

THE GUILD Reporter

November 15, 2002

A Publication of The Newspaper Guild and The Communications Workers of America • Volume 69, Number 11

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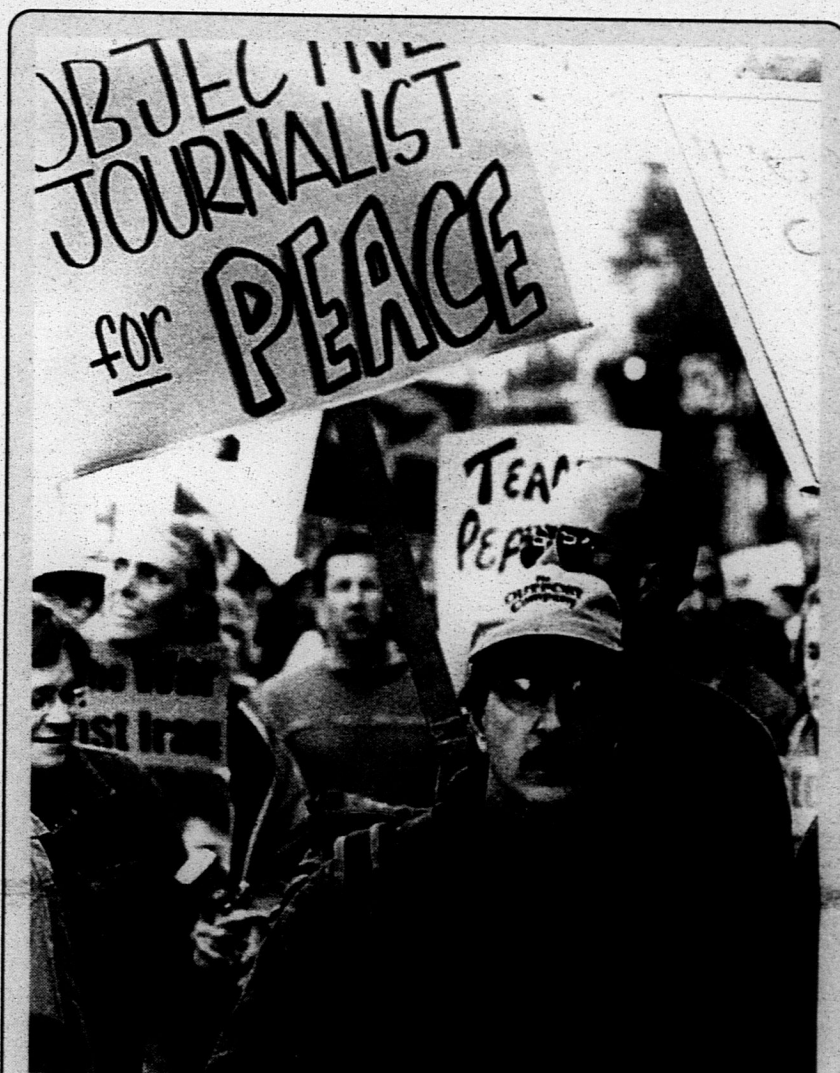
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Meanwhile, the agreement with The Washington Post is the third consecutive contract without a retroactive raise provision. Instead, the three-year deal includes a \$1,350 lump-sum payment in the first year for full-time employees and four subsequent raises, starting next July, averaging \$10.50 a week. The contract covers approximately 1,500 newsroom, circulation, advertising and customer service employees.

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DAVID BACON/NORTHERN CALIFORNIA MEDIA GUILD

Pressing the point

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DIARY OF A STRIKER

Riding the picket-line roller coaster

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We have just completed our first full week of being on strike, and I have to say it is exhilarating.

The exhilaration comes mainly from the camaraderie and the community support. This is a small town, and almost all the employees were born and raised here (or perhaps raised their children here) and everyone knows us.

We have been very forthcoming (translation: blabby) with the details of how management was so insulting in negotiations, like the time the man from head office arrived in his Jaguar and asked if we could hurry things along because he was about to leave for a two-week trip to Paris. We were asking for a decent wage increase which, even if we got it, would still leave us as one of the lowest-

paid newspaper staffs in Canada.

On the very last day, the day we voted whether or not to strike, management showed up two hours late. In the last half-hour, they raised their offer to about half of what we were asking. I voted to accept just because that is about what we would have expected from these cheapskates, and besides, life is hard enough without being on strike. But our union voted 70% to strike. And I'm behind them 100%, because I know where they're coming from.

Our union is part of the Communications Workers of America, which is quite powerful. They are supporting us with strike

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picketing. Cars honk their support, bicycle riders ding their bells in support, people give us cash for our strike fund or bring us treats. One lawyer presented us with a big box of expensive hand-made chocolates. A pizza place surprised us one day by bringing us lunch.

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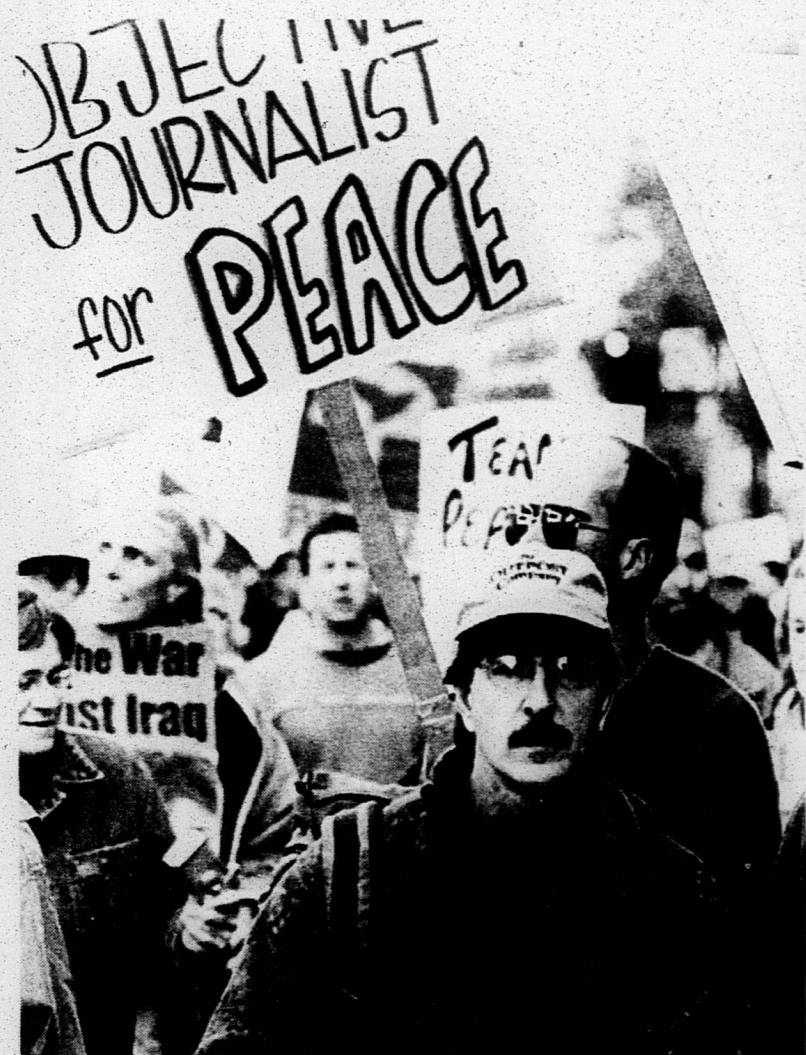
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Gildersleeve retires, staff changes follow

By Linda Cearley
TNG Staff Representative

Larkie Gildersleeve has retired as Director of Research, Information and Technology for The Newspaper Guild-CWA. Maybe it's a good thing the position will be turned into a field rep's job, because Larkie would be a hard act to follow.

Although many Guild members never worked with her directly, Larkie did much for all of us, particularly with her work on ergonomics. Long before terms like repetitive stress incident and carpal tunnel syndrome became known, Larkie was working on solutions to the problems caused by poor ergonomics in the workplace.

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Larkie also was active in the coalition that helped push ergonomics standards into law in the city of San Francisco. Although that law subsequently was overturned by a court, it helped focus national attention on workplace injuries. And Larkie continued her work when she joined the Guild's staff at the end of 1995, as she provided the latest ergonomics information and suggestions for contract improvements to staff and locals.

But while I always think of ergonomics first when I think of Larkie, her contributions to TNG certainly went far beyond that.

Larkie came to the Guild after an already distinguished career. She was widowed young and her teaching career helped her make a good life for her young daughters, Anna and Cicilie.

She became active in union work through the American Federation of Teachers, for whom she worked as an organizer, then moved on in the mid-'Eighties to what was known as the Central California Newspaper Guild.

TNG-CWA is shifting jobs and responsibilities at headquarters and in the field following Larkie Gildersleeve's retirement, with CWA's Research Department agreeing to undertake Guild-related research. Locals needing research assistance should contact Bernie Lunzer at 202-434-7175.

This change is designed to shift resources from headquarters into the field, where staff can work more directly with locals. Marian V. Needham, currently director of contract administration, will transfer to a field staff representative's job in western New York beginning in mid-January. She will work with TNG locals in that vicinity and other East Coast locations, as well assist when needed in Canada. She also will be responsible for further integrating activities of TNG locals with other locals and resources in CWA's District 1.

Needham's job in contract administration will be posted as required by TNG's contract with its staff union. TNG Coordinator Kathy Mulvey Brennan, who had many years of experience handling grievances and arbitrations for another union before she joined TNG-CWA in 1996, is under serious consideration for the position.



Larkie Gildersleeve

When that local merged with San Francisco-Oakland to become the Northern California Newspaper Guild, Larkie merged, too—and continued not only to organize and bargain, but also to serve as a mentor to me and many other activists.

Her major goal all this time was to build consensus.

Yes, she could get as angry as any of us—but, better than most, she could use that anger to continue working for a solution, be it in a grievance or at the bargaining

table. And she played the same role at TNG, where she worked both with locals and with the staff union, as our shop steward. Larkie always has had the ability to look at both sides of a dispute and to find a middle ground that makes sense to all involved.

Unofficially, Larkie was the one person others could turn to for a shoulder to cry on or an ear to hear their frustrations and problems—not something that was in her job description, but one of her most valuable contributions to friends and colleagues.

