of the Woonsocket Guild ratified a three-year contract Sept. 16, including initial collective bargaining agreements for two newly organized departments, with 77% of those voting in favor of the settlement. The contract increases scales by 2.25% a year and includes a \$200 signing bonus for most employees.

In brief

Blethen's bad attitude stretches sea to sea

While employees at the Blethen family-owned Seattle Times gear up for a strike (see story, page 1), their counterparts on the other end of the continent are seething over similarly cavalier treatment. Although Portland Guild President Joanne Lannin has assured her members "a strike is not part of any master plan we have," Frank Blethen's behavior to date makes it clear he "doesn't have much respect for us as employees." While ignoring a petition signed by more than 90% of the membership, Blethen has refused to modify initial contract demands that would cut pay while increasing hours worked.

San Jose exec tapped for workforce board

San Jose Guild's executive officer, Luther Jackson, has been appointed to a four-year term on the North Valley Job Training Consortium Workforce Board. The board, with representatives drawn from labor, private industry, education and government, directs a program that offers a wide range of skills assessment, job training, job search and placement services to job seekers throughout Sili-con Valley. At the Guild, meanwhile, Jackson is working with the membership on plans to teach media internet technologies to current Mercury News and Herald employees and to community members.



Luther Jackson

Translators offer affiliate status . . .

The Translators and Interpreters Guild (TTIG), Local 32100 of TNG-CWA, has announced a new affiliate membership category for members of other TNG-CWA locals at a 50% discount. Any member of another TNG-CWA local may join TTIG as an affiliate member with full membership privileges, including eligibility to apply for membership in TTIG's Referral Services; affiliate members cannot vote in TTIG elections, however, as they already have TNG-CWA voting privileges through their own locals. For more information, call 1-800-992-0367 (703-522-0881) or e-mail to ttig@mindspring.com.

. . . and start new certification program

TTIG also has started a peer certification program for translators and interpreters, available to Guild members in good standing who pass a rigorous screening process. Certification will be reviewed every five years. "There is no official licensing for translators or interpreters in this country," explained TTIG president Alan Gleason, "so this is one way our members can demonstrate to clients that they are professionals."

Where there's smoke there's bound to be fire

Here's a clue that something's amiss in St. Paul: in the past 10 months the Minnesota Newspaper Guild/Typographical Union has filed 17 grievances at the Pioneer Press. Ten are in the circulation department, where 19 grievances have been filed in the past two years and seven have gone to arbitration. Most of the complaints are in response to district supervisors and assistants not getting compensated for overtime and other scheduling abuses.

Beckley paper settles with NLRB

The Beckley (WV) Register Herald has settled complaints of unfair labor practices by rescinding workplace changes it had instituted in the mailroom after that unit voted for TNG representation this past May. The NLRB notice posted by management notifies employees it will not "engage in surveillance of their activities" and will not impose "more onerous working conditions" on union supporters.

Five locals qualify for organizing help

Five Guild locals have qualified for a CWA subsidy that will underwrite increased organizing: San Jose, Wire Service Guild, Northern California, Minnesota and Washington-Baltimore. The subsidies will pay most of the salaries of outside organizers and will be renewed annually based on results. The new organizers are expected to bring in at least 100 members from new units in the first year.

Guild newsletters lauded by CWA

Newsletters produced by four TNG-CWA locals have received awards in the CWA Annual Newsletter Editors Contest, including coveted first-place honors in general excellence won by *Fifty-One*, produced by the Milwaukee Guild. Four awards were taken by the Albany Guild's *The Guildier*, including first place for best news reporting, second place for best front page, third place in general excellence and honorable mention for best human interest feature. The San Jose Guild's *Guild News* knocked down three prizes, including second place in general excellence and honorable mentions for best opinion column and best front page. Two awards went to the New York Guild's *Frontpage*, including third place for general excellence and honorable mention for best human interest feature.

Hollinger owes \$250,000 in back pay in Regina

The Saskatchewan Labour Relations Board has ordered Hollinger to pay an estimated \$250,000 in back pay and bonuses to editorial workers at the Regina Leader Post. The ruling is in response to charges of unfair labor practices filed by the Guild.

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Knight Ridder sued for severance

You can say one thing about the folks who brought you Detroit: they're consistent.

Having demonstrated its antipathy to newspaper unions in Motor City, Knight Ridder Inc. continues to play hardball by ignoring an arbitrator's award of \$2 million in severance pay and interest to employees at the Monterey Herald. The San Jose Newspaper Guild filed suit in U.S. District Court Nov. 1 to compel payment.

In a decision issued May 25, arbitrator Gerald McKay concluded that Guild-repre-

sented employees of the Herald were fired by E.W. Scripps in 1997 as a condition of the sale to Knight Ridder, which then rehired most of the former workforce—but without a contract. None of the rehired employees received severance, despite a provision in their contract with Scripps providing for severance "upon termination of employment."

After four months of waiting for Knight Ridder to make the payment, San Jose Guild officials warned the company it faced legal action if it refused to honor the final

and binding decision. The lawsuit was filed 10 days after Knight Ridder ignored an Oct. 21 deadline set by the Guild.

"We've exercised great restraint in our attempts to get the company to honor its obligations," said Luther Jackson, the local's executive officer. But instead of behaving responsibly, he added, Knight Ridder treated the ruling as a bargaining issue, withheld information and threatened legal action of its own. "The fact remains that an arbitrator has made a binding decision" he added, "and in every case I'm aware of, a company has paid

when ordered to do so."

In addition to demanding that Guild members accept less interest than they're owed, Knight Ridder has withheld payroll data needed to calculate severance for part-time employees and commission salespeople. The Guild also has not received a response to its inquiries, dated Sept. 28 and Oct. 1, regarding employees who were omitted from the company's Sept. 19 payroll data.

Instead, Knight Ridder issued a memo to employees asserting it has been "acting in good faith."

NY Guild files appeal for jobs

Undeterred by an adverse ruling by the National Labor Relations Board, the New York Guild filed an appeal Nov. 8 that seeks to restore the jobs of New York Post employees replaced by Rupert Murdoch when he bought the troubled newspaper in 1993. The Guild also is seeking millions of dollars in back pay.

The 2-1 NLRB decision, issued Oct. 31, concluded that Murdoch acted legally when he replaced Guild-represented employees who went on strike after learning the potential new owner planned to trim the payroll. The walkout was intended to demand severance and pensions for employees who might be axed in the cutbacks, and nine other Post unions honored the Guild picket line.

Murdoch responded by threatening to back out of the talks, prompting the other unions to return to work, and the Guild walkout collapsed within two

days. But while Murdoch then negotiated new contracts with the other unions, the Guild—representing more than 280 editorial, advertising and clerical employees—got the back of his hand: fewer than half were rehired.

