

# THE GUILD Reporter

December 13, 2002

A Publication of The Newspaper Guild and The Communications Workers of America • Volume 69, Number 12

## Media chill

### As we near media oligopoly, the media have clammed up

By Andy Zipser  
Editor, The Guild Reporter

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*Would any person believe that there is any one subject upon which the newspapers of the United States, acting in concert, by prearrangement, in obedience to wires all drawn by one man, will deny full and free discussion? ... Relying so wholly on the press to undo evil, how shall we deal with that evil with which the press itself has been seduced into captivity?*

Thus began a 7,000-word article on a subject that might appear quaint by today's standards, an exposé not just of patent medicines—the main active ingredient was alcohol, sometimes leavened with opium or cocaine—but of the millions spent by the industry on newspaper advertising. From a publisher's perspective, patent medicine was just too lucrative to bear journalistic investigation—and so it didn't. Even legislative debates on the question of whether such "medicines" should bear labels describing their ingredients were ignored by the press.

Ninety-eight years later, a similar freeze enshrouds a potentially more far-reaching subject. As in 1904, those who will gain the most are still "the press;" those with the most to lose are the public. But the stakes these days are measured not in millions but in billions of dollars, not to mention even tighter control of the "wires" that raised Colliers' alarm.

That subject is the steady march toward deregulation of all media ownership. The implication—barring the active involvement of reporters, editors, producers, readers, viewers and listeners—is an even more rapid consolidation of newspapers, radio, television, cable and internet portals into fewer and fewer hands. The price paid for that economically-driven

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process? Less democratic discourse and less citizen involvement in self-government than we already have.

If that sounds alarmist, consider just how scant media coverage of these developments has been to date. Indeed, the lack of press attention to the deregulation question is the most telling rebuttal to industry claims that the proliferation of media outlets is by itself evidence that the "marketplace of ideas" is thriving. The corporate interests that increasingly monopolize the media have nothing to gain by encouraging public examination of ownership deregulation, and so there is scarcely any coverage of the subject in the print press, none at all on television, cable and radio, and what little there is tends to be smothered in technical jargon.

The rush to deregulation has been overseen by Michael Powell, chairman of the Federal Communications Commission. The pretense under which a handful of remaining limitations on media ownership (see sidebar, page 5) will be struck or crippled is a biennial "review," but pressure from the courts and an administration hell-bent on scrapping as many government rules as possible suggest the limits may be eliminated altogether. And restoration of GOP control of the Senate has stripped Ernest Hollings, a leading opponent of media consolidation, of his chairmanship of the Commerce Committee and of his

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NIKKI LESSIN-JOSEPH/BOSTON NEWSPAPER GUILD

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including the right to outsource all work in the business and advertising departments; to virtually eliminate seniority from layoff language; to pay unfair salaries to Globe "staff correspondents"; to allow other New York Times-owned businesses to cross-sell advertisements in the Globe; a "management rights" clause that would cripple the Guild's effectiveness enforcing the contract; and a pattern wage offer that includes increases of less than 2% a year. "Through these events, the membership wanted to send a message to Globe management that it wants a fair contract at the table and fair treatment of its employees in the workplace," said local President Steve Richards.

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While firefighters, cops and construction workers initially were lauded for their heroism and hard work, promised health care for local residents and downtown workers has not materialized. A federally-funded effort to provide medical screening for those participating in "ground zero" recovery efforts has only enough money for approximately 8,500 people. An additional \$90 million to expand the program, appropriated this past summer by Congress, was held back by the White House.

The tightened purse strings have ended a TNG-CWA research project on the health of Manhattan-based union members almost before it started. Organized by Deborah Wallace of Consumers Union and her husband, epidemiologist Rodrick Wallace, the pilot project was to include comprehensive physical exams and mental health evaluations for approximately 100 TNG-CWA members who had significant exposure to the dust and fumes of the collapsed sky-

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The end of each year is marked by more than holidays: it's also a time for working journalists to take stock of what they've done in the past year—and if that includes an exceptional piece of work, to start assembling contest entries.

This year's Heywood Broun Award competition is accepting entries postmarked no later than Jan. 31 for work published or broadcast in calendar year 2002. The award includes a plaque and a cash prize of \$5,000; in addition, two awards of substantial distinction—including one reserved specifically for broadcast entries—will include a cash prize of \$1,000 each.

Jan. 31 also is the deadline for submitting entries for the David S. Barr Award, which is open to high school and college journalists who have written on issues of social justice. Named after a former Newspaper Guild general counsel and mentor, the Barr Award includes a cash prize of \$500 for the high school winner and \$1,500 for the winning college entry.

The Broun Award was established in 1941 to honor the Guild's founding spirit and first president, Heywood Broun, who despite his stature as the country's highest-paid columnist was an enduring champion of the underdog and the disadvantaged. The award memorializes not just the man but his belief that journalists can make a difference and that their work can help right wrongs, especially social ills.

Last year's winner, for example, was the Seattle Times reporting team of David Heath and Duff

Wilson, whose investigative series, "Uninformed Consent," explored the unethical conduct of clinical trials at a cancer research center.

As in the past, there are no entry forms or fees required to compete for the Broun Award, but all entries must be submitted in triplicate, including at least one original tearsheet. The Barr Award likewise does not charge an entry fee but does require a completed application form; applications may be obtained by calling Dominique Edmondson, at 202-434-7177, or may be downloaded from the TNG-CWA web site, at [www.newsguild.org](http://www.newsguild.org).

A copy of the complete rules for both award competitions also may be seen on the web site.

Winners of both the Barr and Broun Awards will be honored May 6 at the second annual Freedom Award Fund Banquet, to be held at the Hyatt Regency Washington on Capitol Hill.

Funded by a bequest from political cartoonist Herbert Block, the Freedom Award was instituted last year to recognize a person who best exemplifies Block's devotion to free speech and assembly, his compassion for the weak and disadvantaged, his distrust of unbridled power and his defense of a vigorous free press.

Last year's winner of the Herbert Block Freedom Award was Vanessa Leggett, a freelance journalist who was imprisoned for 168 days for refusing a subpoena to surrender the notes and interviews she'd accumulated while researching a book about the murder of a Houston socialite.



## . . . and don't forget Hillman

If there's any journalism prize that echoes the values of the Broun Award, it's the Sidney Hillman Prize. Established 52 years ago, it honors the memory of the first president of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America, a predecessor union to today's UNITE (Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees).

Hillman was an architect of the New Deal—so, no surprise, the prize that bears his name is given annually to journalists, writers and public figures who pursue

social justice and public policy for the common good. Nominations for work published or exhibited in the current year will be accepted through January 31, 2003. Winners will receive a plaque honoring their work, \$2,000 and a reception in their honor in New York City.

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- The CWA Joe Beirne Foundation will award 30 scholarships of up to \$3,000 each for the 2003-04 school year to CWA members, spouses, children or grandchildren; it also will award second-year scholarships to last year's winners, subject to demonstrated achievement.

The deadline for applications is March 31, but early filing is strongly encouraged. Application forms and guidelines should be available from local presidents, but otherwise may be obtained from Karrie Adams at 202/434-1158.

## Amplification

A "Labor round-up" item in the November Guild Reporter, in acknowledging the assistance of several TNG-CWA officials on behalf of an affiliation campaign at public broadcasting station WGBH in Boston, overlooked the efforts of Lesley Phillips, Phillips, Region 1 vice president, attended several membership meetings to answer WGBH employees' questions about CWA and about the Guild's affiliation experiences.

## In brief . . .

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Dow Jones chairman Peter Kann's newsroom standing as "one of the boys" took a drubbing at recent company-wide meetings with employees, who angrily demanded to know why they are taking the brunt of cost-cutting measures while senior management goes unscathed and dividends remain higher than profits. "Well, that's one of the dangers you face living in a capitalist society," Kann replied, with uncharacteristic candor. Kann's salary last year was raised to \$921,000 from \$841,167.

### WashTech member wins office handily

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### Daily Item workers win 3-year pact

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With no challengers emerging at its November membership meeting, the Pacific Northwest Guild elected the following executive board: Bob Hoffman of the Seattle Times, president; Kery Murakami of the Seattle Post-Intelligencer, vice president; Janice Barrett of the Times, treasurer; and Yoko Kuramoto-Eidsmoe of the Times, secretary.

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Mac McDonald, who holds the unenviable job of chair of the Monterey Unit of the San Jose Newspaper Guild, doesn't get much respect from Knight Ridder management—so he got it from the Monterey Bay Central Labor Council. The council honored him recently as "Trade Unionist of the Year" for his unflinching efforts on behalf of his coworkers.

### Staff shuffle brings back familiar face

With seasonally impeccable timing, Marian Needham, TNG-CWA's director of contract administration, will be returning to Buffalo (where she once worked for the Guild local, but she was younger then and her blood was thicker) in late January to become a field rep. Her job will be filled by Guild Coordinator Kathy Mulvey Brennan—and the new Guild coordinator will be Kathleen Price, who prior to the TNG merger with CWA served for approximately 10 years as the Guild's bookkeeper. Price currently is a supervisor in CWA's accounting department.

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## The Newspaper Guild International



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

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# Browbeating at Chinese Daily News

The Chinese Daily News, the largest Chinese-language newspaper in the U.S., is being accused by TNG-CWA of engaging in a campaign of intimidation designed to scare employees into recanting a vote to unionize.