Although much of Larkie's work of providing information was behind the scenes—usually on an "I need it yesterday" basis—she played a central role in shaping many of our policies because she could find the relevant information and then show all of us how we could use that information for the betterment of Guild members.

Now she's getting time off in Knoxville, Tennessee, where daughter Anna's family lives and where she can enjoy her grandchildren, reading and opera. She's earned it.

Another candidate for longevity prize

By Liz Ciancone
Indianapolis Guild

Some months ago, The Guild Reporter announced it was searching for the oldest active TNG-CWA member. I suspect Frances E. Hughes ("Tankie") may qualify.

Tankie celebrated her 95th birthday on May 20, 2002, and was still writing and publishing until about a year ago. She joined the staff of the Terre Haute Star in 1930 as women's editor and served in that capacity until her retirement at age 65 in May of 1972.

She was a founding member of the Guild local at the Star (now the Tribune-Star) in 1943 and served two years as the second president of that local after taking exception to the first contract negotiated by the local, which paid men \$10 more per week than women. She also was instrumental in getting a pension program established for

Guild members, but the contract required that members forego a salary increase for three consecutive years to establish the fund. Strictly a company fund, its benefits are taxable: Tankie's pension pays \$152 monthly.

During her active years as a Guild member, Tankie was active in area and national Guild activities, attending meetings in Iowa, Ohio, Indianapolis and Chicago. Bill Blatz was a special friend and mentor.

Since her retirement, she has written a history of the Terre Haute First National Bank and of the Terre Haute Day Nursery, and has published articles about early Terre Haute in "Traces," a publication of the Indiana Historical Society. She also has sold features to the Louisville Courier Journal.

More recently, she presented an unpublished, full-length biography of miniature-portrait artist Amalia Kussner to the library at St. Mary-of-the-Woods College.

In brief...



New England's power brokers

U.S. Rep. Patrick Kennedy (D-RI) and his father, U.S. Sen. Ted Kennedy (D-MA), get a photo op earlier this year with Tim Schick, battle-scarred administrative officer of the Providence Guild. Schick recently was designated by the Providence Phoenix, an alternative weekly, as one of Rhode Island's 256 most influential people. His claim to fame? "Taking on the powers that be at Belo," according to the mag. More or less coincidentally, the Guild voted overwhelmingly to re-up Schick's contract for another five-year term.

Philly Guild saves 10 part-timers...

Following months of negotiations, information picketing and street protests, the Philadelphia Guild obtained an agreement rescinding the layoffs of 10 part-time editorial assistants at the Philadelphia Inquirer. The agreement also protects jobs in advertising that were threatened by computerization, but allows management to shift some large accounts from salaried to commissioned sales staff—a concession significant enough to provoke sizeable opposition to the deal. The final ratification vote was 304 to 188.

... and wins big on docked pay

The Philadelphia Inquirer owes its commissioned sales staff as much as half-a-million dollars—by company estimates—in pay and pension plan contributions, thanks to an arbitration decision received Oct. 29. The ruling follows a unilateral company decision, effective January, 2001, to withhold a portion of earned commissions from sales reps who failed to meet certain quotas—a decision, the arbitrator noted, that was tantamount to using docked pay as a disciplinary tool. And gee—that's not legal.

AP photographer ordered reinstated

An Associated Press photographer who electronically changed a single credit card digit in a photograph should be reinstated, according to an arbitrator. Mark Foley, a 32-year-veteran and member of the News Media Guild, changed the number to protect his subject—shot for a story on credit card fraud—but was fired by AP for violating its "zero-tolerance" darkroom policy that prohibits altering images. The arbitrator ruled the punishment was excessive.

More newsroom cuts announced

As financial and high tech advertising continues its slump, publications especially dependent on those dollars are again trimming staff. BusinessWeek has laid off 21 employees; Forbes, according to The (NY) Daily News, jettisoned 25; and Reuters employees braced themselves for an unspecified number of cuts. Dow Jones, meanwhile, announced 230 layoffs—including at least 18 employees represented by IAPE/CWA Local 1096—and chairman Peter Kann said non-union employees won't get a raise next year. As for IAPE members, who will be negotiating a new contract, "our view is that these negotiations should result in a similar salary freeze," Kann added. The job cuts included 31 positions in the Wall Street Journal's newsroom.

ProJo back at the table...

Following repeated courtroom losses to the Providence Guild, management at the Providence Journal has decided to renew contract talks: the two sides met in off-the-record talks Oct. 28, in their first meeting since February. The last Guild contract at the paper ended in early 2000.

... but still wary of contrary views

Op-ed pages are supposed to promote dissent, but there's a limit—as Charles McCorkle Hauser, former executive editor of the Providence Journal, discovered when he wrote a piece on "the ethics of information." The column, lamenting how newsrooms are being "starved by corporations focusing on the bottom line," was spiked by publisher Howard Sutton after getting the go-ahead from the editorial page editor.

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Higher dividends—how? That's easy: wage freeze

When Knight Ridder's board of directors announced, Oct. 22, that it was increasing dividends by 2 cents a share, a logical question would have been to ask how the company could afford such largesse. Third-quarter earnings were flat compared to the same quarter in 2001. Advertising revenue is still down for the year. Where was the money to come from?

Silly question, of course. Just eight days later, management at the Pioneer Press presented its economic package in contract negotiations that started months earlier. The package includes a wage freeze until 2006 for most Guild-represented employees—and three raises of 1% each for the lucky few—and no increase in pension contributions. But the real kicker is a proposed shifting of health care premiums that would double employee costs.

While Knight Ridder currently pays 80% of the premium and employees cover the remaining 20%, the Pioneer Press is proposing that the company lower its share to 78% for single employees and 70% for employees with one dependent or family coverage. Company contributions for part-timers would be 43% for singles and 35% for family coverage.

The proposal stunned the bargaining committee, said Mike Sweeney, executive officer of the Minnesota Guild, with many committee members calling it an anti-family measure. When combined with the

wage freeze "they're asking us to pay to continue working here," one complained.

Other Knight Ridder papers are following suit. TNG-CWA rep Darren Carroll says he's heard from Guild locals at several of the chain's newspapers of similar cost-shifting efforts. "The effect of the increase for those in the plan will be intensified by premium costs that likely will increase by more than 20 percent next year," he added.

As made clear by Jill Taylor, vice president of employee relations at the Pioneer Press, the company's proposals are not driven by economic necessity. "We are not claiming poverty," she told Sweeney. "But the fact we are making budget does not mean we are a successful company." Also factored into the equation, she explained, are the company's shareholders and the Wall Street analysts who follow its stock.

Ergo, the 8% dividend increase.

Meanwhile, management also made clear it's in no rush to actually reach an agreement. The Pioneer Press initially tried to cancel the Oct. 30 bargaining session, claiming it wasn't ready to respond to the Guild's Oct. 16 proposals, but capitulated when Guild representatives said they would be at the table in any case. But the Press also said it is following a "go slow" strategy because of the uncertain economy.

The Guild has responded with a "Contract Now" campaign, but the next session was set for Nov. 20.

Pushing back in Monterey

In the five years since it took over the Monterey Herald, Knight Ridder repeatedly has refused to agree to contractual language that would permit discipline for just cause. And in the past two years it has fired at least 20 Guild members as casually as corporate officers toss napkins into a trash can.

Now there's a chance Herald employees will win some measure of due process, following three days of hearings before an administrative law judge. Argued by the National Labor Relations Board, the case hinges on the question of whether Knight Ridder has a legal obligation, as a successor employer and in the absence of a contract, to propose and bargain discipline before it is issued.

The San Jose Newspaper Guild has tried on numerous occasions to have the Herald discuss discipline before imposing it, but management has said it will discuss firings only after the fact.

Several other issues that were to be heard Nov. 4 were settled separately, with the Herald agreeing to post a notice specifying labor law violations it would not commit in the future. These include bypassing the union in negotiations over buyouts and early retirements; refusing to provide information to which the Guild is lawfully entitled; and changing schedules, such as the Saturday work rotation in the newsroom, without negotiating with the Guild.

On a related note, the Guild

last month told management its continued failure to present a wage proposal violates the National Labor Relations Act, prompting a promise that such a proposal would be forthcoming at the next bargaining session.

That session was scheduled for Nov. 19, after The Guild Reporter went to press.

FCC yields—grudgingly—to requests for more time

Responding to requests from half-a-dozen groups—including TNG-CWA—for more time in which to analyze proposed rule changes for media ownership, the Federal Communications Commission pushed back the deadline for comments to Jan. 2. The 30-day extension, spanning the holiday season, drew a protesting press release from Commissioner Michael Copps, who said he was "disappointed and alarmed" by the commission's refusal to provide adequate time for review.

In play are half-a-dozen rules limiting concentration of media ownership, including one that bars cross-ownership of television stations and newspapers in the same market. FCC Chairman Michael Powell and industry lobbyists like the Newspaper Association of America have argued that the rules are antiquated and no longer needed in a world of multiple media outlets; the Guild and others respond that increased ownership consolidation of those outlets is limiting the diversity of voices vital to a democracy.

The FCC is expected to base much any rule changes on 12 studies it commissioned and made public in early October (see the Oct. 18 Guild Reporter for details). But the data used in the studies were withheld from the public until Nov. 5, when some were released—after the initial 60-day review period was half over. Even then, the release was only to "authorized representatives" of reviewing parties, not to the public at large, and only after signing of non-disclosure agreements.