"The Guild had stated repeatedly that the strikers would never work under the terms" proposed by Murdoch, the NLRB panel ruled, so it "could only believe that it had to employ a new work force if it wanted to publish the Post."

But the Guild is arguing—and dissenting panel member Sarah Fox agreed—that Murdoch's company was a successor employer and legally bound to negotiate a new contract with the Guild. New York Guild President Barry Lipton said he is confident the U.S. Court of Appeals will agree—leaving Murdoch on the hook for as much as \$20 million in back pay.

Lipton also complained that the board took three-and-a-half years to reach its decision.

Final days: Detroit ratifies contracts

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also fully paid by the employer, although Free Press contributions are suspended because the plan is still overfunded; and preservation of vacation benefits, to a maximum of four weeks a year.

Not resolved by the contracts are the cases of fired strikers, although both companies have committed to reviewing the discharges with the Guild on an individual basis; meanwhile, National Labor Relations Board proceedings are to continue. Guild members who were not fired but have not been recalled will remain indefinitely eligible for recall, but recall rights are extinguished by those who decline job offers.

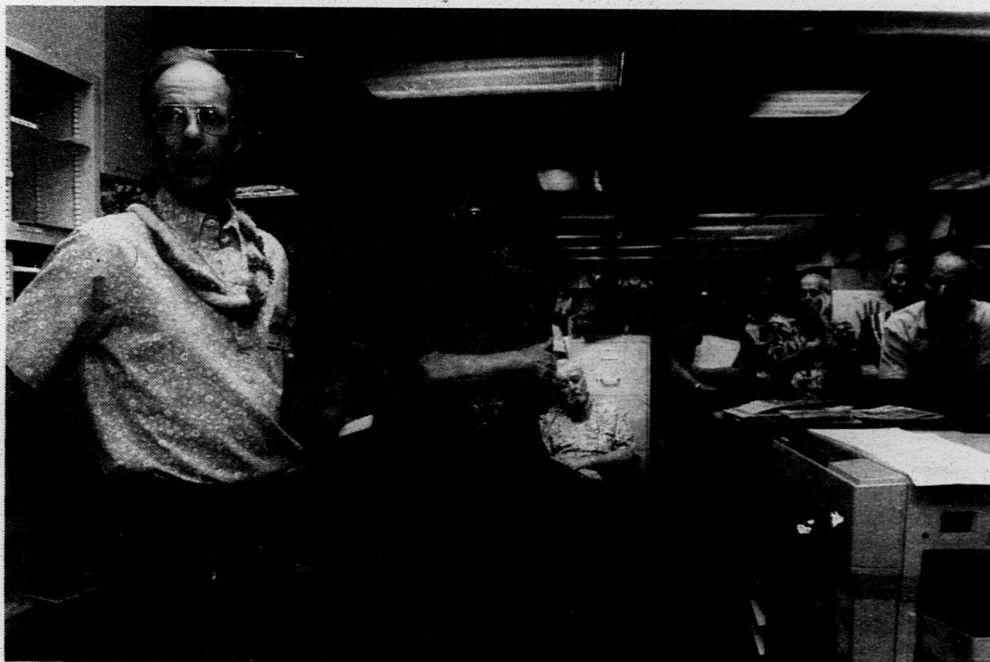
In ratifying the contract offers, presented by Gannett and Knight Ridder Oct. 19, the Guild became the third of the six striking unions to end the lockout. Approximately 200 press operators who belong to GCIU Local 13N ratified a three-year contract Nov. 5; members of International Typographers Union Local 18 agreed to a contract

early last year.

Still without contracts, as The Guild Reporter went to press, were two Teamsters locals and a small GCIU unit of photoengravers.

Ratification of the new contracts in many ways represents the final chapter of a strike that began July 13, 1995 after the two publishers imposed new terms and conditions of employment in the midst of bogged-down contract negotiations. Among the changes was the imposition by the Gannett-owned News of a merit-only pay system, which the NLRB ruled was an unfair labor practice. But that decision, which legitimized the strike, was overturned earlier this year by a three-judge panel of the U.S. Appeals Court, in essence signaling the end of legal maneuvering.

Although the unions offered to end the walkout and return to their jobs in 1997, the newspapers insisted on retaining the 1,200 replacement workers they'd already hired. As many as 600 strikers, most from other unions, still haven't been recalled to their jobs.



The Star-Bulletin's new owner, David Black, in left, fields questions from an anxious newroom during a tour of the paper while he was in negotiations with Gannett.

'Black Thursday' cheered

Continued from page 1

Hawaii Newspaper Guild, which represents most of the newspaper's 97 editorial employees, began Nov. 15 amid widespread expectations that a deal will be struck relatively quickly. Black has assured Star-Bulletin employees that all of them will have jobs if the sale goes through—although he has not promised that everyone will stay in the same position—and has said he will hire more than 200 additional workers to handle the circulation, printing and advertising chores that under the JOA are done by the Advertiser staff.

Black also has said he wants to start up a Sunday edition and to

expand circulation in the rest of the archipelago.

The newsprint issue is potentially thornier, however, and has been cited repeatedly by Black as a potential deal-breaker. Because supplies are tight, Black has pressed Gannett to sell him the newsprint already under contract for the Star-Bulletin; but because Black has spurned Gannett's offer of a contract to use its presses, opting instead to print the paper at RFD Publications, Gannett has balked at selling its supply.

Still, for all the remaining uncertainty, spirits were running uncharacteristically high in the Star-Bulletin newsroom after

months of gnawing uncertainty. "As for the mood at the Star Bulletin: a new T-shirt went on sale yesterday afternoon in the newsroom," staffer Ian Lind wrote on his web site. "Hot off of the production line, it features the 'Yes, We Are Open' front page along with the message, 'We're Still Here!'"

On the other side of the building, meanwhile, recent high-level turmoil at the Advertiser continued with the abrupt resignation of editor Jim Gatti, who said he's retiring at 57. He will be replaced by Sandra Keyes, managing editor of the Contra Costa Times and a long-time Knight-Ridder executive.

Bracing for a strike

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at the papers can't match."

Strike headquarters will be at the former headquarters of Bricklayers Local 1, at 330 Fairview Avenue North.

Management response to such preparations has been to stonewall at the bargaining table—it has yet to move off its 45-cents-an-hour proposal—and to write memos warning employees that a strike in Seattle could end up like the one in Detroit. Guild leaders, on the other hand, believe a more apt comparison would be with that other West Coast center of labor intrigue, San

Francisco, where an 11-day newspaper strike in 1994 "ended in an unqualified victory" for the striking unions. That strike, they point out, started for much the same reasons as would propel one in Seattle: "a growing disrespect and disdain for the work force."