The accusation is merely the most recent in a series of charges filed with the National Labor Relations Board office in Los Angeles. It follows management's circulation of a petition in November that ostensibly was directed to the union, asserting that the undersigned "would like to send a strong message to the Communication Workers of America union that we no longer want this union to represent the employees... We now prefer to work our issues with the management team at Chinese Daily News."

Instead, the petition—reportedly signed by 124 employees, although without any indication of which ones are TNG-CWA members—was submitted Nov. 22 to the NLRB. An unsigned cover letter asserted that the petition signers no longer want union representation and added: "We want the Labor Board and all government offices dealing with this union and our employer, the Chinese Daily News, to close its cases...."

Employees of the paper, most of whom are first-generation immigrants, voted in March 2001 to be represented by The Newspaper Guild sector of the CWA. But the newspaper challenged the election results, alleging that its supervisors had supported the CWA, giving the union an unfair advantage. On losing its challenge in regional

hearings, the company appealed to the full NLRB in Washington, D.C., where the case has languished for well over a year.

During the interim, the newspaper's management has refused to bargain a contract while waging a relentless campaign of fear and intimidation. "Those who dare to openly support the union have been transferred, yelled at, slandered in company publications, disciplined and even threatened with legal action," said Guild rep Bruce Meachum, who has worked closely with the employees.

The petition sparking the latest NLRB charge, Meachum added, was "proof only of management's success in intimidating and coercing" its employees. Indeed, added Hsiao-tse Chao, a former Chinese Daily

News employee who now works as a CWA organizer, many employees signed because they were afraid not to. "They have seen the way management has mistreated their coworkers who openly support the union," she explained.

According to Chao, employees also feared losing their annual bonus if they didn't demonstrate loyalty to the company by signing the petition. The bonuses, often amounting up to 10% of yearly income, are paid in December and January.

"It's a real shame," said CWA rep Laura Reynolds. "This is the first experience most of these workers have had with American freedoms. They believed our labor laws would protect them from reprisals from the company."

## In a blast from the past, talking union gets workers fired

If the newspaper industry were an animal, The Journal Newspapers—a chain of dailies ringing Washington, D.C.—would be at the hind end, somewhere near the musk gland. Underpaid and over-worked, its reporters toil with pinched nostrils solely to accumulate the clips that can pave their way to respectable employment elsewhere.

So it's not surprising that the Journal's Maryland-based newsroom employees decided they might be better off with a union. What is surprising is that the Journal's owner, on learning of such insubordination, resorted to the same tactics that led to the creation of the American Newspaper Guild nearly 70 years ago.

Step one: Journal's management, led by Rupert Phillips and his son, Ryan, hired a couple of union-busting "consultants" from New York to meet with employees last August. That same month, it gave raises to the company's employees in northern Virginia while denying them to all employees of the two Maryland-based Journals.

Step two: When a majority of 14 reporters, photographers and editorial assistants at the two papers, undeterred by such pressure tactics, signed cards requesting TNG-CWA representation, the Washington-Baltimore Guild peti-

tioned the National Labor Relations Board for an election. Journal management responded by arguing that approximately 35 editorial employees of its Virginia-based Journal, who had not sought union representation, should be included in a representation election.

Step three: Union attorneys answered management's argument by pointing out that the Maryland-based employees were hired and supervised by Maryland-based editors, not those at the Journal's headquarters in Virginia. The Journal responded by closing its editorial offices in Maryland and moving those employees to Virginia.

Step four: Faced with an apparently stacked deck, the Guild decided to extend its organizing campaign to the Virginia-based employees and asked the labor board to schedule a representation election for all of the Journal's editorial employees. On the morning of Dec. 2, the Washington-Baltimore Newspaper Guild announced that a Dec. 12 representation election date had been approved. That afternoon, the Journal fired nearly all of its Maryland newsroom employees and several of its Virginia staffers. The locks on the office doors were changed, even though all key cards had been collected.

Severance pay? Not a chance.

The mass dismissals left the



NICK GERVASI

Frank Gervasi, at right, leads a picket line Dec. 9 at the Virginia headquarters of Journal Newspapers, which fired nearly a dozen employees less than two weeks before a union representation election.

two Maryland Journals with a staff of one news reporter, two sports reporters and three photographers. The two papers, little wonder, were filled mostly with wire copy.

The Washington-Baltimore Guild promptly filed charges of unfair labor practices, triggering cancellation of the Dec. 12 election. The local is asking the National Labor Relations Board to order the Journal to recognize the union because its actions have rendered a fair union representation election impossible. It also has requested an order compelling the Journal to begin bargaining a contract, and to rehire, with full back pay, the eight union-eligible employees who have been fired.

But with Washington gripped by anti-union fervor, the outcome is uncertain, at best.

Less uncertain is the nature of the person behind such abusive behavior. The owner of the Journal Newspapers is Rupert Phillips, whose most recent brush with notoriety was earned in late 1999, when he announced he was terminating a joint operating agreement between his Honolulu Star-Bulletin and the Gannett-owned Honolulu Advertiser. The kicker? On terminating the JOA, Phillips planned to close the Star-Bulletin, leaving Gannett with a monopoly—for which Gannett reportedly was to pay him more than \$20 million. The public outcry when news of the deal was

publicized whipped up a political and judicial firestorm, extinguished only when a buyer for the Star-Bulletin was found.

Phillips was rarely seen at the Star-Bulletin and has left management of the Journal Newspapers chiefly in the hands of his son, Ryan. So those who were fired so summarily Dec. 2 never had a chance to tell the man responsible for their fate why they were trying to unionize in the first place. The reasons, listed on an organizing document, included a voice at work; fairness and respect; job advancement; job security; improved compensation; better working conditions, and higher professional standards of journalism.

## Legal action taken to stop CBC out-sourcing

The Canadian Media Guild has taken legal action to stop the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation from outsourcing hundreds of jobs currently done by members of the Guild and other unions. The complaint, filed with the Canada Industrial Relations Board, alleges that the CBC and its representatives did not bargain in good faith during recent contract negotiations, misrepresenting their intentions about outsourcing despite specific and repeated questions by the Guild.

The request to stop outsourcing in all bar-

gaining units, rather than just those represented by the Guild, was made because the board already is deciding whether to consolidate all CBC labor representation under one union. Many of the positions CBC has signalled it wants to outsource currently are filled by Guild members—including pension administration, human resources, finance, information technology and transmission services—but others are held by employees belonging to the Communications, Energy and Paperworkers union, as well as those in the supervisory/professional unit represented by APS.

"If the CBC thinks we are going to abandon our Unit 3 members, they are sadly mistaken," said CBC Branch President Arnold Amber, who also serves as Director of TNG Canada. "If they can do this to these members this way, who's next?"

"The bargaining process is fundamental to the relationship between an employer and employees represented by their union," added Guild staff representative Glenn Gray. "If that process doesn't include full and open dialogue, there's a serious problem with the relationship."

The Guild is asking the CIRB to provide what's called "interim relief" until the full case can be heard. Its complaint is only the most recent step in an ongoing campaign to block CBC's contracting-out plans, including the recent filing of a grievance challenging the CBC's refusal to provide critical information to the union about its outsourcing plans.

A CBC representative confirmed for CMG leaders in October that the corporation has not been guided by the federal policy on contracting out—indeed, that it doesn't follow any policy at all.



## Labor round-up

**Supremes agree: organizing helps all**  
In a rare victory for labor, the U.S. Supreme Court has refused to review a circuit court decision allowing unions to charge represented non-members for union organizing in other workplaces. Although the Supreme Court previously has ruled a union can't bill nonmembers for its political activities, it let stand a 9th Circuit Court of Appeals decision that all employees in an occupational field benefit when salaries increase, and therefore may be charged for a union's collective bargaining work in non-represented locations. The decision came in a case in which grocery workers for chains based in California, Colorado and Michigan were being billed for union-organizing in other markets.

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The AFL-CIO has petitioned the International Labour Organization to formally investigate a U.S. Supreme Court decision, *Hoffman Plastics vs. NLRB*, denying back pay to a migrant worker after he was fired for pro-union activities. Although Hoffman was found guilty by the NLRB of illegally firing the worker, it refused to pay him for work he'd already done on the grounds that he was an illegal immigrant—and the Supreme Court concurred, ruling that immigration law takes precedence over labor law. The AFL-CIO's protest notes that the Hoffman ruling violates two ILO conventions signed by the U.S., one protecting the rights of all workers "without distinction whatsoever" to "establish and join organizations of their own choosing." The other "requires adequate protection against acts of anti-union discrimination."

### Throwing out baby with the tax \$\$\$

With working parents perennially scrambling for adequate, and affordable, child-care, the federal "solution" was a program of state tax credits—not to the parents who needed the help, but to "incentivize" corporations to provide on-site or other assisted care. The problem? According to a recent report by the National Women's Law Center, U.S. companies already have so many tax write-offs that they can't benefit from the perk, so only a relative handful cashed in the child-care credits. The report, "The Little Engine That Hasn't," finds that of 20 states offering the subsidies, 16 had five or fewer corporations claiming the tax credit in the most recent year data was available; in five of those states, there were no claims at all. Meanwhile, on average, 57% of state corporate filers had no tax liability and 93% had insufficient liability to cash in on the credit.

### UFCW launches Justice @ Wal-Mart

Thousands of union, civil rights, women's groups and community organization members participated Nov. 21 in a "National Day of Action" against Wal-Mart, the nation's biggest employer, biggest retailer—and one of its biggest violators of human, civil and workers' rights. The protest launched a long-term campaign by the United Food and Commercial Workers, Justice @ Wal-Mart, to combat the retailer's well-publicized illegal firing of pro-union workers, harassment and spying on unionists, low pay, bad health care benefits and a history of sexual and racial discrimination.