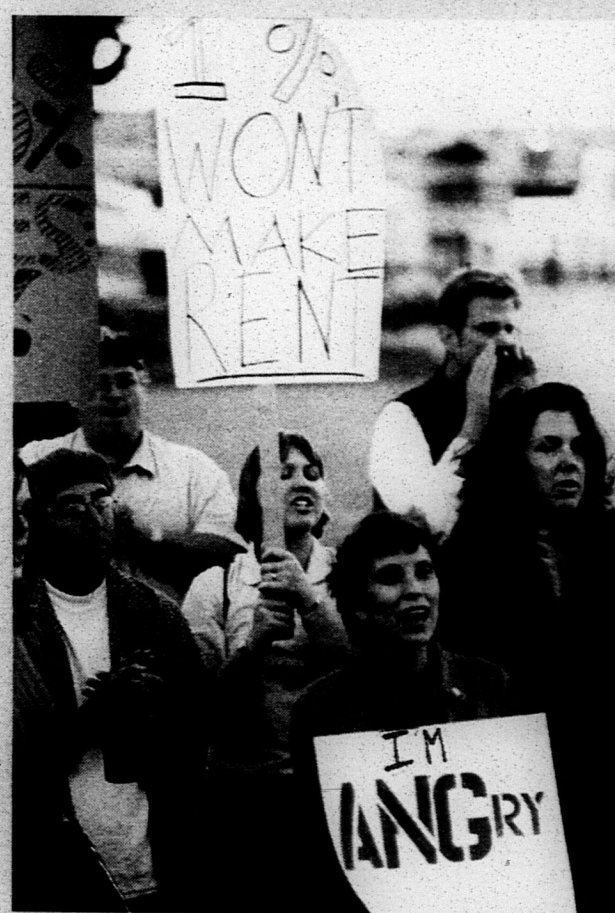
"At stake in this proceeding are our core values of localism, diversity, competition, and maintaining the multiplicity of voices and choices that undergird our marketplace of ideas and sustain American democracy," Copps argued. "With such important values at stake, we

ought to give parties the time to provide detailed data, granular evidence and studied analysis. I am disappointed in the extreme and alarmed at the prospect of forging ahead to dismantle the limits and caps before we fully understand the effects of such action."

Of the six petitions for a deadline extension, five sought an additional 60 days and one an additional 90 days. Media General and Tribune Co., meanwhile, filed comments arguing against any extension, especially on the newspaper-broadcast cross-ownership rule. In granting its 30-day extension, the FCC noted it was "cognizant of concerns, such as those expressed by Media General, that we do not unduly delay the proceeding."

The impending rule changes were among several threats to free expression and inquiry cited by speakers at a forum in late October hosted by the Professional Rights and Opportunities (PRO) Network. Launched by the combined efforts of TNG-CWA, the American Federation of Teachers and the Dept. for Professional Employees of the AFL-CIO, PRO is to release periodic reports, hold forums, propose model contract language and support legislative and regulatory reforms affecting professional employees.

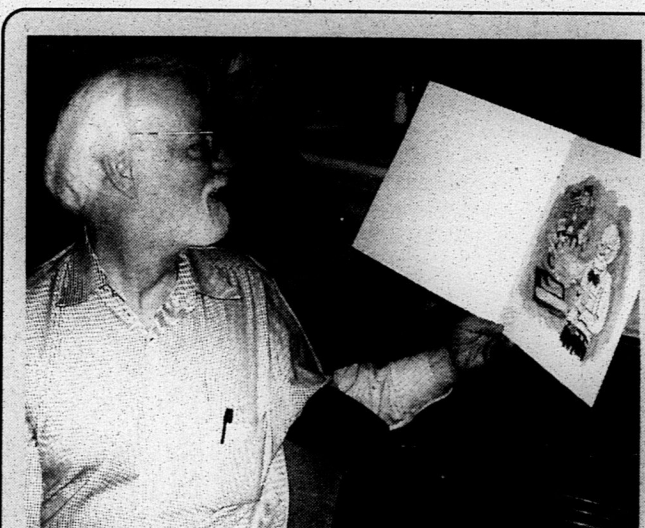
Much of the October forum, "The Corporate State (of Mind) and Free Expression," focused on increased media consolidation. "There's a battle going on over who will control our democracy in the 21st century," summarized Jeff Chester, executive director of the Center for Digital Democracy. "And I dare say there's very few people who know it's going on" because, in part, the media "fail to report on their own political activity." Chester's comments, as well as other participants', may be heard in streaming audio on TNG's web site, www.newsguild.org.



DAVID BACONNO, CALIFORNIA MEDIA WORKERS

hANGing in there

Turning up the heat after working more than a year without a contract, Guild-represented employees of the Alameda Newspaper Group (ANG) join a "Fight Corporate Greed" rally in Oakland that included various other unions and social activists—as well as TNG-CWA President Linda Foley. Separately, in a move that reportedly startled management, the Northern California Media Workers Guild obtained a unanimously approved resolution from the Oakland City Council that urges ANG management to bargain, "without delay, a new contract that is fair and equitable to its editorial employees."



LUTHER JACKSON/SAN JOSE GUILD

Here's lookin' at you

Russ Cain admires a card by Mercury News artist Lars Bourne, presented to him at the Western District Council meeting Oct. 26-27 in Long Beach. Cain stepped down earlier this year after many years as WDC president and as a member of the TNG sector executive council.

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TNG-CWA is shifting jobs and responsibilities at headquarters and in the field following Larkie Gildersleeve's retirement, with CWA's Research Department agreeing to undertake Guild-related research. Locals needing research assistance should contact Bernie Lunzer at 202-434-7175.

This change is designed to shift resources from headquarters into the field, where staff can work more directly with locals. Marian V. Needham, currently director of contract administration, will transfer to a field staff representative's job in western New York beginning in mid-January. She will work with TNG locals in that vicinity and other East Coast locations, as well assist when needed in Canada. She also will be responsible for further integrating activities of TNG locals with other locals and resources in CWA's District 1.

Needham's job in contract administration will be posted as required by TNG's contract with its staff union. TNG Coordinator Kathy Mulvey Brennan, who had many years of experience handling grievances and arbitrations for another union before she joined TNG-CWA in 1996, is under serious consideration for the position.



Larkie Gildersleeve

When that local merged with San Francisco-Oakland to become the Northern California Newspaper Guild, Larkie merged, too—and continued not only to organize and bargain, but also to serve as a mentor to me and many other activists.

Her major goal all this time was to build consensus.

Yes, she could get as angry as any of us—but, better than most, she could use that anger to continue working for a solution, be it in a grievance or at the bargaining

table. And she played the same role at TNG, where she worked both with locals and with the staff union, as our shop steward. Larkie always has had the ability to look at both sides of a dispute and to find a middle ground that makes sense to all involved.

Unofficially, Larkie was the one person others could turn to for a shoulder to cry on or an ear to hear their frustrations and problems—not something that was in her job description, but one of her most valuable contributions to friends and colleagues.

Although much of Larkie's work of providing information was behind the scenes—usually on an "I need it yesterday" basis—she played a central role in shaping many of our policies because she could find the relevant information and then show all of us how we could use that information for the betterment of Guild members.

Now she's getting time off in Knoxville, Tennessee, where daughter Anna's family lives and where she can enjoy her grandchildren, reading and opera. She's earned it.

Another candidate for longevity prize

By Liz Ciancone
Indianapolis Guild

Some months ago, The Guild Reporter announced it was searching for the oldest active TNG-CWA member. I suspect Frances E. Hughes ("Tankie") may qualify.

Tankie celebrated her 95th birthday on May 20, 2002, and was still writing and publishing until about a year ago. She joined the staff of the Terre Haute Star in 1930 as women's editor and served in that capacity until her retirement at age 65 in May of 1972.

She was a founding member of the Guild local at the Star (now the Tribune-Star) in 1943 and served two years as the second president of that local after taking exception to the first contract negotiated by the local, which paid men \$10 more per week than women. She also was instrumental in getting a pension program established for

Guild members, but the contract required that members forego a salary increase for three consecutive years to establish the fund. Strictly a company fund, its benefits are taxable: Tankie's pension pays \$152 monthly.

During her active years as a Guild member, Tankie was active in area and national Guild activities, attending meetings in Iowa, Ohio, Indianapolis and Chicago. Bill Blatz was a special friend and mentor.

Since her retirement, she has written a history of the Terre Haute First National Bank and of the Terre Haute Day Nursery, and has published articles about early Terre Haute in "Traces," a publication of the Indiana Historical Society. She also has sold features to the Louisville Courier Journal.

More recently, she presented an unpublished, full-length biography of miniature-portrait artist Amalia Kussner to the library at St. Mary-of-the-Woods College.

In brief...



New England's power brokers

U.S. Rep. Patrick Kennedy (D-RI) and his father, U.S. Sen. Ted Kennedy (D-MA), get a photo op earlier this year with Tim Schick, battled-scarred administrative officer of the Providence Guild. Schick recently was designated by the Providence Phoenix, an alternative weekly, as one of Rhode Island's 256 most influential people. His claim to fame? "Taking on the powers that be at Belo," according to the mag. More or less coincidentally, the Guild voted overwhelmingly to re-up Schick's contract for another five-year term.

Philly Guild saves 10 part-timers...

Following months of negotiations, information picketing and street protests, the Philadelphia Guild obtained an agreement rescinding the layoffs of 10 part-time editorial assistants at the Philadelphia Inquirer. The agreement also protects jobs in advertising that were threatened by computerization, but allows management to shift some large accounts from salaried to commissioned sales staff—a concession significant enough to provoke sizeable opposition to the deal. The final ratification vote was 304 to 188.

... and wins big on docked pay

The Philadelphia Inquirer owes its commissioned sales staff as much as half-a-million dollars—by company estimates—in pay and pension plan contributions, thanks to an arbitration decision received Oct. 29. The ruling follows a unilateral company decision, effective January, 2001, to withhold a portion of earned commissions from sales reps who failed to meet certain quotas—a decision, the arbitrator noted, that was tantamount to using docked pay as a disciplinary tool. And gee—that's not legal.

AP photographer ordered reinstated

An Associated Press photographer who electronically changed a single credit card digit in a photograph should be reinstated, according to an arbitrator. Mark Foley, a 32-year-veteran and member of the News Media Guild, changed the number to protect his subject—shot for a story on credit card fraud—but was fired by AP for violating its "zero-tolerance" darkroom policy that prohibits altering images. The arbitrator ruled the punishment was excessive.

More newsroom cuts announced

As financial and high tech advertising continues its slump, publications especially dependent on those dollars are again trimming staff. BusinessWeek has laid off 21 employees; Forbes, according to The (NY) Daily News, jettisoned 25; and Reuters employees braced themselves for an unspecified number of cuts. Dow Jones, meanwhile, announced 230 layoffs—including at least 18 employees represented by IAPE/CWA Local 1096—and chairman Peter Kann said non-union employees won't get a raise next year. As for IAPE members, who will be negotiating a new contract, "our view is that these negotiations should result in a similar salary freeze," Kann added. The job cuts included 31 positions in the Wall Street Journal's newsroom.

ProJo back at the table...

Following repeated courtroom losses to the Providence Guild, management at the Providence Journal has decided to renew contract talks: the two sides met in off-the-record talks Oct. 28, in their first meeting since February. The last Guild contract at the paper ended in early 2000.