Correction

Last month's Guild Reporter inaccurately stated that TNG Local 1 represents employees of The Toledo Blade. Employees of the Blade are represented by the Toledo Newspaper Guild, Local 34043.

The Newspaper Guild
International



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When it comes to the working class, even media critics have a blind spot

Story and photos by David Bacon
Northern California Guild

In 1992, immigrant drywall hangers went on strike from Santa Barbara to the Mexican border, halting Southern California home construction for almost a year. They defied police and border patrol agents, even shutting down freeways at rush hour to stop the deportation of picketers. And in the end, they won.

In the years following, immigrants mounted more strikes, involving thousands of workers on construction projects, in huge foundries and tortilla factories, among harbor truckers, and in sweatshops from downtown LA to Pomona.

The impact of this upsurge has been profound. It has changed the demographics of California's labor movement, giving immigrants a new voice and propelling activists into leadership of some of the state's largest unions. It's provided a community power base for a new generation of Latino political leaders. And this upsurge has been met with a wave of anti-immigrant hysteria, from 1994's Proposition 187 to last year's effort to wipe bilingual education off the map.

But despite its profound impact on the economic and political life of California and the rest of the country, this working-class upsurge has gone largely unreported by the mainstream press. "It's really not even on their radar screen," says Susan Alva, staff attorney for the Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights in Los Angeles. "Sometimes the daily newspapers or TV latch onto individual events, but they don't see the context. The energy of immigrants has been the key to the revival of unions in LA, but you wouldn't know it from reading the mainstream press."

The attitudes behind this lack of coverage affect not only media outlets themselves, but also progressive media critics and watchdogs, like Project Censored, based at the California State University campus in Sonoma County.

While some alternative publications did cover the immigrant worker upsurge, from the LA Weekly and the now-defunct LA View to The Nation and Labor Notes, none of those stories were considered censored by Project Censored judges and included in their nationally-touted list, issued every year.

"Unions are off-limits to the media," says Conn Hallinan, journalism teacher at University of California at Santa Cruz. "The anti-union bias in the industry is very deep. This problem is also true with Project Censored."

Project Censored says the media does an inadequate job of exposing the abuse of power by government and corporations, so its

lists inherently assume that the news worth reporting involves the actions of the rich and powerful—their unreported misdeeds. Stories involving movements among working-class people and in communities of color, on the other hand, go unnoticed by both the mainstream media and its liberal critics.

Of the 110 stories chosen by Project Censored over 11 years, 64 featured the U.S. government's abuse of power, 54 covered corporate misdeeds, 40 exposed envi-

ronmental and health crimes and 35 discussed deception in U.S. foreign policy or misdeeds by other governments. The number of stories featuring a union or a struggle by workers: 0.

The denial of abortions to communities reliant on Catholic hospitals made the 1999 list. The same year, the large-scale union organizing effort by workers in those hospitals was met by firings, discrimination and union busters hired by religious orders. That wasn't news. Likewise with Monsanto, the chemical giant: its role as a producer of genetically-modified foods was also featured in 1999, but its role in organizing a company union to fight the United Farm Workers in Watsonville's strawberry fields wasn't.

The bias holds true for stories outside the U.S. as well. Project Censored stories exposed the U.S. government's pro-corporate bias in negotiating NAFTA and the Multilateral Agreement on Investment. But free trade has had its most serious challenge from a new cross-border movement, as U.S., Mexican and Canadian workers have challenged plant closures, organized independent unions and mounted strikes against exploitation on the border. Its high point has been the 2-year strike by the first successful independent union in the maquiladora border plants, at Tijuana's Han Young factory. That story, covered by a few alternative publications, was ignored by the mainstream media and by Project Censored.

Or consider that Project Censored has twice featured Shell's environmental crimes in Nigeria and its support for the dictatorship which killed playwright Ken Saro-Wiwa and young activists in the oil-rich Niger delta. But the most dangerous challenge to the Nigerian generals came from the oil workers union, which mounted a general strike in 1994. Soldiers killed some workers, imprisoned hundreds of others for years at a time and suppressed the oil unions.

That story, reported in the Black Scholar and alternative weeklies, also didn't make it

into either the mainstream press or the Project Censored list.

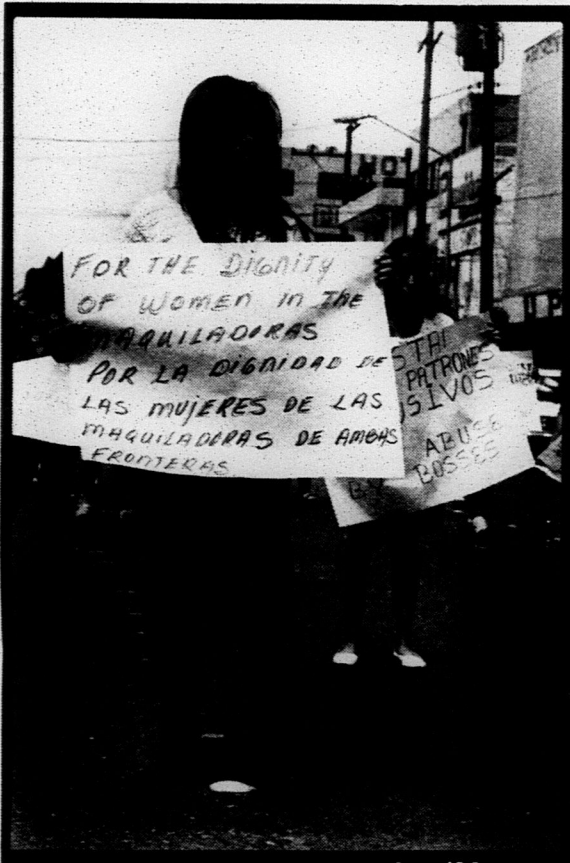
Liberal media critics would have us believe that the function of progressive journalists is to "speak truth to power." But Monsanto, the Nigerian generals, U.S. government trade negotiators and the other subjects of exposes already know the truth. What challenges them is when the people on the bottom begin to fight for power—but the stories of those struggles are the real censored stories.

Why is that? Part of the answer certainly lies in the conglomeration of the media. One of the most censored stories of the last few years, for example, has been the Detroit newspaper strike, a direct challenge to two media monopolies by their own employees. It's hardly a surprise that Gannett and Knight-Ridder didn't report it. Nor is it much of a surprise that other media monopolies saw a common class interest in keeping the story quiet. But Project Censored and other media critics didn't see a story here, either.

Although corporate class interests result in censorship, media workers share responsibility. After all, thousands of them belong to unions and care a lot about their own salaries and working conditions. But while there were real efforts by dedicated newspaper union activists to challenge the suppression of news from Detroit, most media workers didn't feel a strong sense of personal or class responsibility to report the story.