### Unions demand proxy transparency

Continuing a pattern of protests against corporate excess and lack of transparency, union members from coast to coast demanded this month that Fidelity Investments, the country's largest mutual fund company, disclose how it votes its shareholder proxies. The proxies address issues ranging from corporate fraud to workers' rights, but typically only the vote outcomes are disclosed, not who voted how. Many of the assets Fidelity manages are part of various pension funds and 401(k) plans, but institutional investors like Fidelity traditionally support corporate management in proxy votes, which generally are initiated by unions, social justice groups and other dissident shareholders. The Dec. 4 protests backed an AFL-CIO demand that Fidelity support a federal rule change forcing all funds to disclose their votes. The federation also urged union members to write to the Securities and Exchange Commission to support the change.

### Longshore workers settle; voting now

The International Longshore and Warehouse Union reached a tentative six-year contract settlement Nov. 23 with the Pacific Maritime Association, agreeing to technological changes that will eliminate some jobs in exchange for increased pension benefits, new safety protections and somewhat wider union jurisdiction. For more information, visit [www.ilwu.org](http://www.ilwu.org).

### NLRB restored to full strength

The U.S. Senate has confirmed three Republicans and two Democrats to the National Labor Relations Board, bringing it to full strength after several months. The Republicans are management attorney Robert J. Battista, who will serve as chairman; arbitrator Peter C. Schaumber; and former Justice Department official R. Alex Acosta. The Democrats are Dennis P. Walsh, who served a one-year recess appointment on the board that ended Dec. 2001, and current board member Wilma B. Liebman.

## Rubber hits the road: DJ yields on contraceptives

A two-year struggle to win contraceptive coverage under all Dow Jones health care plans has ended in a sweeping victory for company employees, including nearly two years of retroactive payments. The settlement, announced Dec. 5, ends a lawsuit filed with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission on behalf of three female Dow Jones employees.

"We're ecstatic IAPPE members were able to settle the charge with Dow Jones without having to go to court," said Dawn Kopecki, healthcare committee chairwoman at the TNG-CWA local that represents Dow Jones employees. "As a result, all Dow Jones employees, their spouses and dependents now have coverage, effective immediately, for prescription contraceptives, devices and services under all of the company's health plans."

The lawsuit, breaking a long-standing stalemate on the issue, was filed by attorneys from the Planned Parenthood Federation. It alleged that Dow Jones' lack of coverage for prescription contraceptives in one of its medical insurance plans, the Dow Jones/Aetna Comprehensive Medical Option, constituted sex discrimination in violation of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and of the Pregnancy Discrimination Act.

Because the company's employees had a choice of medical plans, including at least one that covered pre-

scription contraceptives, Dow Jones contended that the absence of contraceptive coverage in one option did not discriminate against women because they could choose a different plan. The plaintiffs, however, cited a December 2000 EEOC ruling that employers must include prescription contraceptive coverage in every health insurance plan offered to employees.

Although the EEOC decision was not binding on Dow Jones, the company said it voluntarily expanded its coverage to avoid litigation costs but did not admit any violation of discrimination law. Under terms of the settlement, Dow Jones has agreed to provide coverage for all FDA-approved prescription contraceptives and related medical services in all of its medical plans for all employees.

Dow Jones also will reimburse current and former employees for out-of-pocket costs spent on previously uncovered prescription contraceptives and related services for themselves and their covered dependents since January 1, 2001. The company added that it would immediately notify current and former employees of reimbursement claims procedures; claims for retroactive payments must be filed no later than Feb. 28.

Based on the settlement, the EEOC charges have been withdrawn.

Other terms of the settlement are confidential and were not disclosed.

## Editor's censorship prompts censure by district council

Delegates to the Great Lakes District Council meeting in November had more on their plate than the usual reports. They unanimously adopted a resolution blasting Ron Royhab, executive editor of the Toledo Blade, for his "blatant lapse of fundamental journalistic ethics."

The unusual measure followed complaints from the Toledo Guild over the disciplining of reporter George Tanber for alleged insubordination. Tanber was warned of possible dismissal after vehemently protesting the editing of his story on the legal problems faced by a local businessman; then recently named chairman of the county port authority. The businessman, in addition to being one of the Blade's major advertisers, is a close friend of its publisher and editor-in-chief.

According to Toledo Guild officials, Tanber worked with editors—including Royhab—on three successive drafts of his profile, which he had reported over several months. Unknown to him, however, the third draft was taken from his computer and edited a fourth time by Royhab to include fresh quotes from the businessman. The revised version did not mention that the quotes came from a letter to Royhab, leaving the impression that it came from Tanber's interview.

Moreover, a second quote from someone who had successfully sued the businessman was excised. Royhab also reportedly altered part of the story that

described an investigation of the businessman by the Ohio Supreme Court's Disciplinary Counsel, giving a misleading impression of that probe.

Tanber, on learning of the changes before his story went to print, confronted Royhab and told him he thought his actions were unethical, prompting a disciplinary hearing that resulted in the accusation of insubordination. Although the story was then edited a fifth time, most of the changes Royhab had made were retained and Tanber pulled his byline.

Tanber's un-bylined story ran Sept. 8. Eight days later, despite Royhab's earlier insistence that neither he nor the publisher had a social relationship with the businessman, the Blade published a picture of the publisher at a party the businessman had co-hosted for the publisher and his wife.

Delegates to the Great Lakes District Council, which includes locals representing members from the Blade and the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, both owned by the same family, described themselves as "incensed" at the way Tanber and his story were treated. "As professional journalists, we believe that such deliberate manipulation of the news is a violation of the constitutionally protected role of journalists as guardians of the public trust," the resolution declared.

The council called on the Blade to explain its actions and to apologize to its readers and to Tanber. TNG-CWA is monitoring the situation.

## Dust settled, heroes forgotten

*Continued from page 1*

Among those rebuffing the funding request was the N.Y. Times Fund, which took the position that its employees "couldn't possibly have health problems," Wallace said. Also earning her ire was Reuters, whose management she described as "just horrible" for ordering its employees back to work the day after the attacks—even though the general area was still closed and management itself wouldn't return until its downtown offices had been cleaned several times.

As for the federal government, she adds, "from what I've seen they just want this to go away."

Micki Siegel de Hernandez, director of health and safety for CWA District 1, says the search for funding has been ongoing "from day one," with scant success. The most notable ongoing study, the national World Trade Center Worker and Volunteer Medical Screening

Program, didn't start until this past summer, has only enough funding for approximately 8,500 participants and is limited to those who worked or volunteered on site for at least 24 hours in September 2001 or for at least 80 hours through the end of November.

Surprisingly, perhaps because the criteria have been so stringent, fewer than 3,000 people have been screened to date, prompting Siegel de Hernandez to speculate that the eligibility requirements might be loosened. News employees who were covering the disaster might already qualify, she said, but should in any case register so they can be put on a waiting list.

The toll-free number to call for the screening is 888-702-0630; a web site about the program is at [www.wtcexams.org](http://www.wtcexams.org). Siegel de Hernandez also is willing to answer questions from TNG-CWA members and may be reached at 212-509-6994.



# Media chill

## Staying mum on the biggest media story of the century

Continued from page 1

majority status on Appropriations, which controls the FCC's budget. Although John McCain, incoming chairman of the Commerce Committee, has included media ownership on his hearings list for next year, it's unclear whether he'll use his position as Hollings did, blocking FCC actions he disliked.

Although Powell publicly insists he has not made up his mind on any rule changes, he has pushed an aggressive timetable that leaves little time for opponents to respond. A Dec. 2 deadline was set for written comments, with a final decision to be made this spring. Public hearings wouldn't be necessary, Powell said initially, because folks could just put their comments in writing; when challenged, he amended his position to insist that the FCC simply doesn't have the money with which to pay for hearings.

None of that went down well with various groups, including TNG-CWA, prompting a flurry of petitions that squeezed out an extra month for the written comments. Powell also belatedly agreed to a single public hearing, in Richmond, VA, sometime in February. But the overall lack of meaningful public input has drawn harsh criticism from FCC member Michael Copps, encouraging others to take the initiative. The Columbia University Law School has agreed to host a public hearing Jan. 16, with Copps announcing not only that he would attend but that he would attempt to ensure a commission quorum. Additional hearings, with support from TNG-CWA, are being planned for Los Angeles and Seattle in February.

All this activity suggests that grassroots involvement can make a difference, but of course such involvement requires that the issues be communicated. Indeed, it's reasonable to think that the potential sweeping away of ownership restrictions on the mass media, paving the way for a "Big Three" or "Big Four" who will determine what Americans see, hear and think about, would merit front-page attention. But that simply hasn't been the case.

Make an effort and you might find mention of a recent

letter to the FCC from a coalition of public health experts, contending that relaxed ownership rules could jeopardize children's programming. Ferret around long enough and you might stumble across a report, released last month by a non-profit think tank, documenting how deregulation of radio by the 1996 Telecommunications Act (another critical piece of legislation that received negligible press exposure) has produced less competition, less programming diversity and more homogenous radio formats.

And if you burrow deeply enough you can unearth various critiques of the flimsy "studies" on which the FCC plans to justify its actions, studies that conclude either a) the people who claim there is less media diversity today don't know what they're talking about (look at all those cable channels!) or b) that loss of media diversity isn't a bad thing—indeed, that single ownership of multiple media outlets allows synergies, economies of scale, blah-blah blah.