... but still wary of contrary views

Op-ed pages are supposed to promote dissent, but there's a limit—as Charles McCorkle Hauser, former executive editor of the Providence Journal, discovered when he wrote a piece on "the ethics of information." The column, lamenting how newsrooms are being "starved by corporations focusing on the bottom line," was spiked by publisher Howard Sutton after getting the go-ahead from the editorial page editor.

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Higher dividends—how? That's easy: wage freeze

When Knight Ridder's board of directors announced, Oct. 22, that it was increasing dividends by 2 cents a share, a logical question would have been to ask how the company could afford such largesse. Third-quarter earnings were flat compared to the same quarter in 2001. Advertising revenue is still down for the year. Where was the money to come from?

Silly question, of course. Just eight days later, management at the Pioneer Press presented its economic package in contract negotiations that started months earlier. The package includes a wage freeze until 2006 for most Guild-represented employees—and three raises of 1% each for the lucky few—and no increase in pension contributions. But the real kicker is a proposed shifting of health care premiums that would double employee costs.

While Knight Ridder currently pays 80% of the premium and employees cover the remaining 20%, the Pioneer Press is proposing that the company lower its share to 78% for single employees and 70% for employees with one dependent or family coverage. Company contributions for part-timers would be 43% for singles and 35% for family coverage.

The proposal stunned the bargaining committee, said Mike Sweeney, executive officer of the Minnesota Guild, with many committee members calling it an anti-family measure. When combined with the

wage freeze "they're asking us to pay to continue working here," one complained.

Other Knight Ridder papers are following suit. TNG-CWA rep Darren Carroll says he's heard from Guild locals at several of the chain's newspapers of similar cost-shifting efforts. "The effect of the increase for those in the plan will be intensified by premium costs that likely will increase by more than 20 percent next year," he added.

As made clear by Jill Taylor, vice president of employee relations at the Pioneer Press, the company's proposals are not driven by economic necessity. "We are not claiming poverty," she told Sweeney. "But the fact we are making budget does not mean we are a successful company." Also factored into the equation, she explained, are the company's shareholders and the Wall Street analysts who follow its stock.

Ergo, the 8% dividend increase.

Meanwhile, management also made clear it's in no rush to actually reach an agreement. The Pioneer Press initially tried to cancel the Oct. 30 bargaining session, claiming it wasn't ready to respond to the Guild's Oct. 16 proposals, but capitulated when Guild representatives said they would be at the table in any case. But the Press also said it is following a "go slow" strategy because of the uncertain economy.

The Guild has responded with a "Contract Now" campaign, but the next session was set for Nov. 20.

Pushing back in Monterey

In the five years since it took over the Monterey Herald, Knight Ridder repeatedly has refused to agree to contractual language that would permit discipline for just cause. And in the past two years it has fired at least 20 Guild members as casually as corporate officers toss napkins into a trash can.

Now there's a chance. Herald employees will win some measure of due process, following three days of hearings before an administrative law judge. Argued by the National Labor Relations Board, the case hinges on the question of whether Knight Ridder has a legal obligation, as a successor employer and in the absence of a contract, to propose and bargain discipline before it is issued.

The San Jose Newspaper Guild has tried on numerous occasions to have the Herald discuss discipline before imposing it, but management has said it will discuss firings only after the fact.

Several other issues that were to be heard Nov. 4 were settled separately, with the Herald agreeing to post a notice specifying labor law violations it would not commit in the future. These include bypassing the union in negotiations over buyouts and early retirements; refusing to provide information to which the Guild is lawfully entitled; and changing schedules, such as the Saturday work rotation in the newsroom, without negotiating with the Guild.

On a related note, the Guild

last month told management its continued failure to present a wage proposal violates the National Labor Relations Act, prompting a promise that such a proposal would be forthcoming at the next bargaining session.

That session was scheduled for Nov. 19, after The Guild Reporter went to press.



DAVID BACON/NO. CALIFORNIA MEDIA WORKERS

hANGing in there

Turning up the heat after working more than a year without a contract, Guild-represented employees of the Alameda Newspaper Group (ANG) join a "Fight Corporate Greed" rally in Oakland that included various other unions and social activists—as well as TNG-CWA President Linda Foley. Separately, in a move that reportedly startled management, the Northern California Media Workers Guild obtained a unanimously approved resolution from the Oakland City Council that urges ANG management to bargain, "without delay, a new contract that is fair and equitable to its editorial employees."

FCC yields—grudgingly—to requests for more time

Responding to requests from half-a-dozen groups—including TNG-CWA—for more time in which to analyze proposed rule changes for media ownership, the Federal Communications Commission pushed back the deadline for comments to Jan. 2. The 30-day extension, spanning the holiday season, drew a protesting press release from Commissioner Michael Copps, who said he was "disappointed and alarmed" by the commission's refusal to provide adequate time for review.

In play are half-a-dozen rules limiting concentration of media ownership, including one that bars cross-ownership of television stations and newspapers in the same market. FCC Chairman Michael Powell and industry lobbyists like the Newspaper Association of America have argued that the rules are antiquated and no longer needed in a world of multiple media outlets; the Guild and others respond that increased ownership consolidation of those outlets is limiting the diversity of voices vital to a democracy.

The FCC is expected to base much any rule changes on 12 studies it commissioned and made public in early October (see the Oct. 18 Guild Reporter for details). But the data used in the studies were withheld from the public until Nov. 5, when some were released—after the initial 60-day review period was half over. Even then, the release was only to "authorized representatives" of reviewing parties, not to the public at large, and only after signing of non-disclosure agreements.

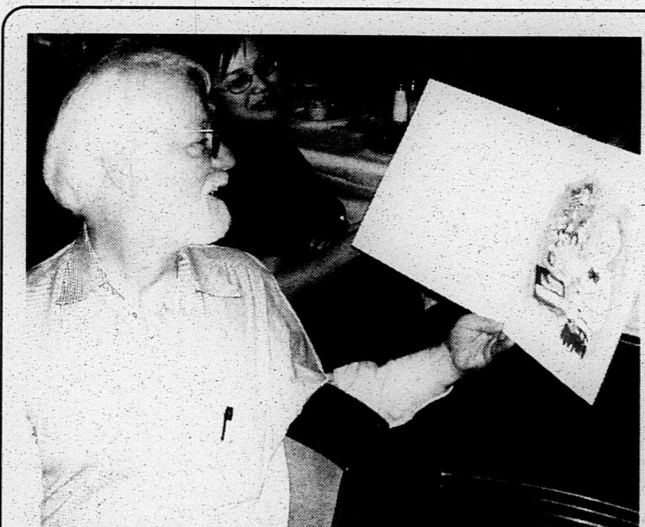
"At stake in this proceeding are our core values of localism, diversity, competition, and maintaining the multiplicity of voices and choices that undergird our marketplace of ideas and sustain American democracy," Copps argued. "With such important values at stake, we

ought to give parties the time to provide detailed data, granular evidence and studied analysis. I am disappointed in the extreme and alarmed at the prospect of forging ahead to dismantle the limits and caps before we fully understand the effects of such action."

Of the six petitions for a deadline extension, five sought an additional 60 days and one an additional 90 days. Media General and Tribune Co., meanwhile, filed comments arguing against any extension, especially on the newspaper-broadcast cross-ownership rule. In granting its 30-day extension, the FCC noted it was "cognizant of concerns, such as those expressed by Media General, that we do not unduly delay the proceeding."

The impending rule changes were among several threats to free expression and inquiry cited by speakers at a forum in late October hosted by the Professional Rights and Opportunities (PRO) Network. Launched by the combined efforts of TNG-CWA, the American Federation of Teachers and the Dept. for Professional Employees of the AFL-CIO, PRO is to release periodic reports, hold forums, propose model contract language and support legislative and regulatory reforms affecting professional employees.

Much of the October forum, "The Corporate State (of Mind) and Free Expression," focused on increased media consolidation. "There's a battle going on over who will control our democracy in the 21st century," summarized Jeff Chester, executive director of the Center for Digital Democracy. "And I dare say there's very few people who know it's going on" because, in part, the media "fail to report on their own political activity." Chester's comments, as well as other participants', may be heard in streaming audio on TNG's web site, www.newsguild.org.



LUTHER JACKSON/SAN JOSE GUILD

Here's lookin' at you

Russ Cain admires a card by Mercury News artist Lars Bourne, presented to him at the Western District Council meeting Oct. 26-27 in Long Beach. Cain stepped down earlier this year after many years as WDC president and as a member of the TNG sector executive council.