Media monopolies and journalism schools have taught journalists that they must not participate in movements for social justice, especially unions and community organizations which challenge the established order.

"Many reporters internalize the ban on being participants, and believe it would compromise their supposed neutrality and objectivity," says Steve Stallone, communications director for the International Longshore and Warehouse Union. "For reporters and editors, if they don't already know about



Employees of the National O-Ring maquiladora demonstrate during the May Day parade in Tijuana, following their layoffs after they filed charges of sexual harassment.



Members of Tijuana's SWAT team, the Special Forces, march beside the Han Young factory as they prepare to illegally reopen the plant and bring in strike breakers. After fighting for

their union for a year, workers struck Han Young on May 22, 1998, in the first legal strike by an independent union in a maquiladora.



Striking framers ride a bus out to their picketlines during a bitterly-fought strike in southern California in the spring of 1995, when thousands of immigrant carpenters shut down residential homebuilding. As the strike progressed, the police and Border

Patrol would stop car caravans of strikers en route to picket lines and seize them for deportation. That prompted use of buses like this, which were less likely to be stopped, for ferrying the workers to and from their job actions.

something, it's not news. But the neutrality rule says you can't cover a story if you know about it from your personal experience, because it's a conflict. And of course, behind this lies the knowledge of what you need to do to please your boss and get ahead."

"Project Censored is a reflection of the industry," adds Hallinan. "The objective persona is like the tooth fairy—it doesn't exist. It not only makes reporters unwilling to be participants, but they can't be good journalists with it, either. Was I.F. Stone neutral on Vietnam and Korea, or Mike Quinn on the San Francisco general strike? The point isn't to be objective and neutral, but to be fair and accurate. Neutrality destroys independent reporting—no one but reporters believes in it."

Belonging to unions can provide important job protections for journalists who challenge corporate power. But union membership doesn't automatically lead to better coverage of workers and communities of color. For that, unions need to actively educate their members and appeal for loyalty to the labor movement and struggles in working-class communities.

Some of the stories most hostile to workers during the 1998 BART strike, for instance, were written or aired by union members.

"Yes, corporations own the newspapers, but if reporters bit and screamed more, they could change a lot," Hallinan asserts.

"Newspapers have to rely on them to produce the copy. Sure, publishers and editors have a class stance, but so does the average reporter, even if they belong to the Newspaper Guild."

Another measure that would lead to coverage of unions and communities of color would be increasing diversity among media workers themselves. Bill Fletcher, former AFL-CIO education director and now assistant to President John Sweeney and an organizer of the Black Radical Congress, points out that "communities of color are overwhelmingly working-class communities. The percentage of union membership among African-Americans, 18-20%, is the highest among any racial or national group."

Yet minorities make up 11.1% of media workers, and 45% of newspapers hire no minorities at all, according to Hallinan. Minority journalists are three times as likely to be unemployed as white ones. To reflect their percentage in the population, minorities would have to comprise 27.1% of media employees.

"Look at the class origin of reporters and editors also," he urges. "Seventy-five years ago, they were overwhelmingly working-class people. Today they're largely middle class."

The demographics of the judges and staff at Project Censored reflect those of the media. Perhaps they don't see some stories because they

don't exist in their world.

For Floyd, a leading African-American unionist, the problems of the coverage of unions and of communities of color are closely linked. "I don't see nearly enough coverage of either. If the issue is crime, then there may be some, or during the holidays they talk about poverty in a very paternalistic way. But in terms of covering the struggles in our communities on a day-to-day, ongoing basis, there's very little."

Like Susan Alva, Floyd points out that workers and people of color need media coverage that goes beyond reporting particular events. "We need an analysis of the system in this country that reflects the reality of our lives," she says. "The media talk about our economic system in black and white terms. Communism is dictatorial and repressive. The free enterprise system is the savior of all people. The media says our economic system allows us the freedom to do wonderful things, but there's no discussion of how this system really works, and what its true impact is on working people."

That expectation requires an analysis and critique of the media far beyond highlighting unreported exposes of government and corporate misdeeds. It calls for a new kind of participatory activist journalism, with roots in the struggles of workers, unions and communities of color, loyal to the ideal of fundamental social change and those who fight for it.

Immigrant workers, whether documented or not, are entitled to the full protection of federal labor laws. In the context of an organizing campaign, says TNG-CWA attorney Barbara Camens, that means an employer may not use a worker's immigrant status to discourage union support. Threats to discharge immigrant employees in retaliation for union activities are unfair labor practices.

Because more Guild locals are reaching out to immigrants—as in the recent Hudson News representation election, and now with an organizing drive at the Chinese Daily News—here are some basic principles to keep in mind:

1. Immigrants (regardless of documentation or visa status) are properly included in the bargaining unit and are entitled to vote in a union election. Whether an immigrant is legally permitted to work is not relevant in an election, which among other things means an employer may not inquire into an employee's immigration status.

2. Employers may not question workers about their immigration status when the question is a result of employees' union activities. While an employer should verify an employee's eligibility to work at the beginning of employment, an employer cannot later demand production of immigration documents if linked to union activity.

3. An employer may not threaten deportation or threaten to call the INS in retaliation for an employee's union activities. The employer may not refuse to assist in obtaining appropriate immigration documentation on behalf of an employee because of anti-union animus. The mere threat of such activities may constitute an unfair labor practice or grounds for objections to the conduct of an election.

4. An employer may not discharge an employee because of his or her immigration status (even if the employer determines that the employee is undocumented) where there is evidence that the employer is motivated by anti-union animus.

5. The INS has formally agreed that during a labor dispute it will take no action against an undocumented worker or an individual whose work authorization has expired. Thus, a person cannot be subjected to deportation or other action by the INS as a result of an employer's discriminatory treatment during an election and during any litigation resulting from an employer's unfair practices. In the interim, workers must make sure to comply with the procedural and substantive requirements of the immigration laws to preserve their right to work once the underlying labor issues have been resolved.

In short, immigrants participating in an organizing campaign have many legal rights, but they must be educated about such protection and taught to document and report to union organizers any threats or actions taken by an employer with regard to their immigration status. "Remaining silent in the face of such threats is the most dangerous course," Camens notes. "Only by speaking out can employees gain the legal protections they deserve."

Walking away from a job to kill for

By Rich Robertson

When I told my television station's news director a few months ago that I intended to end nearly 30 years in print and broadcast journalism, I borrowed a line from a former British minister's resignation letter. I said I wanted to spend more time with my principles.

I don't think he understood. How could anyone walk away from a job that many people would kill to have?

Pay and benefits were certainly not an issue. And I thoroughly enjoyed and admired the people I worked with. The public recognition was nice, too. But somewhere along the line, journalism's values (or, more accurately, what journalism values) had diverged from mine.