Two things about this are notable. First, that such digging and ferreting are needed at all. The ownership rules at stake don't affect some kind of obscure, backwater industry—this is the media we're talking about: the modern-day factories of an era we're content to describe as "the Information Age." The newspaper segment of that age is a \$55 billion industry all by itself. The mega-corporations that already control huge swaths of the media landscape—notably AOL Time Warner, Disney, Vivendi, News Corp., Viacom, Bertelsmann, General Electric—generate more revenue than most countries of the world. Just the economic implications of further consolidating media ownership—never mind the complexities of the media's role in a democracy—cry out for sustained and thorough news coverage and analysis.

The second notable thing is how much of the opposition to the rule changes falls into the "Duh" category. Don't run with sharp objects. Don't stick your tongue into an electrical outlet. Don't—if you love democracy; if you believe self-government is possible only if there is a free exchange of information, opinions and ideas—don't allow a few vested interests to control the news. These are things you say to children. Say them to adults and you're telling the emperor he has no clothes—but this emperor, alas, doesn't care.

None of this is novel for the newspaper industry, which has been imploding in slow-motion for decades. It's astonishing how frequently The Guild Reporter ran stories and columns in the 'Forties and 'Fifties lamenting the steady decline of newspaper competition and the rise of newspaper chains. When Ben Bagdikian created a stir in 1983 with his book "The Media Monopoly," he identified some 50 corporations that controlled the lion's share of U.S. newspapers, magazines, books, television network, radio stations and movie studios. Today, a list of 50 corporations with substantial media holdings would be a miracle.

But while this consolidation has been defended at all times with the claim that it would benefit the newsroom—thanks to the "synergies" and "economies of scale" mentioned above—just the opposite has been true. Media companies don't buy each other because of a corporate desire to illuminate the republic; it's all about the money. Or as A.J. Liebling wrote, some 40 years ago: "Money is not made by competition among newspapers, but by avoiding it." That's why profit margins in the newspaper industry have been climbing from single digits in the 'Sixties to a point at which margins of less than 20% are considered disreputable.

Those margins, as Guild members already know, aren't the rewards of higher circulation. They come from cutting payrolls and depressing wages. One predictable consequence is the enormous decline in statehouse coverage, already well documented by the journalism reviews. Another is the near-demise of true investigative reporting at all but the largest metros. Another: the findings of a Pew Research Center poll that more than three-fourths of all journalists believe that news stories perceived as important but dull are sometimes ignored (they're



just not entertaining enough, darn it!), while a third believe that new stories that might hurt the financial interests of their news organization often or sometimes go unreported.

The converse of that last observation also holds true. Russell Mokhiber and Robert Weissman, co-authors of "Corporate Predators: The Hunt for MegaProfits and the Attack on Democracy," recently had a cow over the Newsweek cover story, "Why TV is Good for Kids." Why, they asked, would Newsweek try and convince us that television is good for kids? Could it be because Newsweek is owned by the Washington Post Co., which also owns a sprawling cable company and six broadcast stations around the country—a pertinent fact not mentioned in the article? Is that why the chief expert cited in the eight-page article, a psychology prof at the University of Massachusetts, is never identified by Newsweek as a paid consultant to "a variety of television networks and advertising interests"?

Now that's "synergy" for you.

The predictable outcome of all this is already on display in Canada, which for some inexplicable reason is leading the way down the deregulation path. There the Winnipeg-based Asper family controls CanWest Global, which in turn controls a major share of Canadian news coverage through its ownership of the National Post and 13 other major dailies in the Southam chain, as well as the Global television network.

Although the Guild Reporter reported a few months back that CanWest apparently had shelved a policy of requiring all of its newspapers to publish "national editorials"—a policy that sparked a national uproar—the story proved premature. While such editorials are no longer published weekly, as originally intended, Canadian journalists report that at least four have been printed since early summer. One, on June 17, dismissed all anti-globalization protesters as "a furtive cabal of self-appointed world-savers." Its statement that "We resent even having to pay attention to these people" was readily absorbed by CanWest's outlets, which either ignored or mocked "these people" in subsequent news stories.

A second ran on Sept. 29. A third, on Oct. 26, urged the governor of the Bank of Canada not to raise interest rates—a move that wouldn't go down well for a company up to its eyeballs in debt. A fourth was published Nov. 28—including on the front page of the Times-Colonist.

Just as significant as the chain editorials is the Aspers' proclivity for signalling the slant they expect in news coverage through toughly worded, often belligerent speeches. As just one example, Izzy Asper, CanWest's founder and chairman, gave a speech in Montréal the day before Halloween attacking more than a dozen media organizations for being anti-Semitic, as evidenced by their "sloppy" and "dishonest" reporting on various Middle East issues. While the various CanWest newspapers ran his remarks uncritically, Montréal Gazette columnist Sue Montgomery tried to argue that it's concentration of media ownership, more than "dishonest reporting," that accounts for growing distrust of the media.

Much of her column actually made it into the paper, which also is owned by CanWest. But approximately 150 words did not, including this extract: "What is so disturbing about what Israel Asper says is the chill it sends through the newsrooms he owns, and he owns a very large number in this country. After reading Asper's latest speech, what journalist in the Southam chain isn't going to second-guess a story or opinion piece that may not reflect the word according to our boss?"

That question will be asked a lot more often if the FCC continues on its apparent course without effective opposition. Just don't look for it in your daily newspaper.

## What's up for grabs

The Federal Communication Commission is seeking comment on six media ownership rules by Jan. 2, with a Feb. 3 deadline for replies to the first round of comments. The existing rules, briefly, are as follows:

- **National television ownership rule.** Prohibits any entity from controlling television stations with a combined audience reach exceeding 35% of U.S. television households.
- **Local television multiple-ownership rule.** Allows the combination of two television stations in the same Designated Market Area, provided the grade B contours (a definition of broadcast strength) of the stations do not overlap; or (a) at least one of the stations is not among the four highest-ranked stations in the market, and (b) at least eight independently owned and operating full-power commercial and noncommercial television stations would remain in that market after the combination.
- **Radio-television cross-ownership rule.** Allows common ownership of one or two TV stations and up to six radio stations in any market in which at least 20 independent voices would remain post-combination; or common ownership of two TV stations and up to four radio stations in a market where at least 10 independent voices would remain post-combination; or of one TV and one radio station, notwithstanding the number of independent voices in the market.
- **Dual-network rule.** Permits a television broadcast station to affiliate with a network that maintains more than one broadcast network, unless the dual or multiple networks are created by a combination between ABC, CBS, Fox, or NBC.
- **Newspaper-broadcast cross-ownership rule.** Prohibits common ownership between a broadcast television station and newspaper in the same market.
- **Local radio ownership rule.** Prohibits common ownership of more than eight radio stations in a local market with more than 45 radio stations; seven stations in a market with 30-44 radio stations; six stations in a market with 15-29 stations; and five stations in a market with less than 14 stations.



## Labor round-up

### Supremes agree: organizing helps all

In a rare victory for labor, the U.S. Supreme Court has refused to review a circuit court decision allowing unions to charge represented non-members for union organizing in other workplaces. Although the Supreme Court previously has ruled a union can't bill nonmembers for its political activities, it let stand a 9th Circuit Court of Appeals decision that all employees in an occupational field benefit when salaries increase, and therefore may be charged for a union's collective bargaining work in non-represented locations. The decision came in a case in which grocery workers for chains based in California, Colorado and Michigan were being billed for union-organizing in other markets.

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Continuing a pattern of protests against corporate excess and lack of transparency, union members from coast to coast demanded this month that Fidelity Investments, the country's largest mutual fund company, disclose how it votes its shareholder proxies. The proxies address issues ranging from corporate fraud to workers' rights, but typically only the vote outcomes are disclosed, not who voted how. Many of the assets Fidelity manages are part of various pension funds and 401(k) plans, but institutional investors like Fidelity traditionally support corporate management in proxy votes, which generally are initiated by unions, social justice groups and other dissident shareholders. The Dec. 4 protests backed an AFL-CIO demand that Fidelity support a federal rule change forcing all funds to disclose their votes. The federation also urged union members to write to the Securities and Exchange Commission to support the change.

### Longshore workers settle; voting now

The International Longshore and Warehouse Union reached a tentative six-year contract settlement Nov. 23 with the Pacific Maritime Association, agreeing to technological changes that will eliminate some jobs in exchange for increased pension benefits, new safety protections and somewhat wider union jurisdiction. For more information, visit [www.ilwu.org](http://www.ilwu.org).

### NLRB restored to full strength

The U.S. Senate has confirmed three Republicans and two Democrats to the National Labor Relations Board, bringing it to full strength after several months. The Republicans are management attorney Robert J. Battista, who will serve as chairman; arbitrator Peter C. Schaumber; and former Justice Department official R. Alex Acosta. The Democrats are Dennis P. Walsh, who served a one-year recess appointment on the board that ended Dec. 2001, and current board member Wilma B. Liebman.

## Rubber hits the road: DJ yields on contraceptives

A two-year struggle to win contraceptive coverage under all Dow Jones health care plans has ended in a sweeping victory for company employees, including nearly two years of retroactive payments. The settlement, announced Dec. 5, ends a lawsuit filed with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission on behalf of three female Dow Jones employees.