DIARY OF A STRIKER

Riding a picket-line roller coaster

Continued from page 1

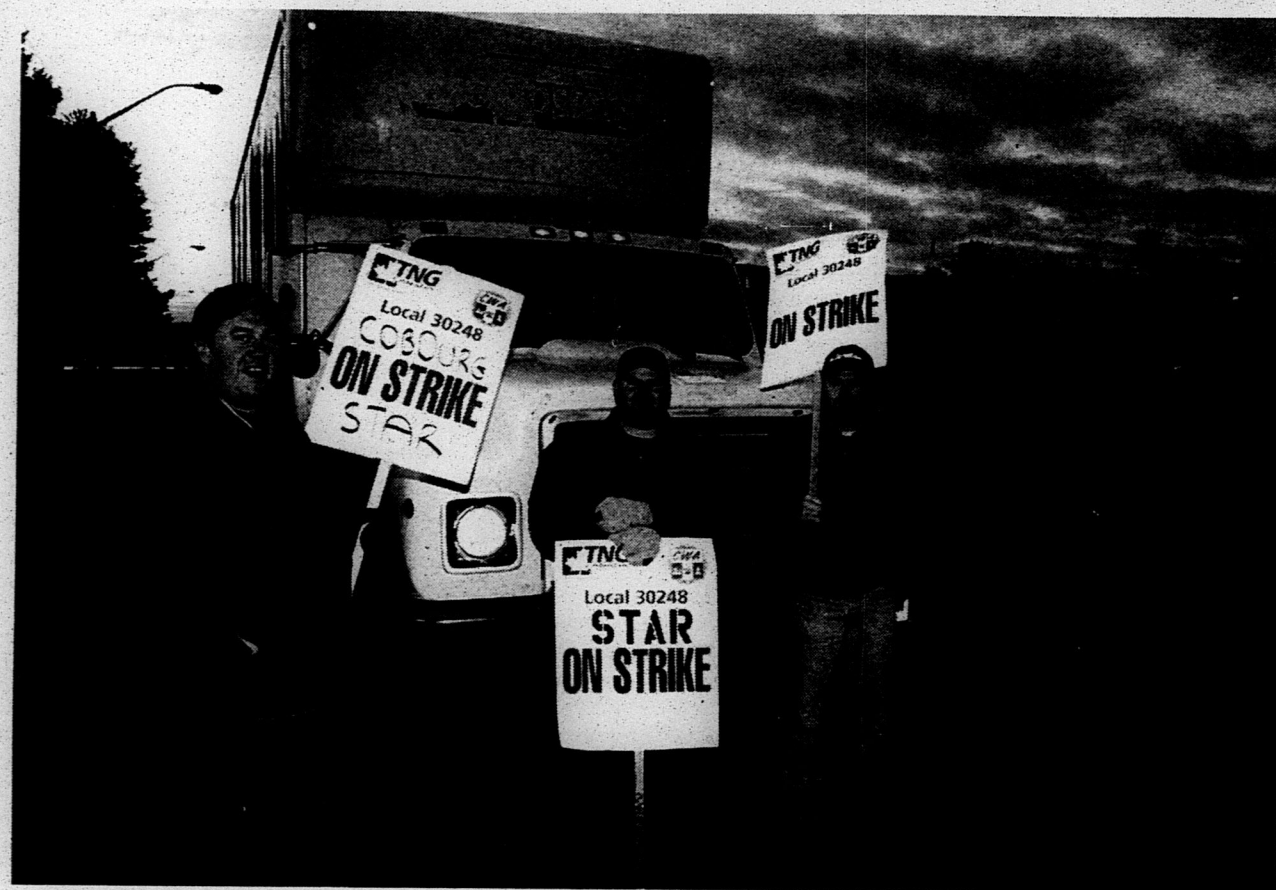
the one Cobourg employee who stayed on the job, but is extremely harsh against the one Port Hope staffer who did. We took his photo and plastered it on the wall of our strike headquarters in Cobourg and labelled it, "Scab."

The company is part of a big chain, so they have shipped in scabs to do our work. It's just too bad they could not find more competent scabs. These people get no bylines, so I guess the thinking is that the readers won't know we aren't on the job. But the quality of the stories absolutely stinks. We are asking everyone we know to suspend or cancel their subscriptions during the strike, but management is getting cancellation calls from people we haven't even asked just because the paper is so awful.

Last Friday, a man who had Thursday's paper in his hand brought us a tray of coffee and said he was going into the office to ask for a refund on his paper because it was the worst paper he had ever seen. He got the refund and, when he came out, he gave it to us. As luck would have it, our publisher was walking out the door just then and (we hope) heard everything.

The publisher is the top-ranking guy at the Cobourg office. His name is Mike Walsh, and he is having a hard time. He has been out personally trying to sell ads and subscriptions; half the time, he is accompanied by the security guards the company has hired. These guards come from a firm that specializes in security during strikes, and they say we are the politest, nicest strikers they have ever dealt with. They always talk to us, and we are on such friendly terms we usually include them in our coffee runs.

From our talks with them about what



Darren Catherwood, Mark Ford and Nigel Sones, outside the Trenton Printing Plant.

they are making and what their company is charging ours, we estimate the rent-a-cops could be costing Mike Walsh as much as \$30,000 a week. The ironic thing is, if they had given us our original requests, it would have cost them \$4 per person per day. Even after 21 years in the mail room (in one case), our workers got \$8 an hour. Their scab replacements are getting \$8.50.

Another unforeseen cost was incurred by Francis, our Port Hope editor. We were picketing the Port Hope office, of course, and Francis lives above the office. Well, even though that site has 24-hour security and even though our pickets go off-duty at 5 p.m., Francis insisted on being put up at the Best Western in Cobourg for a few days—until he got his courage up, I guess.

With all this money pouring into the pockets of out-of-towners, it represents a lot of revenue leaving the community—money that would have stayed here and been spent here if it had been paid to us in raises. People know this. They are not stupid.

If it sounds like we take pleasure in this, I have to admit some part of us does—just as I am sure Mike takes a secret delight in the days we get rained on. We are all only human. But we are also proud to be out walking our picket shifts, and standing up for what we think is right. Most of us are surprised to find ourselves enjoying this metaphorical game of chess. We are perceived to be the good guys, and that feels very nice indeed.

Week Two of the strike finds us with sore feet but soaring spirits. So many people are on our side that we can be encouraged, though footsore.

It doesn't help the Port Hope Guide that it lost popular columnists Selena Forsyth and Dan Christie. While Doug James scabs away, these principled writers have backed up their dismay at the actions of management by risking a source of income—an even truer demonstration of principles when one considers they do not qualify for strike pay, as we do. Dan even brought a fire barrel to the Port Hope strikers to keep spirits (and other things) warm.

At 415 King Street they have a fire barrel, plenty of wood and even a rough tarp-roofed shelter where they store snacks and keep semi-dry in wet weather. Sometimes you can see them roasting marshmallows or hot dogs over the barrel.

We all gathered there Thursday night, thinking some important papers were coming into that location for Friday. We were mistaken but, with everyone milling around, trading jokes and circulating around the fire barrel, it sort of took on the aspect of a street party. And we made up for it the next morning with a quick trip to Trenton to hold up the drivers there. They were pretty pissed off, and there were accounts of drivers missing our guys by an inch or two with their cars. But our guys made it back to Cobourg with everything intact.

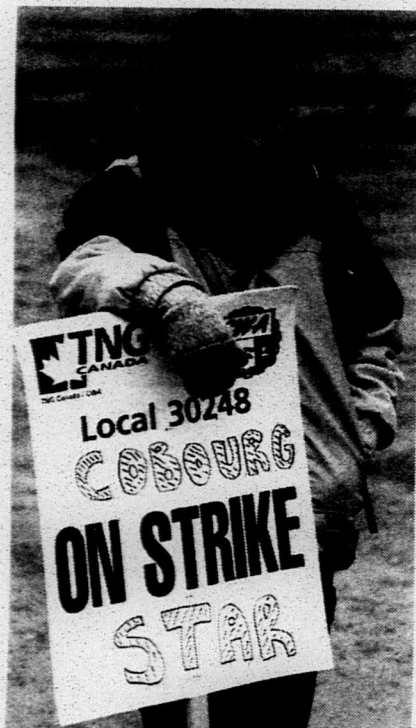
The pickets on Albert Street do not have the great visibility of the ones on King Street, but they do important work holding up scabs. Until now, they have had only the security guard and each other to talk to, but one homeowner has brightened things up a bit. Not only is he allowing us to park our lawn chairs on his lawn, but he also put out a radio on his porch so we have music to help pass the time.

Friday, as the evening shift was coming

on, a gentleman passed by whom we have come to know for always offering a word of encouragement. This cool evening, he announced he was going across the road and buying us a pepperoni pizza—a hot and welcome treat for the evening folks, but the afternoon team had gotten a surprise of their own. A lady from The Jail brought a late lunch consisting of a steaming hot kettle of savoury soup plus a basket of white and focaccio bread with butter and crackers. She said her husband had been out on the provincial civil servants' strike last summer and she could sympathize with what we were going through.

The King Street people also have the most fascinating spot for watching the world go by. In fact, they saw three accidents last week alone. One took place directly across the street, when a man backing an SUV into a parking spot hit a preacher's car. From the furtive way he looked around (and from the fact that the preacher was not in the car), we wondered if he wasn't tempted just to drive away quickly, but he did the right thing, stuck around and made his confession.

High school students are lively supporters of ours, though one might be tempted to think it's at least partly because they welcome a chance to blow their horns as they drive by.



Garrett Leaman



Sharrie-Lynn Flemming and Michael Klein

But they often augment the honks with a hang-loose sign and whoops of support.

We have noticed an interesting phenomenon. As newspaper people, we instinctively try to learn about things that are happening around us. Now that there are no reporters to bring our stories to and now that our reporters have no place to put stories, it's a funny feeling. We should be enjoying the freedom of not having to care about what's going on, but that's just not the way we are.

Still, we are trying to be courteous to the staffers and scabs when they do come out. In fact, this is how we learned Francis has left his company-paid digs at the Best Western and gone back home. It is inspiring to witness such raw courage.

If truth in advertising applied to our newspapers, the Saturday editions would be labelled as reruns. Two features from last year are being rerun as if they had never seen the light of day before.

And it did the Port Hope Evening Guide no credit to run a whiny editorial last week condemning Port Hope council for expressions of support for the strikers. What business is it of theirs what our benefits are? the editorial asked. Is council going to investigate the benefits of every store clerk and gas-station jockey, the editorial wondered, and why did they act before hearing both sides? Of course, those ridiculous paid ads Mike Walsh put into the paper before the strike, as well as the one-sided story of the strike on Day One, presented their position eloquently (and lop-sidedly).

Week Three of the strike winds up, and we had what I believe was our third visit by the CHEX news team—averaging one a week so far, not too shabby!

This week, the reporter wanted Mike Walsh's comments on the labour-board complaint we lodged against him. This complaint stemmed from two letters he sent to employees before the strike vote.

One was a friendly little "reminder" that staffers were perfectly free to cross picket lines in spite of any strike action and, of course, they would then be paid at the generous rate being offered by management for a vote by the union. Only one staffer at each paper (Cobourg Star and Port Hope Guide) accepted this kind offer.

The second letter was left on each desk in the Cobourg office two days before the vote. Mike had gotten wind of our plans to conduct an information picket on our lunch hour that day, just strolling around and passing out leaflets explaining our position. The letter said that this would constitute grounds for instant dismissal.

Our position is that the letters constitute bargaining in bad faith. Mike refused comment to the newsmen, so he had to get his story from our union guy—though I understand Mike later telephoned a comment to the station to the effect that he would level some kind of complaint against us for bargaining in bad faith. Too bad he can't come up with his own ideas and has to copy ours!

We were handed two surprises by our local councils this week. On Monday night, Cobourg council decided to refer our request for support to staff members for a report. This could take several weeks, but then, that's better than being dismissed outright—which is what happened Tuesday night at Port Hope council.

Frankly, many of us showed up for that vote in anticipation of rejoicing in the council's support for its home-town workers over the out-of-town scabs. Instead, the motion to support us got neither moved nor seconded,

dying right in front of our unbelieving eyes!