I'm not alone. A recent study by the Pew Research Center for People and the Press found that four in 10 journalists, both print and broadcast, now admit to working in an environment that increasingly asks them to avoid "newsworthy" stories to benefit the financial interests of their "news" organizations. These journalists believe market pressures are pushing them toward the salacious and sensational and away from the complicated and important.

I was among the four in 10 journalists.

I began feeling I was doing a disservice to the TV audience by telling them only what was happening rather than why. I felt it was unfair to compress complex subjects into a few breathless seconds or inches. I was embarrassed when my stories were so often oversold, or just wrong, in "promos" and "teases." I was frustrated that news is defined as being whatever is urgent rather than what is "important."

"Breaking news" becomes the most important news, even if there's no news to report.

I cringed that every story had to be "shocking" or some kind of superlative, even if it wasn't: "a parent's worst nightmare," "a story you must see," "an exclusive interview" (with someone who is constantly being interviewed).

I once suggested to a news manager that we program the Alt-H keys on the computer keyboard to automatically insert hype into every story.

Television, in particular, is increasingly in the business of marketing itself, not the news. The primary criterion is that a story be promotable. In fact, story promos usually get more air time than the stories themselves. Putting out a competent, useful news product isn't the goal. The only goal is to have the largest viewer- or readership.

Sadly, criticisms I'd dismissed for years—"You're only doing this to sell more newspapers or get higher ratings"—are now coming true.

For example, I was heartened one morning a while back to hear a group of news managers discuss doing a story about the local fallout of the Asian economic crisis. The electronics industry, in particular, could be affected, leading to lost jobs and distressed families. It was an important local story.

But the discussion fell silent when one producer asked, "How do we avoid the

glaze factor?" Those are the code words for "It's boring." Everyone looked at each other and shrugged.

"Well, how about the double murder?" someone else offered.

They were off and running.

I've always known that news is a business.

You have to have readers and viewers to be able to attract advertisers who pay the bills, including your salary. But we tried to separate ourselves by saying that if we do good journalism, readers and viewers and therefore advertisers will come.

That is no longer true. Now, journalists are forced to pander to the same gawker reflex that causes traffic to snarl near car wrecks. We want viewers and readers to slow down to see us, so we give them a whole bunch of car wrecks and other forms of mayhem.

Now, stories are "tested" with random phone calls asking people if they'd prefer a story about "Deadly Germs on Your Child's Playground Equipment" to "Welfare Policies and the Poor." Public policy always loses in that kind of analysis.

It isn't just television. Newspapers, radio and web-based news services are suffering from many of the same pressures cited in the Pew Center study. Newspapers have pared their staffs or shifted them away from fulfilling a socially critical but apparently financially unprofitable role of public watchdog.

Not too many years ago, there were full-time reporters from at least three different news organizations covering the Maricopa County courts, Phoenix City Hall and the city's police department. Today, only two of those beats have full-time print reporters. In their place is a cadre of government-paid information officers. News organizations simply publish or air what they're told by the agencies.

As the pressures increase, journalists, both individually and organizationally, have little time to think, let alone be thoughtful.

Get on the air or in print. Move on to the next story.

I'm not suggesting that all news shows become the Bloomberg Report or be like demolition derby. Somewhere, there's a balance. Do the crime/accident story, but don't bludgeon it with "team coverage" and reaction sound bites from people who always say they are shocked it happened in their quiet neighborhood.

Give the headlines so that viewers and readers have a sense of what's happening in their community, but devote time to the important topics.

"Important" is more difficult. It's hard to take pictures of it; it's harder to understand and then explain it. And it's hardest of all to make it compelling. But that's what professional journalists are supposed to be able to do. It won't happen unless media companies commit to it. Not abdicate it.

Robertson is a former city editor and investigations team leader for *The Arizona Republic* and investigative reporter for Channel 5 (KPHO) and Channel 12 (KPX) in Phoenix. He is now owner of Robertson Investigations and Consulting.

Ten years later, ergo rules issued—maybe

Few political footballs have been juggled aloft as long as the campaign to provide workplace protection from repetitive stress injuries. The Newspaper Guild took up the cause some 15 years ago because of the high incidence of carpal tunnel syndrome among its many keyboard users, but business lobbyists and their Congressional allies, chiefly Republicans, have persisted in claiming there is inadequate scientific proof that repetitive motion causes injury.

On Nov. 14, following more than a year of review, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration issued new ergonomics rules that are to take effect Jan. 16. Anti-rule lobbyists promptly announced they will go to court to block implementation of the rules, threatening to open another chapter in a decade-long saga. The history of such delays was summarized during an Oct. 31 debate by Rep. David Obey of Wisconsin:

Mr. Speaker, I am wearing this wrist band in solidarity with the over 300,000 workers who will suffer repetitive motion injuries, some of them career-ending, because of the gutlessness of this Congress in refusing, for over a 10-year period, to put some protection for those folks into the law.

Mr. Speaker, I have gone into plant after plant in my district and I have seen especially women at computer terminals, at shoe-stitching machines, wearing things like this or even worse.

Look at this picture and tell me what is different. What separates us as Members of Congress from this woman? What separates us is that when we have a repetitive motion

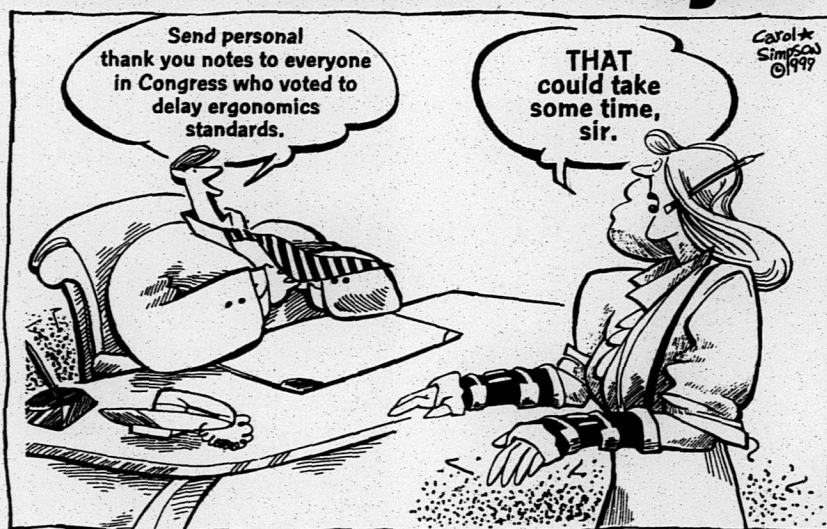
injury, like I had for several weeks last year when I was wearing one of these, we can stop doing what we were doing until we recover. People like this woman cannot. They have to keep going until they cannot go any more.