"We're ecstatic IAFE members were able to settle the charge with Dow Jones without having to go to court," said Dawn Kopecki, healthcare committee chairwoman at the TNG-CWA local that represents Dow Jones employees. "As a result, all Dow Jones employees, their spouses and dependents now have coverage, effective immediately, for prescription contraceptives, devices and services under all of the company's health plans."

The lawsuit, breaking a long-standing stalemate on the issue, was filed by attorneys from the Planned Parenthood Federation. It alleged that Dow Jones' lack of coverage for prescription contraceptives in one of its medical insurance plans, the Dow Jones/Aetna Comprehensive Medical Option, constituted sex discrimination in violation of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and of the Pregnancy Discrimination Act.

Because the company's employees had a choice of medical plans, including at least one that covered pre-

scription contraceptives, Dow Jones contended that the absence of contraceptive coverage in one option did not discriminate against women because they could choose a different plan. The plaintiffs, however, cited a December 2000 EEOC ruling that employers must include prescription contraceptive coverage in every health insurance plan offered to employees.

Although the EEOC decision was not binding on Dow Jones, the company said it voluntarily expanded its coverage to avoid litigation costs but did not admit any violation of discrimination law. Under terms of the settlement, Dow Jones has agreed to provide coverage for all FDA-approved prescription contraceptives and related medical services in all of its medical plans for all employees.

Dow Jones also will reimburse current and former employees for out-of-pocket costs spent on previously uncovered prescription contraceptives and related services for themselves and their covered dependents since January 1, 2001. The company added that it would immediately notify current and former employees of reimbursement claims procedures; claims for retroactive payments must be filed no later than Feb. 28.

Based on the settlement, the EEOC charges have been withdrawn.

Other terms of the settlement are confidential and were not disclosed.

## Editor's censorship prompts censure by district council

Delegates to the Great Lakes District Council meeting in November had more on their plate than the usual reports. They unanimously adopted a resolution blasting Ron Royhab, executive editor of the Toledo Blade, for his "blatant lapse of fundamental journalistic ethics."

The unusual measure followed complaints from the Toledo Guild over the disciplining of reporter George Tanber for alleged insubordination. Tanber was warned of possible dismissal after vehemently protesting the editing of his story on the legal problems faced by a local businessman, then recently named chairman of the county port authority. The businessman, in addition to being one of the Blade's major advertisers, is a close friend of its publisher and editor-in-chief.

According to Toledo Guild officials, Tanber worked with editors—including Royhab—on three successive drafts of his profile, which he had reported over several months. Unknown to him, however, the third draft was taken from his computer and edited a fourth time by Royhab to include fresh quotes from the businessman. The revised version did not mention that the quotes came from a letter to Royhab, leaving the impression that it came from Tanber's interview.

Moreover, a second quote from someone who had successfully sued the businessman was excised. Royhab also reportedly altered part of the story that

described an investigation of the businessman by the Ohio Supreme Court's Disciplinary Counsel, giving a misleading impression of that probe.

Tanber, on learning of the changes before his story went to print, confronted Royhab and told him he thought his actions were unethical, prompting a disciplinary hearing that resulted in the accusation of insubordination. Although the story was then edited a fifth time, most of the changes Royhab had made were retained and Tanber pulled his byline.

Tanber's un-bylined story ran Sept. 8. Eight days later, despite Royhab's earlier insistence that neither he nor the publisher had a social relationship with the businessman, the Blade published a picture of the publisher at a party the businessman had co-hosted for the publisher and his wife.

Delegates to the Great Lakes District Council, which includes locals representing members from the Blade and the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, both owned by the same family, described themselves as "incensed" at the way Tanber and his story were treated. "As professional journalists, we believe that such deliberate manipulation of the news is a violation of the constitutionally protected role of journalists as guardians of the public trust," the resolution declared.

The council called on the Blade to explain its actions and to apologize to its readers and to Tanber. TNG-CWA is monitoring the situation.

## Dust settled, heroes forgotten

*Continued from page 1*

Among those rebuffing the funding request was the N.Y. Times Fund, which took the position that its employees "couldn't possibly have health problems," Wallace said. Also earning her ire was Reuters, whose management she described as "just horrible" for ordering its employees back to work the day after the attacks—even though the general area was still closed and management itself wouldn't return until its downtown offices had been cleaned several times.

As for the federal government, she adds, "from what I've seen they just want this to go away."

Micki Siegel de Hernandez, director of health and safety for CWA District 1, says the search for funding has been ongoing "from day one," with scant success. The most notable ongoing study, the national World Trade Center Worker and Volunteer Medical Screening

Program, didn't start until this past summer, has only enough funding for approximately 8,500 participants and is limited to those who worked or volunteered on site for at least 24 hours in September 2001 or for at least 80 hours through the end of November.

Surprisingly, perhaps because the criteria have been so stringent, fewer than 3,000 people have been screened to date, prompting Siegel de Hernandez to speculate that the eligibility requirements might be loosened. News employees who were covering the disaster might already qualify, she said, but should in any case register so they can be put on a waiting list.

The toll-free number to call for the screening is 888-702-0630; a web site about the program is at [www.wtcexams.org](http://www.wtcexams.org). Siegel de Hernandez also is willing to answer questions from TNG-CWA members and may be reached at 212-509-6994.



# Media chill

## Staying mum on the biggest media story of the century

Continued from page 1

majority status on Appropriations, which controls the FCC's budget. Although John McCain, incoming chairman of the Commerce Committee, has included media ownership on his hearings list for next year, it's unclear whether he'll use his position as Hollings did, blocking FCC actions he disliked.

Although Powell publicly insists he has not made up his mind on any rule changes, he has pushed an aggressive timetable that leaves little time for opponents to respond. A Dec. 2 deadline was set for written comments, with a final decision to be made this spring. Public hearings wouldn't be necessary, Powell said initially, because folks could just put their comments in writing; when challenged, he amended his position to insist that the FCC simply doesn't have the money with which to pay for hearings.

None of that went down well with various groups, including TNG-CWA, prompting a flurry of petitions that squeezed out an extra month for the written comments. Powell also belatedly agreed to a single public hearing, in Richmond, VA, sometime in February. But the overall lack of meaningful public input has drawn harsh criticism from FCC member Michael Copps, encouraging others to take the initiative. The Columbia University Law School has agreed to host a public hearing Jan. 16, with Copps announcing not only that he would attend but that he would attempt to ensure a commission quorum. Additional hearings, with support from TNG-CWA, are being planned for Los Angeles and Seattle in February.

All this activity suggests that grassroots involvement can make a difference, but of course such involvement requires that the issues be communicated. Indeed, it's reasonable to think that the potential sweeping away of ownership restrictions on the mass media, paving the way for a "Big Three" or "Big Four" who will determine what Americans see, hear and think about, would merit front-page attention. But that simply hasn't been the case.

Make an effort and you might find mention of a recent

letter to the FCC from a coalition of public health experts, contending that relaxed ownership rules could jeopardize children's programming. Ferret around long enough and you might stumble across a report, released last month by a non-profit think tank, documenting how deregulation of radio by the 1996 Telecommunications Act (another critical piece of legislation that received negligible press exposure) has produced less competition, less programming diversity and more homogenous radio formats.

And if you burrow deeply enough you can unearth various critiques of the flimsy "studies" on which the FCC plans to justify its actions, studies that conclude either a) the people who claim there is less media diversity today don't know what they're talking about (look at all those cable channels!) or b) that loss of media diversity isn't a bad thing—indeed, that single ownership of multiple media outlets allows synergies, economies of scale, blah-blah blah.

Two things about this are notable. First, that such digging and ferreting are needed at all. The ownership rules at stake don't affect some kind of obscure, backwater industry—this is the media we're talking about: the modern-day factories of an era we're content to describe as "the Information Age." The newspaper segment of that age is a \$55 billion industry all by itself. The mega-corporations that already control huge swaths of the media landscape—notably AOL Time Warner, Disney, Vivendi, News Corp., Viacom, Bertelsmann, General Electric—generate more revenue than most countries of the world. Just the economic implications of further consolidating media ownership—never mind the complexities of the media's role in a democracy—cry out for sustained and thorough news coverage and analysis.

The second notable thing is how much of the opposition to the rule changes falls into the "Duh" category. Don't run with sharp objects. Don't stick your tongue into an electrical outlet. Don't—if you love democracy; if you believe self-government is possible only if there is a free exchange of information, opinions and ideas—don't allow a few vested interests to control the news. These are things you say to children. Say them to adults and you're telling the emperor he has no clothes—but this emperor, alas, doesn't care.

None of this is novel for the newspaper industry, which has been imploding in slow-motion for decades. It's astonishing how frequently The Guild Reporter ran stories and columns in the 'Forties and 'Fifties lamenting the steady decline of newspaper competition and the rise of newspaper chains. When Ben Bagdikian created a stir in 1983 with his book "The Media Monopoly," he identified some 50 corporations that controlled the lion's share of U.S. newspapers, magazines, books, television network, radio stations and movie studios. Today, a list of 50 corporations with substantial media holdings would be a miracle.

But while this consolidation has been defended at all times with the claim that it would benefit the newsroom—thanks to the "synergies" and "economies of scale" mentioned above—just the opposite has been true. Media companies don't buy each other because of a corporate desire to illuminate the republic; it's all about the money. Or as A.J. Liebling wrote, some 40 years ago: "Money is not made by competition among newspapers, but by avoiding it." That's why profit margins in the newspaper industry have been climbing from single digits in the 'Sixties to a point at which margins of less than 20% are considered disreputable.