A couple of our people asked what had happened. Our theory is that council knuckled under a vituperative editorial in last week's Port Hope Guide, accusing them of being anti-business for their previous expressions of support.

We have since gotten a press release from the Sudbury area, where our sister paper has locked out its employees. Their municipal council and provincial MPs are offering support to their home-town workers to the extent of not even speaking with or granting interviews to the scabs! We forwarded a copy of this press release to the Cobourg council, hoping they will see that there is another way to go.

The Port Hope paper last week featured an article on the St. Mark's Church soup kitchen. It must have been a good one; they reran it this week, complete with the same photograph.

Having worked hard to build a quality newspaper, we are frustrated that it has been reduced to this. In fact, some of our reporters have decided to continue to cover some news on a site of our own (or at least as much as they can, given that they have picket-line assignments), and to concentrate mainly on items the Guide and Star may be missing—check out lakeshorefreeweb.com.

Public support continues, and continues to be much appreciated. We had a general meeting mid-day Friday, during which our Pizza Pizza order was delivered. One union member took the money to the door, and I heard the delivery man say, "It's been taken care of." Though we are at a bit of a stand-off, that kind of thing keeps our spirits high.

Week four. The man who said he would not negotiate through the media is hard at work doing just that. Publisher Mike Walsh has purchased a saturation campaign of radio ads and, almost daily, takes up revenue-producing ad space in the newspaper to run an open letter.

The fact is, to restart talks, he would have to contact the mediator. He knows this. He has not done so. As one of the strikers said, if he is really interested in communicating with us in any meaningful way, he will stop talking about talking—and just call the mediator.

We are trying to get our message out by blanketing the area with our own fact sheet. It compares our wages with those of our counterparts in Lindsay and Peterborough.



David Wilson, Mark Ford and Nigel Sones in a picket-line huddle.

While Peterborough may seem like "the big city" to many of us, Lindsay is a comparable size. And their people get paid significantly more even after Mr. Walsh's wage offer.

The long hours our people have put into this effort are paying off. We approach people now, and they know what we're talking about. One lady stopped one of our people to ask if there were any discussions yet toward ending it all; told there were not, she was incensed. "I read your flyer," she said, "and the offer you got was just asinine."

A couple of strikers have begun adopting a more aggressive stance, following scabs for a distance and asking them how it feels to take someone's job away and if they are enjoying putting someone out of work. We have been warned not to be threatening or libelous, but there are ways to get the point across without that—for example, saying things like, "Yes, I was convicted in those machete slayings, but at least I'm not a scab."

And Mike Walsh is stepping up the food wars. Every day, he has lunch brought in for his staff so they won't have to risk facing us by going out. The lunch shipments seem to be from a different restaurant every day, which we figure is his way of wooing potential advertisers. Ironically, he never bought us so much as a box of Timbits except on rare occasions. While companies all over town treated their employees to a Christmas party or dinner each year, we always had to pay for our own.

Even ignoring the pettiness and the contemptuous attitude displayed by these moves, what kind of money is this man spending?! To say he is spreading it around like a drunken sailor demeans our fine men and women in the navy, but the thing is, we were told through six months of negotiations that there was not enough money for the cost-of-living wage increases we wanted. We can't help picking up some kind of mixed message here!

Although Week Five opens with unseasonably balmy weather, we have already had our first dress rehearsal for the wintry days ahead. Last Wednesday was bitterly cold, with all conversation inevitably involving what kind of layers we were wearing.

The propane heater we had purchased was no match for the weather, so we purchased a cast-iron chiminea that really belted out the heat. We asked the fire department in advance if we could have it, but got no conclusive answer. Then, once we had it unpacked and all stoked up, they called to tell us to put it out. We argued that this was much safer than the fire barrels on King Street during First Night to no avail. The firemen came down at mid-day and sprinkled the flames to death.

A verbal bouquet must go to the man on Albert Street who has allowed us to put the chiminea on his property. Thank goodness for people like this man, who—unlike management at the Star and Guide—actually want to support their home-town workers.



Mailroom picket line, including (left to right) Lavonne Douglas, Diane Cross, Marie Chatten, David Wilson and Jackie Alex.

Labor round-up

Union support couldn't overcome \$\$\$

Despite a huge push by organized labor—and, some critics claimed, few other organized groups—the Democrats got whupped in the Nov. 5 mid-term elections. The GOP widened its lead in the House, regained control of the Senate and, despite some Democratic gains at the state level, left governorships split virtually even between the two parties. One major contributing factor: the record amount spent by corporate interests on promoting anti-labor candidates, with business and its allies contributing \$710 million through Sept. 9 (latest figures available) compared to labor's \$62 million. That 11-to-1 ratio apparently more than off-set labor's grassroots mobilization, which the AFL-CIO said included 225,000 Election Day volunteers, 17 million leaflets, dispatch of 750 AFL-CIO and national union staffers to the field, employment of 4,000 local union election coordinators and five million phone calls.

Labor's senator dies before election

Overshadowing the election for many labor supporters and social activists was the Oct. 25 death of Sen. Paul Wellstone of Minnesota, whose frequent appearances before union conventions were punctuated by the exclamation, "I'm a labor Senator!" He was, too, not least because of his work on the Senate Labor Committee, where he wrote a comprehensive labor law reform bill to "level the playing field" in union organizing drives. He also was the leading Senate sponsor of single-payer national health insurance, and was the only senator seeking reelection to vote against the Bush administration's plan to invade Iraq. Wellstone was 58.

Dockworkers have a tentative deal

Marking a breakthrough in the most contentious issue it faced in contract talks, the International Longshore and Warehouse Union said Nov. 1 it had a tentative agreement on a technology package with the Pacific Maritime Association. Details of the agreement were kept secret pending a final contract resolution, but apparently cleared the way for more far-ranging talks to resume Nov. 13, when the two sides met to discuss the dockworkers' demands for a major pension increase. The higher retirement benefits are being sought to offset the expected loss of hundreds of jobs to new technology.

IUE-CWA members okay GE strike

A plan by the world's most profitable company, General Electric, to shift more health care costs to its workers forced delegates to the GE conference of its lead union, the International Union of Electronic Workers-CWA, to vote Oct. 29 to authorize a strike next year, if necessary. The unanimous vote came after GE said it would impose on Jan. 1 a 15% cost increase on workers and retirees in its self-run managed care plan. Under the national contract with IUE, workers have the right to strike over the issue. IUE represents 50,000 workers at GE. The other 13 unions in the GE Coordinated Bargaining Committee represent 103,000 more.—*Press Associates, Inc.*

CWA seeks break-up of WorldCom

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'I gotcha back, bro'

By Reynaldo Barrios
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Dennis was inspired by Malcolm X when he would go "see the man" during "Speak Outs" at the corner of Lennox and 125th streets in the Bronx. Dennis says people such as Malcolm X and the Rev. Jesse Jackson helped educate him about injustices against black people. In 1963 Dennis got a job with a telephone company, became a steward in 1964, and has been a union activist ever since.

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Labor round-up

Union support couldn't overcome \$\$\$

Despite a huge push by organized labor—and, some critics claimed, few other organized groups—the Democrats got whupped in the Nov. 5 mid-term elections. The GOP widened its lead in the House, regained control of the Senate and, despite some Democratic gains at the state level, left governorships split virtually even between the two parties. One major contributing factor: the record amount spent by corporate interests on promoting anti-labor candidates, with business and its allies contributing \$710 million through Sept. 9 (latest figures available) compared to labor's \$62 million. That 11-to-1 ratio apparently more than off-set labor's grassroots mobilization, which the AFL-CIO said included 225,000 Election Day volunteers, 17 million leaflets, dispatch of 750 AFL-CIO and national union staffers to the field, employment of 4,000 local union election coordinators and five million phone calls.

Labor's senator dies before election

Overshadowing the election for many labor supporters and social activists was the Oct. 25 death of Sen. Paul Wellstone of Minnesota, whose frequent appearances before union conventions were punctuated by the exclamation, "I'm a labor Senator!" He was, too, not least because of his work on the Senate Labor Committee, where he wrote a comprehensive labor law reform bill to "level the playing field" in union organizing drives. He also was the leading Senate sponsor of single-payer national health insurance, and was the only senator seeking reelection to vote against the Bush administration's plan to invade Iraq. Wellstone was 58.

Dockworkers have a tentative deal

Marking a breakthrough in the most contentious issue it faced in contract talks, the International Longshore and Warehouse Union said Nov. 1 it had a tentative agreement on a technology package with the Pacific Maritime Association. Details of the agreement were kept secret pending a final contract resolution, but apparently cleared the way for more far-ranging talks to resume Nov. 13, when the two sides met to discuss the dockworkers' demands for a major pension increase. The higher retirement benefits are being sought to offset the expected loss of hundreds of jobs to new technology.

IUE-CWA members okay GE strike

A plan by the world's most profitable company, General Electric, to shift more health care costs to its workers forced delegates to the GE conference of its lead union, the International Union of Electronic Workers-CWA, to vote Oct. 29 to authorize a strike next year, if necessary. The unanimous vote came after GE said it would impose on Jan. 1 a 15% cost increase on workers and retirees in its self-run managed care plan. Under the national contract with IUE, workers have the right to strike over the issue. IUE represents 50,000 workers at GE. The other 13 unions in the GE Coordinated Bargaining Committee represent 103,000 more.—Press Associates, Inc.

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LOOKING AHEAD

**'Playing it safe'
a strategy that
ultimately fails**

By Linda Foley, President

I remember the emotions that caused my eyes to well up as I watched Sen. Max Cleland (D-Ga.) make his way to the dais at the CWA's Legislative and Political Conference last April. I was filled with pride and hope.

He was wheeled up a ramp to sounds of thunderous applause as he waved to delegates with his remaining hand. Even though he couldn't stand, he spoke that day about our country's future with all the energy and conviction of a young athlete aiming for a championship season. I remember thinking about how much bravery he had to muster to overcome the loss of both legs and an arm. And then to go on to become a U.S. Senator. Pride and hope.

**'Americans were
driven to the polls
on Nov. 5 by their
fears, not their
dreams.'**

On Nov. 5, the brave Democratic senator from Georgia who lost three limbs because he volunteered to fight in an unpopular war three decades ago was defeated in his bid to retain his Senate seat. His opponent, who avoided military service altogether, accused Cleland of being unpatriotic, accused him of aiding and abetting Osama bin Laden. Why? Because Cleland refused to vote for a homeland security bill that did not guarantee basic organizing rights for federal workers.