That is the difference. The only repetitive motion injury that most Members of Congress are likely to get is to their knees from the repetitive genuflecting to the big business lobbyists who persuaded the Republican leadership to blow up the agreement on the Labor, Health, and Education bill by denying some protection to people like this.

That is a fact. That is a fact. Mr. Speaker, I want to recite to my colleagues the history of the repetitive motion struggle that we have had. On June 29 of 1995, the House for the first time took action to prohibit OSHA from putting in place a repetitive motion injury rule that would protect workers like this. That was delay number one.

On July 27, 1995, the House Committee on Appropriations again reported language to do the same thing. When it was finally adopted, it again said that none of the funds in the bill would be used to enforce or implement an OSHA rule protecting workers like this from repetitive motion injury. That was delay number two.

Then, on July of 1996, the Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education again tried to delay action for another year. That time the House had guts enough to stand up and say no and they were defeated on the House floor. But they came back; and on July 25 of 1997, they again adopted new language which for another year delayed the implementation of the rule to protect workers like this. And



they won. And so, we had delay number three that delayed yet another year.

The only difference was that that time the House said it would be the last time. This is a copy of the front page of the committee report dated July 25, 1997, which outlines the fact that yet another year's delay was being undertaken to prevent these repetitive motion injuries. But it said "the committee will refrain from any further restrictions with regard to the development, promulgation, or issuance of an ergonomics standard following fiscal year 1998."

And you know what? For a year the Congress abided by that. It is true that the Congress did provide additional funding to do yet an additional study by the National Academy of Sciences of the issue. But at the same time that was done, the chairman

of the committee, Bob Livingston, our former colleague, in good faith signed a letter with me which indicated that even though that money was being provided that nonetheless "we understand that OSHA intends to issue a proposed rule on ergonomics late in the summer of 1999. We are writing to make clear by funding of the NAS study it is in no way our intent to block or delay issuance by OSHA of a proposed rule on ergonomics."

And yet this year, here is the roll call if you want to look at it, some of the same people who were here when the Congress made the agreement not to delay this any further voted once again to genuflect to the interests of big business and forget the interests of workers and they signed on to another year delay.

LOOKING AHEAD

Detroit contract OK'd, struggle goes inside



By Bernie Lunzer
Secretary-Treasurer

After five and a quarter years into the strike/lockout in Detroit, three Guild units have ratified new agreements with Knight Ridder and Gannett. I want to say I remain tremendously impressed with the members' reaction.

Their anger and rage toward truly nasty and greedy employers is still evident, but their choice was to live to fight another day. The choice was not easy, and all three contracts contain concessions—inevitably so, given the Republican-appointed appeals court that stole justice from us this summer. In spite of the fact that the National Labor Relations Board is supposed to interpret labor law and the courts are supposed to enforce those interpretations, this biased panel threw out our unfair labor practice charges on their ear.

So where to from here? As part of the settlement agreements, the Guild agreed that bonus payments beyond small wage increases would only come from circulation gains—at increments of 100,000. While such increases may be difficult to achieve, they point to the central reality of the strike: mutually assured destruction. While it's true that the companies won in court and were able to jam us legally at the bargaining table, both papers lost significant amounts of circulation: 768,913 on Sunday, down from 1.13 million, and 597,579 combined daily, down from 900,000.

Many have analyzed this strike's causes and logistics, but for me, it's clear we really weren't ready for a strike. Our local had been badly bruised by internal political infighting, which damaged the Guild's overall credibility. There was not enough com-

munication with the members in the first month of the strike, and little mobilization. The unions weren't able to gear up a strike paper for almost half a year. The overall issues of the strike were not clear at inception—some locals struck with as many as 100 issues on the table.

Observers had to sort through this morass, and the moral high ground was not easily found. The immediate goal of the unions was not perfectly clear, which helped create doubt in many. These factors added up to a situation that caused serious and early erosion of support for Guild strikers.

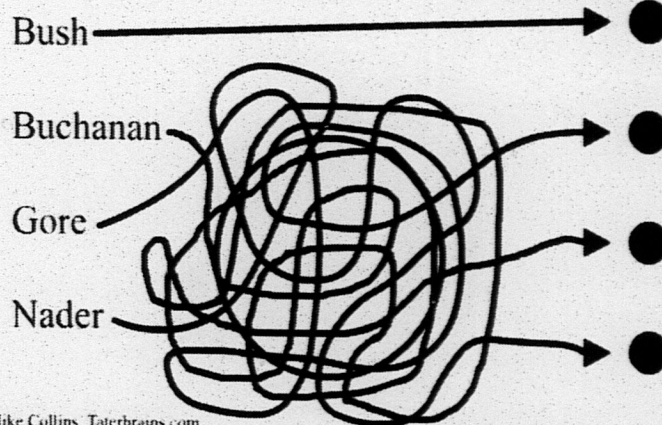
So far I've found fault with our side—but to really appreciate this story, you have to pay attention to the viciousness of the employers. Both papers began preparing for this strike a couple of years after a JOA was implemented in Detroit. We now know that the papers paid for riot training for suburban law enforcement several months prior to the strike. Hired thugs and video cameras were the order of the day at the start of the strike. Many believe that several of these thugs torched some trucks at one of the plants, then blamed the strikers. The companies never had any intention of making a reasonable agreement and were guided by ideology from the start.

The painful cost to those involved in the strike was substantial, including health problems and even death. It's still not clear that management even now wants the type of relationship that creates a fair and better workplace. Negotiators for both companies took every opportunity to gouge the unions right up to the final agreement.

While several members of the Guild at-large have said a strike should have been avoided, it was probably inevitable. The companies were pushing on every level for a walkout, and because of the history of solidarity in Detroit, this posture guaranteed that all locals would go at the same time.

Official Florida Presidential Ballot

Follow the arrow and punch the appropriate dot.



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Now the struggle goes back inside. No, we're not done with the fight. Yes, we've agreed with the employer to promote the papers and rebuild circulation. Many of the locked-out members voted for the contract because, as bad as it was, it kept Gannett from its ultimate goal of a union-free workplace. Will Detroit remain a two-newspaper town? Will the Guild and all the other unions regain the support of most of the workers in Detroit? The real work is just beginning. I'm certain we can survive. We are committed to provide the resources to rebuild our local and maintain our units in Detroit.

Our people in Detroit were an amazing study in resilience and courage. Many fine leaders emerged from this strike—people who showed tremendous courage and principle when under fire. They understand the most basic thing about bargaining: it's about power, and how you use it. There were points when the strike brought out the worst in all of us, with some bitter divisions developing at all levels of the union. But current signs are that those divisions are behind us. Locals across the country were also amazing in their support of Detroit—some locals gave till it hurt, and then gave some more.