Those margins, as Guild members already know, aren't the rewards of higher circulation. They come from cutting payrolls and depressing wages. One predictable consequence is the enormous decline in statehouse coverage, already well documented by the journalism reviews. Another is the near-demise of true investigative reporting at all but the largest metros. Another: the findings of a Pew Research Center poll that more than three-fourths of all journalists believe that news stories perceived as important but dull are sometimes ignored (they're



just not entertaining enough, darn it!), while a third believe that new stories that might hurt the financial interests of their news organization often or sometimes go unreported.

The converse of that last observation also holds true. Russell Mokhiber and Robert Weissman, co-authors of "Corporate Predators: The Hunt for MegaProfits and the Attack on Democracy," recently had a cow over the Newsweek cover story, "Why TV is Good for Kids." Why, they asked, would Newsweek try and convince us that television is good for kids? Could it be because Newsweek is owned by the Washington Post Co., which also owns a sprawling cable company and six broadcast stations around the country—a pertinent fact not mentioned in the article? Is that why the chief expert cited in the eight-page article, a psychology prof at the University of Massachusetts, is never identified by Newsweek as a paid consultant to "a variety of television networks and advertising interests"?

Now that's "synergy" for you.

The predictable outcome of all this is already on display in Canada, which for some inexplicable reason is leading the way down the deregulation path. There the Winnipeg-based Asper family controls CanWest Global, which in turn controls a major share of Canadian news coverage through its ownership of the National Post and 13 other major dailies in the Southam chain, as well as the Global television network.

Although the Guild Reporter reported a few months back that CanWest apparently had shelved a policy of requiring all of its newspapers to publish "national editorials"—a policy that sparked a national uproar—the story proved premature. While such editorials are no longer published weekly, as originally intended, Canadian journalists report that at least four have been printed since early summer. One, on June 17, dismissed all anti-globalization protesters as "a furtive cabal of self-appointed world-savers." Its statement that "We resent even having to pay attention to these people" was readily absorbed by CanWest's outlets, which either ignored or mocked "these people" in subsequent news stories.

A second ran on Sept. 29. A third, on Oct. 26, urged the governor of the Bank of Canada not to raise interest rates—a move that wouldn't go down well for a company up to its eyeballs in debt. A fourth was published Nov. 28—including on the front page of the Times-Colonist.

Just as significant as the chain editorials is the Aspers' proclivity for signalling the slant they expect in news coverage through toughly worded, often belligerent speeches. As just one example, Izzy Asper, CanWest's founder and chairman, gave a speech in Montréal the day before Halloween attacking more than a dozen media organizations for being anti-Semitic, as evidenced by their "sloppy" and "dishonest" reporting on various Middle East issues. While the various CanWest newspapers ran his remarks uncritically, Montréal Gazette columnist Sue Montgomery tried to argue that it's concentration of media ownership, more than "dishonest reporting," that accounts for growing distrust of the media.

Much of her column actually made it into the paper, which also is owned by CanWest. But approximately 150 words did not, including this extract: "What is so disturbing about what Israel Asper says is the chill it sends through the newsrooms he owns, and he owns a very large number in this country. After reading Asper's latest speech, what journalist in the Southam chain isn't going to second-guess a story or opinion piece that may not reflect the word according to our boss?"

That question will be asked a lot more often if the FCC continues on its apparent course without effective opposition. Just don't look for it in your daily newspaper.

## What's up for grabs

The Federal Communication Commission is seeking comment on six media ownership rules by Jan. 2, with a Feb. 3 deadline for replies to the first round of comments. The existing rules, briefly, are as follows:

- **National television ownership rule.** Prohibits any entity from controlling television stations with a combined audience reach exceeding 35% of U.S. television households.

- **Local television multiple-ownership rule.** Allows the combination of two television stations in the same Designated Market Area, provided the grade B contours (a definition of broadcast strength) of the stations do not overlap; or (a) at least one of the stations is not among the four highest-ranked stations in the market, and (b) at least eight independently owned and operating full-power commercial and noncommercial television stations would remain in that market after the combination.

- **Radio-television cross-ownership rule.** Allows common ownership of one or two TV stations and up to six radio stations in any market in which at least 20 independent voices would remain post-combination; or common ownership of two TV stations and up to four radio stations in a market where at least 10 independent voices would remain post-combination; or of one TV and one radio station, notwithstanding the number of independent voices in the market.

- **Dual-network rule.** Permits a television broadcast station to affiliate with a network that maintains more than one broadcast network, unless the dual or multiple networks are created by a combination between ABC, CBS, Fox, or NBC.

- **Newspaper-broadcast cross-ownership rule.** Prohibits common ownership between a broadcast television station and newspaper in the same market.

- **Local radio ownership rule.** Prohibits common ownership of more than eight radio stations in a local market with more than 45 radio stations; seven stations in a market with 30-44 radio stations; six stations in a market with 15-29 stations; and five stations in a market with less than 14 stations.



# Bush is right: there's a war going on, but it's not the one he's promoting

By Andy Zipser  
Editor, The Guild Reporter

Come January, George Bush will be at the mid-point of his first term as president and the Republicans will have a clear majority in both houses of Congress. Aside from whatever rear-guard action the listless Democrats throw up in the Senate, where the rules favor obstruction more readily than in the House, it appears the way has been cleared for imposition of even more of the corporate agenda than we've already seen.

What we have seen is increasingly grim. The U.S. unemployment rate jumped 0.3% in November, to 6%, tying an eight-year high set earlier this year. Six percent doesn't sound terribly high when compared, say, with Western Europe, which has been suffering its own economic problems. But the Europeans, for the most part, have resisted the forces that for two decades have unraveled the U.S. social safety net while steadily transferring the tax burden from corporations and the rich to the middle class. Unemployment in the U.S. is enormously more burdensome than in other industrialized countries.

Moreover, that 0.3% increase, which looks so insignificant when expressed in decimals and percentages, translates into an additional 299,000 people without jobs. The Bureau of Labor Statistics says 8.5 million people were out of work in November, and that's only counting those who were still actively looking for work. Add those trying to scrape by on part-time wages while looking for full-time work, or those who simply have given up, and the BLS statistic jumps from 6% to more than 9.5%.

But the problem isn't just that the unemployment rate is climbing; it's that those without work are finding it harder to find jobs, so they stay unemployed longer. That's why, last March, Congress passed a 13-week extension in federal unemployment benefits, on top of the maximum 26 weeks that laid-off workers typically get from the states they live in. That extension starts expiring Dec. 28, when an estimated 820,000 people will lose their benefits, smack in the middle of the yuletide season. Each week thereafter, barring action by Congress when it reconvenes Jan. 7, the benefits of an additional 95,000 will evaporate.

Meanwhile, the U.S. ended its fiscal year with a \$286 billion budget decline, swinging from a \$127 billion surplus in October 2001 to a \$159 billion deficit two months ago. Extending unemployment benefits wouldn't add to this deficit because the federal unemployment insurance trust fund, from which additional benefits would be taken, has more than \$25 billion for that very purpose, but the deficit makes a convenient cover for declaring that the federal government is too strapped to help. Then again, this administration and Congress view any federal money—remember how quickly the notion of a Social Security trust fund "lock box" was forgotten?—as part of one big piggy bank, and they're not reluctant to swing a hammer to pay for whatever tax cuts, bonuses for political appointees or military adventures they desire.

While the jobless numbers keep trending up, those with jobs frequently find their personal fortunes trending in the opposite direction. The minimum wage, for example, has

remained stubbornly mired at \$5.15 an hour since 1997, when its purchasing power was \$5.80 in today's dollars. That's not just bad for the full-time workers who try to scrape by on \$10,712 a year—two-thirds of whom are adults 20 or older—but the low federal minimum depresses wages for all unskilled and semi-skilled workers.

Corporate demands for wage freezes are becoming commonplace, with company chieftains like Dow Jones chairman Peter Kann airily explaining—from the comfort of his own multi-million-dollar annual income—that such is the nature of capitalism. The airline industry, meanwhile, has gone far beyond wage freezes and is demanding wage cuts. And health care costs, Rush Limbaugh's fulsome claims to the contrary notwithstanding, are climbing each year by double-digit percentages, with employers making no secret of their plans to force most of those increases onto their wage-frozen employees. No surprise, then, that the number of Americans without any health insurance is back on an upswing, hitting 41.2 million at the end of 2001 and climbing from there.

Other job benefits, notably retirement plans, also are getting whacked. Nearly one in ten companies with more than 200 workers eliminated retiree health benefits for new hires or for existing employees within the past two years, according to the Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation. Matching contributions to 401(k) plans either are being scaled back or, as at Ford, have been stopped altogether.

And those who lose their jobs—there were nearly 10 million displaced workers in the three-year period through 2001, a 23% increase over the previous three years—often find that the only alternative to unemployment is a job at lower pay. The BLS reported this past summer that of 9.9 million displaced workers in the 1999-2001 period, approximately 4 million had held their jobs for at least three years. Of that number, 1.6 million reported their earnings to BLS after finding new, full-time employment—and of them, more than half said they were earning less than they had in their prior positions.

(Perhaps more unnervingly, roughly a third of the 4 million were not working at all in January, 2002, when the survey was conducted, although BLS did not report how long they had been unemployed. An additional 400,000 were working part-time or were self-employed.)

Jobs don't just disappear. Nearly half—47%—of the lost jobs in the BLS survey were the result of employers closing or moving the business, usually overseas, usually in search of cheaper labor, which further depresses U.S. wages. And the trend is no longer confined largely to blue-collar manufacturing jobs.