The Bush administration is insisting on a homeland security bill that wrests away union rights and deprives the new department's workers of any voice—indeed, any hope—that they may have to make their jobs and lives better. Television advertising practically branded Cleland a traitor for fighting to keep those rights.

Analysts and pundits have offered a myriad of reasons why Max Cleland and many of his colleagues were defeated. The Democrats didn't have enough message. The Republicans had too much money. George W. Bush was too popular. Dick Gephardt and Tom Daschle were too weak. Too much redistricting, too few competitive candidates.

I think basically it boiled down to this: There was too much fear and not enough hope. Americans were driven to the polls

on Nov. 5 by their fears, not their dreams. We were afraid of terrorists. We were afraid of Saddam Hussein. We were afraid of higher taxes. We were afraid of "the sniper." We were afraid of a bad economy. We were afraid we'd lose our retirement. The list is almost endless.

If fear was what motivated voters, it also defined the campaigns. Candidates were afraid to oppose the war in Iraq, fearful of taking on the NRA, afraid to fight corporate malfeasance and too timid to propose bold steps to fix the economy.

Voters and candidates alike wanted to play it safe. And they did.

In the short term, playing it safe preserves what we have. But whatever sense of well-being is derived from that strategy doesn't last. For the long haul, we have to be willing to take some risks. Change won't happen if we continue to prop up the status quo. We need to be cognizant of our fears, but we need to act on our dreams.

In this time of uncertainty and danger, we have a choice. We can rely on our individual defenses to maintain what we already have, or we can unite with others to use our collective strengths to build something bigger and better.

Sen. Cleland ended his talk to us in April with a poem from one of his constituents about 9/11 and its aftermath, titled "One America." It said, in part:

*As the soot and dirt and ash rained down,
We became one color.*

*As we carried each other down the stairs
of the burning building
We became one class...*

*As we fell to our knees in prayer for
strength,
We became one faith.*

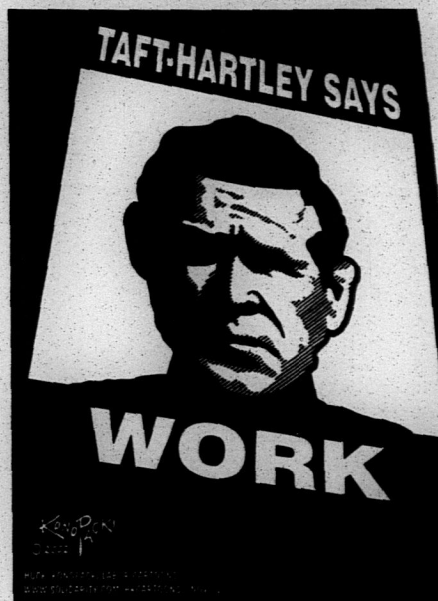
*As we whispered or shouted words of
encouragement,
We spoke one language...*

*As we cried tears of grief and loss
We became one soul.*

*As we retell with pride of the sacrifices
of heroes
We become one people...*

We are The Power of One.

We need to organize so that in the future, leaders like Max Cleland, who refused to give in to his own fears throughout his life, won't be defeated by ours.



**"The Taft-Hartley statute
is the first ugly,
savage thrust of
fascism in America."
- John L. Lewis, 1947**

Laboring under the lawBy Mark Gruenberg
Press Associates/Washington-Baltimore Guild

You haven't heard it mentioned in 24 years, but with a federal judge's assent to GOP President George W. Bush's request for an injunction in the West Coast longshore lockout, you're hearing about the Taft-Hartley Act. And if you haven't, you should—and your neighbors should, too.

What is the Taft-Hartley Act? It's the nation's basic labor law, and it's anti-worker. The right-wing Republicans who controlled Congress in 1947 passed it over Democratic President Harry S. Truman's veto that year.

Wait a minute, you say. Isn't basic U.S. labor law—the one recognizing the right to organize and bargain—the National Labor Relations Act? And wasn't it passed under FDR in 1935?

The answer to both those questions is "yes." But Taft-Hartley turned U.S. labor law on its head—so much so that it, not the NLRA, is the nation's real labor law. Consider:

- The NLRA outlawed most judicial injunctions against strikes. Injunctions were a common big-business weapon against workers before 1935. Taft-Hartley lets the president seek an injunction against a strike or a lockout "which, in the opinion of the president, imperils the national health and safety." Bush got his injunction after the Pacific Maritime Association locked out the International Longshore and Warehouse Union in early October.

- The NLRA approved union shops and closed shops. Taft-Hartley allowed states to outlaw such shops through passage of so-called "right-to-work" laws.

- The NLRA banned employer interference with unions and the right to organize; outlawed company unions; banned discrimination against workers on the basis of union

membership; banned the firing of workers because they filed labor law-breaking charges or testified to the National Labor Relations Board; and banned employers from refusing to bargain collectively.

Taft-Hartley added anti-union sanctions, including a ban on unions from acting against picket-line crossers; a ban on secondary boycotts and sympathy strikes; and allowing employer damage suits for boycotts and contract violations. It also ordered union officers to sign anti-Communist oaths.

- Taft-Hartley ordered labor and management to give 60-days' notice before terminating a contract—and banned strikes or lockouts during those 60 days.

- The NLRA did not provide for union decertification elections. Taft-Hartley does, and allows employers to seek them.

- The NLRA was an active law, actively enforced by the NLRB. Taft-Hartley gelded the NLRB, transforming it into a passive body that acts only in response to complaints and to cases brought by its general counsel.

There's more, a lot more, but you get the idea. Then-AFL President George Meany, in lobbying against Taft-Hartley in 1947, complained that it had been written by big business and was designed to "bring about the destruction of free trade unions in our country."

"Industry as a whole resented the fact that labor made progress," Meany said in a later interview. "The minute the war (World War II) was over, they declared war on us."

Not much has changed in the intervening decades. Although Bush's Taft-Hartley injunction request stopped port management's lockout of his workers, ILWU President Jim Spinosa says management's stand would have collapsed without Bush's pro-business intervention. Taft-Hartley is "the government colluding with employers to break workers and their unions," he declared.

LETTER**To the Editor,**

We would like to clear up a misconception raised in a September 20th letter.

The National Lesbian & Gay Journalists Association is an organization of journalists, online media professionals and students that works from within the journalism industry to foster fair and accurate coverage of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender issues.

NLGJA opposes workplace bias against all minorities and provides professional development for its members. NLGJA is not, as implied, an activist group. As journalists, we do not ask for "special" or "positive" coverage of the LGBT community, but we do ask for "fair and accurate" reporting.

Like other minority journalism associations, we are committed to helping jour-

nalists produce the highest quality coverage of our diverse marketplace. Most of NLGJA's initiatives, including the newly revised Stylebook Supplement on LGBT Terminology, focus on education. Information about all of NLGJA's programs is available at www.nlgja.org.

NLGJA would like to thank the Guild for its continued support, including the recently

revamped human rights program, which says the union shall continue to participate in minority journalists' associations, including NLGJA. If we, as journalists, can be of assistance, please call our national office (202.588.9888) or drop us an e-mail at info@nlgja.org.

—Steven Petrow,
President, NLGJA

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: December 6.) Letters may be e-mailed to the editor at azipser@cwa-union.org.

Press freedom survey yields a few surprises

Reporters Without Borders, the international organization that defends press freedom, has taken the global pulse in a comprehensive way for the first time—and its findings contain several surprises. Among them: that the United States ranks below Costa Rica, Italy scores lower than Benin, and India—often described as the world's largest democracy—barely edges out the Palestinian National Authority.

The worldwide index of press freedom, published for the first time in October, also shows that such freedom is under threat everywhere, with the 20 bottom-ranked countries drawn from Asia, Africa, Latin America and Europe. The situation is especially grave in Asia, which contains the five worst offenders: North Korea, China, Burma, Turkmenistan and Bhutan.

In the worst-ranked countries, press freedom is a dead letter and independent newspapers do not exist. The only media voice is tightly controlled or monitored by the government, and any independent journalists are constantly harassed, imprisoned or forced into exile. Foreign media are banned or allowed only in small, closely monitored doses.

The top of the list, on the other hand, is occupied by northern European states that not only respect press freedom in their own countries but also speak up for it elsewhere, for example recently in Eritrea and Zimbabwe. The highest-scoring country outside Europe is Canada, which comes in fifth.

Some countries with democratically-elected governments are way down in the index, including Colombia (114th) and Bangladesh (118th). In these countries, armed rebel movements, militias or political parties constantly endanger the lives of journalists and the state fails to do all it could to protect them.

Too many U.S. journalists jailed

The poor ranking of the United States (17th), Reporters Without Borders explained, is due mostly to the high number of journalists arrested or imprisoned there, often because they refuse to reveal their sources in court. Also, since the Sept. 11 attacks, several journalists have been arrested for crossing security lines at some official buildings.

The highest-ranked country of the South is Costa Rica (15th), traditionally the continent's best performer in terms of press freedom. This past February it ceased to be one of 17 Latin American states that still give prison sentences to those found guilty of "insulting" public officials. Cuba, on the other hand, (134th) is the only country in the region where there is no diversity of news and journalists are routinely imprisoned.

The 15 member-countries of the European Union

all score well except for Italy (40th), where news diversity is under serious threat. Prime minister Silvio Berlusconi is turning up the pressure on state-owned television stations, has named his henchmen to help run them and continues to combine his job as head of government with being boss of a privately-owned media group. The imprisonment of journalist Stefano Surace, convicted of press offenses from 30 years ago, as well as the monitoring of journalists, searches, unjustified legal summonses and confiscation of equipment, are all responsible for the country's low ranking.

Among those states hoping to join the EU, Turkey (99th) is very poorly placed. Despite the reform efforts of its government, aimed at easing entry into the EU, many journalists are still being given prison sentences and the media is regularly censored. Press freedom is especially under siege in the southeastern part of the country.

Middle East, Arab nations fare poorly

No Arab country is among the top 50. Lebanon only makes 56th place and the press freedom situation in the region is not encouraging. In Iraq (130th) and Syria (126th), the state uses every means to control the media and stifle any dissenting voice. Iraqi President Saddam Hussein especially has set his country's media the sole task of relaying his regime's propaganda. In Libya (129th) and Tunisia (128th), no criticism of Col Muammar Kadhafi or President Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali is tolerated.