The most difficult issue for me was that of the workers fired for strike-related activity and those who remain on the rehire list. Yes, they will continue to receive strike benefits until their issues are resolved, for better or worse. But because we were so badly beaten in the courts, we were unable to get them back to work. Their cases are going forward with the National Labor Relations Board. All of our fired strikers were fired for trumped-up and bogus reasons. They were good people, involved in basic, non-violent civil disobedience, and they were punished because of their strong principles. The two companies have promised to review each individual case after contracts are signed, but with no real commitment. Let's hope they understand the good faith that can be gained by rehiring these talented folks, who deserve everyone's consideration.

The lessons are multiple. Strikes are serious matters and we must always be fully prepared to prosecute a strike if we choose that weapon. Employers throw away their relationships with their employees at great risk of losing circulation at a critical time for print journalism. Yes, unions can be busted, but so too can newspapers.

LETTERS

To the Editor,

I think "objectivity" depends on what the subject is. Reporters should have opinions, and I don't mind if they express them. Trouble is, as with politics, debate stops at the water's edge.

To take just one flagrant example, which Andy Zipser wrote about (October GR, p. 6), media coverage of the war with Yugoslavia has not been good. Much if it has been a rehash of NATO press briefings. Multiply this by all the other global issues of the last 50 years and you get what IF Stone called "the kept press." Every day on the internet I find stories in the foreign press that don't get mentioned by our mainstream media. The mainstream is where government and corporate poopaganda flows deepest.

—Per Fagereng, SF Examiner retiree
Portland, Oregon

To the Editor,

For some 20 years, I had the pleasure of serving the International Executive Board of The Newspaper Guild as a vice president (at large). For those of you who may remember me, I was the only avowed Republican. I

chortled with glee when I was castigated, when derisive remarks were tossed my way and when 1,000% Democrats like Larry Hatfield, et al, verbally bashed me. But my head was unbowed. By the time you all read this, if the editor deigns to print it, the election for president will be over. No matter who wins, our union will survive. My very best to Linda and Bernie. While I never voted for either one of them, I am positive they are doing their very best to protect our members who really need them.

I retired from Standard & Poor's on November 3, 1995. My thanks to and love for the Guild is boundless. In my office at home I have several mementos of my days on the board and of my efforts on behalf of the employees of S&P in the bargaining unit. I pay dues each month to the NGNY because the Guild and S&P were good to me. Lois and I are enjoying retirement and our church and civic activities. I do not agree with the political thinking of either Larry Hatfield or Peter Szekely, but I certainly respect their opinions on the issue of endorsement by the Guild. I opposed the endorsement of McGovern, but I did not

hate President Perlik for it. I detested his ultra-liberal stance on a number of issues, but I respected his efforts for all members of the Guild. In fact, I still like him.

I also have a very fond regard for President Dale, despite his Democrat leanings. In politics, we call it a "high personal regard." On my car, I have a sticker. It says "Save America, Vote Republican."

—Dave Mulcahy

To the Editor,

O.K. Patton (September GR, p. 7) reminds me of several editors who grew up thinking the shenanigans of Pat O'Brien and Adolphe Menjou in "The Front Page" were prerequisites for running a real newspaper.

In those days, when 50-plus pounds of lead type were locked up in the chase ready for deadline, some clown would come charging into the composing room for the umpteenth time wanting to re-make. The pressmen, the mail room, the paper boys had to have that paper out on time, or else!

What else? The Greyhound that took the bulldog editions to the outer fringes of civilization. The paper boys who had to deliver

the papers before going to school. The publisher who was monumentally annoyed when his paper didn't arrive before he had his morning coffee and eggs.

It's easy now, huh? Just hit a few buttons on the computer keyboard—and hope the gremlins and viruses haven't multiplied in the last few minutes. Believe me, I miss the excitement and even the editors, two of whom I can recall off-hand: Cy Donaldson and Bob Reyes of Hayward, Cal.

—Bertt Lependorf, ITU retiree
San Lorenzo, Cal.

To the Editor,

I got a kick out of the exchange of letters in the September Reporter. Most editors and reporters appreciated whatever help we operators could give. In my files I treasure a letter from Al Sicherman, Strib columnist, who mentions help he received from Ken Redding, one of the stalwarts in Typo No. 42. Operators wanted to publish a quality newspaper as much as anyone, and we were in a unique position to review every take.

—Fran Johnston, ITU retiree
Minneapolis

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: Dec. 8.) Letters may be e-mailed to the editor at azipser@cwa-union.org.

Globalization: less growth, not more

By Andy Zipser
Editor, The Guild Reporter

It was just one year ago that an unusual alliance of union members, environmentalists and political activists—including several TNG-CWA contingents—paralyzed the World Trade Organization by funneling approximately 50,000 demonstrators into the streets of Seattle. In the months since, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund also have been targeted by protesters, most notably in Washington, D.C. and Prague, over their economic policies.

Woven throughout these and other demonstrations (including those at both major party conventions) has been a belief that the world's rule-making organizations are promoting economic globalization by sacrificing labor and the environment. Paradoxically, however, most protesters have been reluctant to challenge the merits of economic globalization itself, apparently in the belief that glob-

alization is both inevitable and desirable—a sentiment captured in the phrase "Fair Trade, not Free Trade." The challenge, in this view, is to strike a balance: to ensure that economic growth alleviates poverty in addition to enriching the capitalist class, and that it does so without sacrificing the environment.

But what if the initial premise is unfounded? What if globalization actually chokes off economic growth, rather than promoting it?

That, in essence, is the conclusion reached by the Washington-based Center for Economic and Policy Research. Comparing economic data for the past two decades with the years 1960-1980, the center found that economic growth slowed dramatically—especially in the least-developed countries—even as international trade and investment accelerated. Specifically:

- Of 116 countries for which data are available over the four-decade span, per capita growth fell from 83% in the years 1960-1980

to 33% in the years 1980-2000.

- In 89 countries, the per capita rate of growth fell by at least five percentage points in the second 20-year period. Only 14 countries saw their per capita growth rate increase by that much.

- In Latin America, per capita GDP grew by 75% from 1960-1980, but rose only 6% from 1980-1998; in sub-Saharan Africa, per capita GDP grew 36% in the first two-decade period but fell 15% in the second.

Why this should have happened is the result of at least two factors: the depressing effect of trade on wages, and the rules that global institutions like the WTO, IMF and World Bank write to regulate that trade.

Trade's dampening effect on wages in the U.S. and other industrialized countries has been long recognized and can be significant: the Institute for International Economics, for example, estimates a 39% increase in wage inequality from 1973-1993 as a result of increased trade—and that's without accounting for the extent to which labor's bargaining leverage has been undermined by threats of plant relocation and

electronically-enabled outsourcing of white-collar work.