A Hewlett-Packard spokeswoman, by way of illustration, told Wall Street analysts Dec. 4 that the high-tech company is "aggressively realigning our resources." Translation: now that the company has shifted essentially all of its manufacturing abroad, it's doing the same with its software and consulting businesses. The immediate beneficiary will be India, where HP already has several thousand employees, including high-end programmers that cost a quarter of their U.S. counterparts. But that's already too much. Within a few years, the company is predicting, an even

greater share of its work will be done in China.

Taken as a whole, such trends account for the widening income gap within the United States and the re-emergence of class as an issue that is rending an already tattered social fabric. What they don't explain is the generally lackadaisical public response. It's as though most working people were like the frog in the folk tale who sits in a pot of water, oblivious to the fire beneath: the water temperature rises so gradually that the frog cooks to death without realizing his danger.

With the Democratic Party twisted into a knot, the only organized center of resistance to the corporate-GOP bid for complete dominance is the labor movement. But that, too, is a wan adversary. Unions now represent a smaller percentage of the non-government workforce than they did prior to passage of the National Labor Relations Act, in part because the government routinely ignores employers who illegally battle organizing drives, indulge in surface bargaining and terrorize employees who try to stand up for themselves.

There are, of course, numerous reasons why organized labor is on the defensive, from a wider culture that extols the macho, go-it-alone mystique (it's okay for employers to be organized, but each employee should be able to stand on his own two feet) to the in-bred bureaucracy and occasional graft that afflicts some unions. But there's little question that Republicans who worship unequivocally at the free-market altar sense that this may be their long-awaited opportunity to administer the coup-de-grace.

The broad outlines of the anti-labor campaign are readily evident to anyone following the news. For example, the most unionized segment of the economy has been the government workforce, so the White House has been leading a frontal assault under the banner of homeland defense, stripping away union protection from tens of thousands of federal employees as it consolidates 22 agencies. Separately, as many as 850,000 government jobs are being readied for privatization and outsourcing, paving the way for still more decimation of organized labor's ranks.

Meanwhile, a two-pronged attack is being mounted by a corporate-bankrolled Congress and by the investing class.

The legislative assault, on unions, on workers' rights, on privacy rights, on freedom of association and on countless other trappings of democracy, is already underway. In recent weeks, for example, the newly invigorated Republican majority reversed the provision of the Homeland Security Act that banned government contracts from being awarded to companies that move off-shore to avoid paying U.S. taxes. The original ban was passed in the first blush of patriotic fervor following the Sept. 11 attacks, with Bush trumpeting that American companies "ought to pay taxes and be good citizens," but apparently a much different tune was sounded behind closed doors after the election.

The Homeland Security Act is a grab bag of other favors to corporate interests, not least its creation of a new and enormous set of exemptions from the Freedom of Information Act that will affect all news-gathering operations. As signed into law, the act now enables companies to hide information—including safety violations and consumer hazards—by reporting it to the government as "Critical Infrastructure Informa-

tion," which is to say, information that's related to homeland security.

Other, more conventional legislative attacks are still shaping up. CWA lobbyist Lou Gerber, for example, has warned of a renewed effort to amend the Workplace Investment Act to allow employers to offer compensatory time off in lieu of overtime pay. Although the initiative will be presented as one of giving employees a choice, Gerber predicts it is highly unlikely it will include safeguards to prevent employers from forcing workers to opt for the comp time—which, in many cases, they'll be unable to take because of work demands.

The other wing of the pincer attack, consisting of the corporate and investment classes, has already asserted itself in closed-door meetings at the White House and by bankrolling the last election. But to see how blatant it is becoming, turn to the Nov. 14 research report from Morgan Stanley that phrased the dominant ethos as bluntly as any Wall Street document: "Look for the union label . . . and run the other way," it counseled investors. "What does history suggest about investing in heavily unionized industries? Avoid them."

Although much of the investment bank's report focused on heavy industries—the same industries that have been leading the charge overseas—its analysis was drawn with a broad brush of far wider implications. "In all kinds of respects we are living in a brave new world, but a decidedly old world phenomenon—unions—may weigh in on some new world issues in the year ahead," the report summarized. "The environment we currently envision includes limited pricing power, pension liabilities that rise while asset prices fall, and spiraling post-retirement healthcare benefits."

"Limited pricing power" is Wall Street-speak for a market with too many goods and not enough demand, as occurs when incomes are stagnating or declining. Under such circumstances, the report noted, "pensioners, employees and debtors may receive a large chunk of future cash flows . . . perhaps at the expense of equity holders."

That's as clear a call to arms by the capitalist class as you're ever likely to hear.

The tech workers whose jobs are being exported to India and China, after years of working 60- and 70-hour weeks in hermetic isolation on the assurance that they were nothing like the assembly-line drones of another era, are only the most blatantly victimized workers of Morgan Stanley's "brave new world." But as they learned abruptly when the tech bubble collapsed, and as workers in other occupations are learning more gradually, there really is a difference between people who work for a living and those who live off others' work.

Anything we get—health care, pensions, decent wages—are expenses that the people who pay for Morgan Stanley's reports view as coming out of their profits, not out of the labor that created such wealth in the first place. So expenses must be cut, are being cut, will be cut even more dramatically—unless some force succeeds in standing against the assault.

All of which is another way of saying that there's a war going on, and it's not the one that's trumpeted by Bush in all the media. This one is ours, and it's time to choose sides and enlist.





## LOOKING AHEAD

## Key to diversity: starting at home

By Linda Foley, President

When I first got involved in The Newspaper Guild, 25 years ago, we had established a reputation for fighting against discrimination and inequality in the news industry. Our human rights program focused on defending the rights of women and minorities.

The Newspaper Guild-CWA has won and continues to win many struggles in our quest to end discrimination and to promote equal opportunity at our workplaces. Local 1096's recent success in achieving contraceptive equity in the health plans for Dow Jones employees is only the latest example.

But today, our human rights agenda has expanded. We've discovered it's not enough

just to defend the rights of those we already represent. If our union is going to grow and truly become a force for equal representation, we also must focus on

making it and our workplaces more diverse by reaching out to those we haven't yet touched.

The Guild must undertake activities that actually encourage unrepresented and under-represented groups to participate in our union and in our workplaces. We have to work to open doors, as well as ensure they aren't being slammed shut. This expanded mission will make an already difficult task even more challenging.

There are still too many examples of

Guild members who face discrimination on the job; are denied rights or benefits just because of who they are or who their parents were; are subject to sexual or racial harassment; or simply get treated unfairly. In addition, both our industry and our union lack enough diversity to reflect what's happening in the communities we serve. The ranks of Guild leadership and news industry management are too thin when it comes to minority representation.

Fixing these systemic problems will take everyone's commitment and a lifetime of work and effort. But we have to begin at a point where we can make the most difference. And, we can make the most difference with ourselves.

**'I never knew what diversity meant until today—especially to our union and industry.'**

Since the spring of 2001, the Guild's Human Rights Task Force has been reviewing our human rights program and its goals. Delegates to

The Newspaper Guild's sector conference in February, 2002, adopted a plan to refocus and reorient the program toward training and education about diversity.

Throughout the spring and summer, we established a network of human rights coordinators, with a goal of eventually getting at least one person in each Guild local responsible for human rights and diversity. (So far, about one-third of our locals have appointed such coordinators.)

We recently completed a round of train-

ing sessions for human rights coordinators and Guild leaders at various district council meetings around the U.S.

More than 100 Guild leaders attended those training sessions. The key component was an intense diversity seminar developed by CWA Education Director Dennis Serrette called "Building Unity." TNG-CWA Human Rights Director Anna Padia and Contracts Committee Executive Secretary Debbie Thomas supplemented that session with a break-out workshop on local issues targeted at human rights coordinators, who were encouraged to attend district council meetings with their local leaders.

The reactions of various participants ranged from mild skepticism to enthusiastic applause. One long-time Guild leader said it was "the best training session I've ever attended in all my years with the Guild." Another called it "nothing less than magnificent." At one council meeting, the training caused leaders from two locals to reach an understanding about how they could use

their combined resources to reach out to unrepresented groups. Others were puzzled by the deviation from the Guild's usual "how-to-win-a-grievance" training at these meetings.

One Guild leader summed it up this way: "I never knew what diversity meant until today—especially to our union and industry." In other words, to accomplish our goal of having more voices in both our union and our industry, we must change the way we view diversity.

It's more than just addressing problems of race or gender discrimination. Working on diversity means figuring out how what makes us different from one another makes us stronger together.

*[Editor's note: A follow-up report on the state of diversity in The Newspaper Guild-CWA and in the news industry will be distributed to locals before the end of the year. TNG-CWA will assist locals that want to conduct the "Building Unity" or human rights coordinator training sessions.]*



## A jaundiced view of CBC's stealth privatization

By Lise Lareau  
President, Canadian Media Guild

Little by little, away from public glare and scrutiny, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation is selling off or unloading vital assets, which could ultimately result in the layoff of hundreds of employees. The news has been released bit by bit, in short, neutral-sounding announcements from CBC president Robert Rabinovitch. But these latest moves will have an impact on all of us, and the trend is worth examining.

The carving-up actually started five years ago, with the contracting-out of many internal services, from mailroom duties, shipping and stores to duplication and cleaning and security. Then the internal audit department was contracted-out. It turns out that was just the beginning.