The political weakening of the Palestinian Authority (82nd) means it has made few assaults on press freedom. However, Islamic fundamentalist opposition media have been closed, several attempts made to intimidate and attack local and foreign journalists and many subjects remain taboo. The aim is to convey a united image of the Palestinian people and to conceal certain activities, such as demonstrations of support for attacks on Israel.

The attitude of Israel (92nd) towards press freedom is ambivalent. Despite strong pressure on state-owned TV and radio, the government respects the local media's freedom of expression. However, in the West Bank and Gaza, Reporters Without Borders has recorded a large number of violations of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which guarantees press freedom and which Israel has signed. Since the start of the Israeli army's incursions into Palestinian towns and cities in March 2002, many journalists have been roughed up, threatened, arrested, banned from moving around, targeted by gunfire, wounded or injured, had their press cards withdrawn or been deported.

This index measures the amount of freedom journalists and the media have in each country and the efforts made by governments to see that press freedom is respected. It is based on a questionnaire prepared by Reporters Without Borders asking for details of direct attacks on journalists (such as murders, imprisonment, physical assaults and threats) and on the media (censorship, confiscation, searches and pressure). It also asked about the degree of impunity enjoyed by those responsible for such violations.

The questionnaire was sent to people with a working knowledge of the press freedom in one or more countries, such as local journalists or foreign correspondents living in the country, researchers, legal experts, specialists on a region and the researchers of the Reporters Without Borders International Secretariat.

Reporters Without Borders said it took into account the excesses of the state as well as those of armed militias, underground organizations and pressure groups that can be serious threats to press freedom. It also considered the diligence with which each state combated such tactics.

The 139 countries included in the index are those about which Reporters Without Borders received completed questionnaires from several independent sources. Other countries have not been included for lack of reliable information. Countries that got equal scores have been ranked in alphabetical order.

This index is a portrait of press freedom based on events between September 2001 and October 2002. It does not take account of all human rights violations, only those that affect press freedom. Neither is it an indicator of the quality of a country's media. Reporters Without Borders defends press freedom without regard to the content of the media, so any ethical or professional departures from the norm have not been taken into account.

Rank Country Score

1	Finland	0.50
	Iceland	0.50
	Norway	0.50
	Netherlands	0.50
5	Canada	0.75
6	Ireland	1.00
7	Germany	1.50
	Portugal	1.50
	Sweden	1.50
10	Denmark	3.00
11	France	3.25
12	Australia	3.50
	Belgium	3.50
14	Slovenia	4.00
15	Costa Rica	4.25
	Switzerland	4.25
17	United States	4.75
18	Hong Kong	4.83
19	Greece	5.00
20	Ecuador	5.50
21	Benin	6.00
	U. Kingdom	6.00
	Uruguay	6.00
24	Chile	6.50
	Hungary	6.50
26	South Africa	7.50
	Austria	7.50
	Japan	7.50
29	Spain	7.75
	Poland	7.75
31	Namibia	8.00
32	Paraguay	8.50
33	Croatia	8.75
	El Salvador	8.75
35	Taiwan	9.00
36	Mauritius	9.50
	Peru	9.50
38	Bulgaria	9.75
39	South Korea	10.50
40	Italy	11.00
41	Czech Rep.	11.25
42	Argentina	12.00
80	India	26.50
82	Palestinian National Authority	27.00
92	Israel	30.00
121	Russia	48.00
122	Iran	48.25
130	Iraq	79.00
131	Vietnam	81.25
132	Eritrea	83.67
133	Laos	89.00
134	Cuba	90.25
135	Bhutan	90.75
136	Turkmenistan	91.50
137	Burma	96.83
138	China	97.00
139	North Korea	97.50

THE GUILD Reporter

Volume 66, Number 11

NOVEMBER 15, 2002

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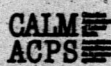
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Press freedom survey yields a few surprises

Reporters Without Borders, the international organization that defends press freedom, has taken the global pulse in a comprehensive way for the first time—and its findings contain several surprises. Among them: that the United States ranks below Costa Rica, Italy scores lower than Benin, and India—often described as the world's largest democracy—barely edges out the Palestinian National Authority.

The worldwide index of press freedom, published for the first time in October, also shows that such freedom is under threat everywhere, with the 20 bottom-ranked countries drawn from Asia, Africa, Latin America and Europe. The situation is especially grave in Asia, which contains the five worst offenders: North Korea, China, Burma, Turkmenistan and Bhutan.

In the worst-ranked countries, press freedom is a dead letter and independent newspapers do not exist. The only media voice is tightly controlled or monitored by the government, and any independent journalists are constantly harassed, imprisoned or forced into exile. Foreign media are banned or allowed only in small, closely monitored doses.

The top of the list, on the other hand, is occupied by northern European states that not only respect press freedom in their own countries but also speak up for it elsewhere, for example recently in Eritrea and Zimbabwe. The highest-scoring country outside Europe is Canada, which comes in fifth.

Some countries with democratically-elected governments are way down in the index, including Colombia (114th) and Bangladesh (118th). In these countries, armed rebel movements, militias or political parties constantly endanger the lives of journalists and the state fails to do all it could to protect them.

Too many U.S. journalists jailed

The poor ranking of the United States (17th), Reporters Without Borders explained, is due mostly to the high number of journalists arrested or imprisoned there, often because they refuse to reveal their sources in court. Also, since the Sept. 11 attacks, several journalists have been arrested for crossing security lines at some official buildings.

The highest-ranked country of the South is Costa Rica (15th), traditionally the continent's best performer in terms of press freedom. This past February it ceased to be one of 17 Latin American states that still give prison sentences to those found guilty of "insulting" public officials. Cuba, on the other hand, (134th) is the only country in the region where there is no diversity of news and journalists are routinely imprisoned.

The 15 member-countries of the European Union

all score well except for Italy (40th), where news diversity is under serious threat. Prime minister Silvio Berlusconi is turning up the pressure on state-owned television stations, has named his henchmen to help run them and continues to combine his job as head of government with being boss of a privately-owned media group. The imprisonment of journalist Stefano Surace, convicted of press offenses from 30 years ago, as well as the monitoring of journalists, searches, unjustified legal summonses and confiscation of equipment, are all responsible for the country's low ranking.

Among those states hoping to join the EU, Turkey (99th) is very poorly placed. Despite the reform efforts of its government, aimed at easing entry into the EU, many journalists are still being given prison sentences and the media is regularly censored. Press freedom is especially under siege in the southeastern part of the country.

Middle East, Arab nations fare poorly

No Arab country is among the top 50. Lebanon only makes 56th place and the press freedom situation in the region is not encouraging. In Iraq (130th) and Syria (126th), the state uses every means to control the media and stifle any dissenting voice. Iraqi President Saddam Hussein especially has set his country's media the sole task of relaying his regime's propaganda. In Libya (129th) and Tunisia (128th), no criticism of Col Muammar Kadhafi or President Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali is tolerated.

The political weakening of the Palestinian Authority (82nd) means it has made few assaults on press freedom. However, Islamic fundamentalist opposition media have been closed, several attempts made to intimidate and attack local and foreign journalists and many subjects remain taboo. The aim is to convey a united image of the Palestinian people and to conceal certain activities, such as demonstrations of support for attacks on Israel.

The attitude of Israel (92nd) towards press freedom is ambivalent. Despite strong pressure on state-owned TV and radio, the government respects the local media's freedom of expression. However, in the West Bank and Gaza, Reporters Without Borders has recorded a large number of violations of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which guarantees press freedom and which Israel has signed. Since the start of the Israeli army's incursions into Palestinian towns and cities in March 2002, many journalists have been roughed up, threatened, arrested, banned from moving around, targeted by gunfire, wounded or injured, had their press cards withdrawn or been deported.

This index measures the amount of freedom journalists and the media have in each country and the efforts made by governments to see that press freedom is respected. It is based on a questionnaire prepared by Reporters Without Borders asking for details of direct attacks on journalists (such as murders, imprisonment, physical assaults and threats) and on the media (censorship, confiscation, searches and pressure). It also asked about the degree of impunity enjoyed by those responsible for such violations.

The questionnaire was sent to people with a working knowledge of the press freedom in one or more countries, such as local journalists or foreign correspondents living in the country, researchers, legal experts, specialists on a region and the researchers of the Reporters Without Borders International Secretariat.

Reporters Without Borders said it took into account the excesses of the state as well as those of armed militias, underground organizations and pressure groups that can be serious threats to press freedom. It also considered the diligence with which each state combated such tactics.

The 139 countries included in the index are those about which Reporters Without Borders received completed questionnaires from several independent sources. Other countries have not been included for lack of reliable information. Countries that got equal scores have been ranked in alphabetical order.

This index is a portrait of press freedom based on events between September 2001 and October 2002. It does not take account of all human rights violations, only those that affect press freedom. Neither is it an indicator of the quality of a country's media. Reporters Without Borders defends press freedom without regard to the content of the media, so any ethical or professional departures from the norm have not been taken into account.

Rank Country Score

1	Finland	0.50
	Iceland	0.50
	Norway	0.50
	Netherlands	0.50
5	Canada	0.75
6	Ireland	1.00
7	Germany	1.50
	Portugal	1.50
	Sweden	1.50
10	Denmark	3.00
11	France	3.25
12	Australia	3.50
	Belgium	3.50
14	Slovenia	4.00
15	Costa Rica	4.25
	Switzerland	4.25
17	United States	4.75
18	Hong Kong	4.83
19	Greece	5.00
20	Ecuador	5.50
21	Benin	6.00
	U. Kingdom	6.00
	Uruguay	6.00
24	Chile	6.50
	Hungary	6.50
26	South Africa	7.50
	Austria	7.50
	Japan	7.50
29	Spain	7.75
	Poland	7.75
31	Namibia	8.00
32	Paraguay	8.50
33	Croatia	8.75
	El Salvador	8.75
35	Taiwan	9.00
36	Mauritius	9.50
	Peru	9.50
38	Bulgaria	9.75
39	South Korea	10.50
40	Italy	11.00
41	Czech Rep.	11.25
42	Argentina	12.00
80	India	26.50
82	Palestinian National Authority	27.00
92	Israel	30.00
121	Russia	48.00
122	Iran	48.25
130	Iraq	79.00
131	Vietnam	81.25
132	Eritrea	83.67
133	Laos	89.00
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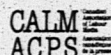
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