But at least there was supposed to be a trade-off for such sacrifices: thanks to increased investment and manufacturing overseas, living standards in other parts of the world would rise. Unfortunately, as the two charts on this page attest, that hasn't been the case.

Although there are many ways of measuring economic vitality other than growth in output per person, such growth is a prerequisite for improved standards of living. But IMF and World Bank policies emphasize financial stability, not economic growth, such as eliminating a current account deficit—typically accomplished by shrinking the domestic economy. As a result, people in countries like Indonesia, Mexico, Brazil and Russia can spend a decade trying to regain a lost standard of living after the IMF and World Bank force their governments to accept tight monetary policies.

The chart above summarizes the effects of these policies on the developing world. Ironically, the biggest success story it shows is China (whose economic results

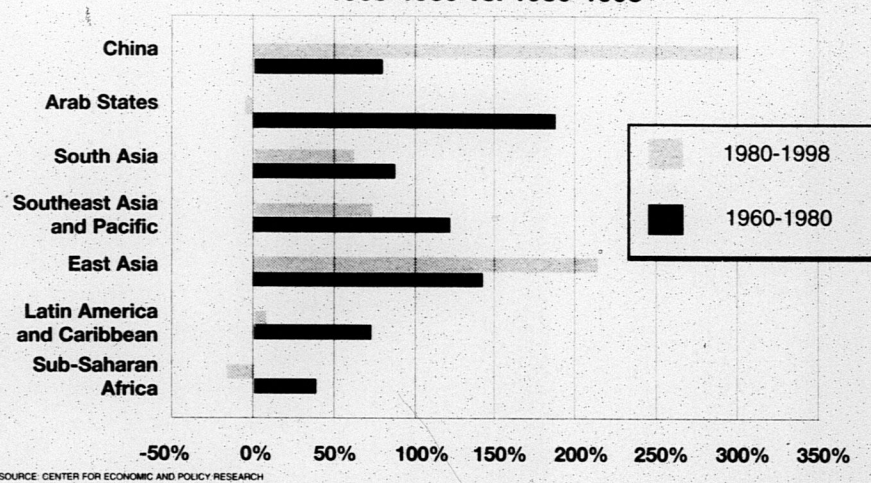
end up skewing the graph for East Asia; China has 83% of East Asia's population). While China's GDP has quadrupled over the past 20 years, the state maintains a non-convertible currency, controls its banking system and embraces a host of other major violations of IMF/World Bank prescriptions.

Moreover, as the chart at left illustrates, IMF policies in the former Soviet Union and Iron Curtain satellites have been nearly as disastrous: after eight years of "transitioning" to a market economy, only Poland had caught up to its pre-transition GDP. Russia, meanwhile, has suffered a GDP decline of more than 50%, a loss "rarely seen in the absence of war or major natural disaster," the center's report observes.

"In short," the study's authors conclude, "there is no region in the world that the Bank or Fund can point to as having succeeded through adopting the policies that they promote—or, in many cases, impose—on borrowing countries."

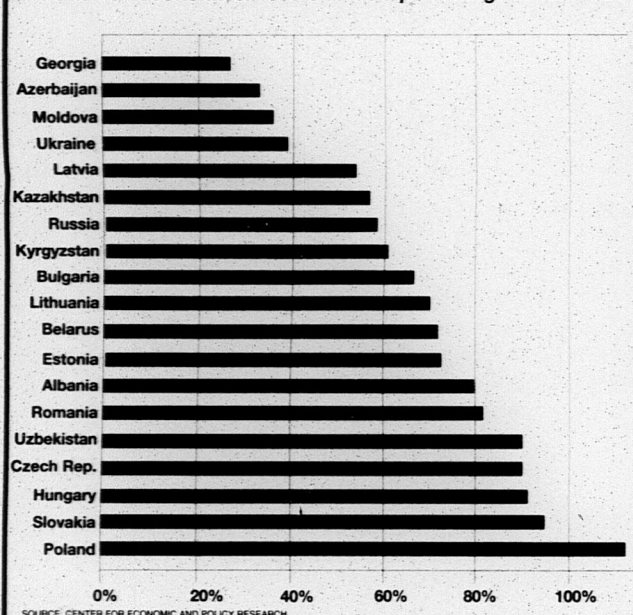
Such counter-intuitive results have received scant coverage in the media, however, which have focused more on the protesters than on the issues.

Change in per capita income in the developing world:
1960-1980 vs. 1980-1998



SOURCE: CENTER FOR ECONOMIC AND POLICY RESEARCH

Transition economies: 1997 GDP as a percentage of 1989 GDP



SOURCE: CENTER FOR ECONOMIC AND POLICY RESEARCH

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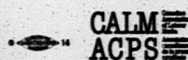
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DAYBOOK

AFL-CIO Exec. Council,
Nov. 28, Washington, D.C.

TNG Sector Exec. Council,
Dec. 2-4, Orlando, FL

Heywood Broun Awards
deadline, Jan. 26

AFL-CIO Exec. Council,
Feb. 13-15, Los Angeles

New Local Officers Seminar,
Feb. 16-19, Meany Center

New England Dist. Council,
Feb. 24-25, Fall River, MA

CWA Legislative-Political
Conference, April 22-25,
Washington, D.C.

Heywood Broun Luncheon,
April 24, Nat'l Press Club

CWA National Women's
Conference, May 10-13,
Las Vegas

FROM THE MORGUE

Fifty years ago this month:

Pittsburgh's three dailies resume publication after a 47-day shut-down, as 12 unions—including the Pittsburgh Newspaper Guild—agree on return-to-work pacts following resolution of a wage dispute with the mailers. . . . As a strike against the Arkansas Gazette by circulation and editorial department employees enters its tenth month, several managers are demoted or leave. . . . Three weeks of federal conciliation meetings result in a new Guild contract for 1,500 AP employees, barely averting a nationwide strike; among the major gains is arbitration of grievances.

Twenty-five years ago this month:

Ten minutes ahead of a strike deadline, the Philadelphia Inquirer and the Daily News agree to 15-month contracts that convert company pension contributions to a straight 6% of payroll. The New York Times and the New York Daily News, meanwhile, refuse to engage in such brinksmanship: they settle on new contracts hours before their strike deadlines. . . . With a multi-union strike against the Washington Post intensifying and uncertainty surrounding talks elsewhere, TNG returns to full, regular dues collection to bolster its defense fund.

Ten years ago this month:

A two-week strike by Southern Ontario Guild members at the London Free Press results in a first-ever contract. . . . Bargainers for 10 unions representing 4,500 employees at the San Francisco Examiner and Herald and at the San Jose Mercury News avert a strike at the 11th hour with new contract settlements. . . . Strike at the New York Daily News intensifies.