Now the CBC is looking seriously at whether it would be feasible to contract out many—even all—of the jobs in human resources, information technology, finance and corporate payroll. The corporation also is interested in unloading the people and infrastructure connected to transmitter operations, and is considering a takeover offer made by the very person who's in charge of it now! It also is looking at outside contractors to administer its pension plan, even though the

plan's administrative costs are among the lowest in the country; in fact, other organizations try to emulate our plan's efficiency.

Taken all together, this comprises much of the CBC's administrative infrastructure. We think this is blatantly unwise; who wants their paycheque or pension coming from "an alternate service provider" who is not accountable to the CBC board or to CBC corporate policies? It's also immoral; the lowest bidder will likely be lower because it pays its employees less. Perhaps most importantly, the supposed cost savings just aren't there.

Contracting out services often appears to be good for the bottom line, at least for the first year or so. That's when most of the savings are realized, from the layoffs and the leasing or selling of office space and equipment. Afterwards, though—after the CBC employees and their expertise are gone—the savings dwindle. Contracts are renegotiated, and suddenly they become much more expensive. The executives that stick-handled the whole thing, claiming they were transmuting "bricks and mortar into programming dollars," are gone. And you don't know what you had... until it's gone.

**'In a panic to appear to be well-managed, the CBC is cannibalizing itself.'**

What's truly shocking is the short timeline that's being contemplated. If all goes according to the CBC's plan, a decision whether to contract out HR, IT or finance may be made as early as January, the selection of the contractor in March, and a final contract announced in June. Employees could be going out the door as early as September. In the midst of all this rushing around, one has to wonder how much analysis is being done.

In fact, it appears all this is motivated not by sound analysis but by appearances. In its priorities for 2003-04, CBC's senior management lists as priority number one "to demonstrate that CBC is a well-managed company and generate cash flow into programming." This is all about showing the folks in the federal heritage department, in the prime minister's office and at the Treasury Board how lean and mean the CBC can appear to be, whether it makes practical sense or not.

At the same time, the CBC also is selling off or leasing its real estate assets across the country. We all know that it's the employees—the people who actually make the programs or support those who do—who are on

the losing end of this particular initiative.

If we could be sure that any savings were being funneled back into programming, as the corporation keeps telling us, the CBC's contracting-out initiatives might be defensible. Well, savings may be turned into programming money (though I'd like to see proof), but they're not always being turned into CBC programming. CBC management made it clear to union leaders in October that it has written off in-house dramatic television production of any type. And it's buying more and more outside radio and television information programming, something that has always been at the core of the CBC's business. Stranded, the radio show purchased from Jane Hawtin's production company, is one of the latest additions.

So, in a panic to appear to be well-managed, the CBC is cannibalizing itself. You have to wonder who will be left to manage, and what will be left of Canada's national public broadcaster, when all the privatizing is done.

The Canadian Media Guild is not taking any of this contracting-out lightly. We are in the early stages of trying to convince the CBC not to walk down this road. We will take whatever actions are necessary to protect Guild members, as well as the interests of public broadcasting in Canada.

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: January 10.) Letters may be e-mailed to the editor at [azipser@cwa-union.org](mailto:azipser@cwa-union.org).



# RSI doesn't hamper judicial back-hand

By Derek Baxter  
Attorney, Camens & Barr

After years of typing at her job as a reporter with the Fresno Bee, Jacalyn Thornton developed carpal tunnel syndrome and could no longer type or write for more than an hour a day. But Thornton figured that wouldn't be a problem—that she would continue doing her job after her employer provided her with reasonable accommodation, such as voice recognition technology.

That, after all, is what the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires in the United States—doesn't it? Thornton would seem to fit squarely within the definition of the people that the ADA was supposed to help, of otherwise qualified employees who can perform their jobs if only their employers provide reasonable accommodation for their impairments—unless such an accommodation would cause an undue hardship.

But this past summer the 9th Circuit disagreed. This federal appeals court, stretching along the West Coast and purportedly the most liberal in the land, held that Thornton had no claim that she had been wrongly terminated under the ADA because she did not meet the legal definition of "disabled." Even once-liberal courts have now joined in the full-scale assault on disability rights that is serving to diminish the scope of this important civil rights law.

When President Bush (the first incarnation) signed the ADA in 1990, proponents trumpeted it as a historic advance in the rights of persons with disabilities. The law was intended to end employment discrimination against people with disabilities, and

to provide greatly expanded access to public transit and accommodation.

More recently, however, courts have greatly narrowed the definition of "disability." Responding to attacks by corporate lawyers, they are driving a wedge between employees perceived as "truly disabled" (with substantial visual or ambulatory impairments) and employees that management contends are undeserving of ADA protection—including many with carpal tunnel syndrome—even if the latter are unable to work without reasonable accommodation. And courts are agreeing that more and more of the latter group of the "undeserving disabled" should simply be written out of the act's protections.

The first shocker came in the 1999 case of *Sutton v United Airlines*, in which the Supreme Court ruled that employees who improve their vision by wearing corrective lenses are not "disabled," even if employers refuse to hire them despite the corrective measures. This left disabled workers facing a classic Catch-22: if they take mitigating measures to compensate for their disability and thereby qualify to work, they're not "disabled"—even if their employer discriminates against them on the basis of that disability. But if the impairment is so severe it can't be corrected, they are indeed "disabled" under the law—but in the eyes of the employer and the court may no longer be "qualified" to do the job. Only Joseph Heller could come up with that kind of logic.

This past January, the Supreme Court limited the definition of "disability" even further. The ADA defines a "disability" as a "substantial limitation on a major life activity." In a case known as *Toyota v Williams*,

Justice O'Connor, writing for a unanimous court, ruled that for an impairment to "substantially limit" limit the "major life activity" of performing manual activities, it must limit the plaintiff in activities of central importance to most people's daily lives—not just activities particularly important to her own life. Thus, in *Williams*, the plaintiff's carpal tunnel syndrome prevented her from performing certain repetitive motions essential to her job. But those repetitive motions were not of "central importance" to most people's daily lives because most people don't have that particular kind of job. So as long as Williams's impairment didn't prevent her from doing other manual activities deemed to be important to most people—like brushing her teeth—she wasn't "disabled" and Toyota could fire her without running afoul of the ADA.

In Jacalyn Thornton's case, the 9th Circuit merely followed suit from *Williams*. The fact that Thornton was restricted in her ability to type and write did not mean that she was substantially limited in a manual activity of central importance to most people. That typing and writing for more than an hour per day is not of "central importance" will no doubt come as a surprise to most Guild members, but as there was no proof that Thornton's condition restricted her from performing other, "more important" manual activities, the court deemed her not to be disabled under the ADA.

So that's part of the conservative judicial response to the problems confronted by people with disabilities in the workplace: employers don't have to take some of these issues seriously because many individuals just aren't "disabled" to begin with! Little

comfort for the Jacalyn Thorntons out there, and for all those committed to the rights of people with disabilities.

And the results of this onslaught on the ADA? Studies have shown that companies win the overwhelming majority of federal and administrative disability cases resolved on the merits.

This is not to say that people with disabilities shouldn't seek judicial remedies, even though it has become harder for them to have their day in court. The ADA still plays an important role in establishing rights and protections for people with disabilities. But now, more than ever, it's important for TNG-CWA locals to seek collective bargaining solutions to disability and workplace safety issues. Despite the recent judicial setbacks, locals are still free to negotiate for the rights of their unit members, independently of the latest rulings on the ADA.

Most TNG-CWA contracts have fair employment clauses, which act apart from federal law to require that the employer respect the rights of people with disabilities. In many cases, people with disabilities have successfully used the grievance/arbitration system set up in Guild contracts. TNG-CWA can provide advice on how to form local human rights committees and advance human rights in the workplace. TNG-CWA also can provide support in helping to prevent carpal tunnel syndrome and other workplace injuries, and continues to fight for tough ergonomics and safety standards in the workplace.

As courts increasingly give people with disabilities the back of the hand, the Guild's fight for both individual and collective rights is becoming more important than ever.

## Poynter: Private papers just as short-staffed

In a report of the "good news-bad news" variety, the Poynter Institute and the Project for Excellence in Journalism have announced that, on average, newsrooms in privately-owned newspaper chains are no better staffed than those owned by publicly traded publications. That's supposed to be the good news.

The bad news, buried a little more deeply within the report (posted Dec. 5 on [www.poynter.org](http://www.poynter.org)), is that staffing pressures at both kinds of newspapers are all too real. Even privately-held papers—with such exceptions as the St. Petersburg Times and the papers "led by I'll-do-it-my-way publisher Frank Blethen"—are owned by profit seekers "likely to grow restive if earnings soften."

Looking at 178 newspapers with daily circulation of more than 50,000 (80% of the total), the analysis found a nearly identical average of one editorial employee per 1,000 circulation, with somewhat higher staffing levels among smaller newspapers (under 200,000) and somewhat lower among the giants. But individual papers can vary a great deal from the average, ranging from 1.5 full-time professionals per 1,000 circulation to fewer than 0.85. "In other words, the staffing 'haves' put nearly twice the professional staff to work per 1,000 readers as do the 'have-nots.'"

In terms of newsroom cuts last year, both publicly held and privately owned newspapers cut an average of 3% of staff. But, again, there were wide variations, with 43 of the

178 newspapers ending up with the same headcount at year's end as when they started and 17 actually adding staff. But because of Knight Ridder's well-publicized program of paring news staffs by 10%, it alone accounted for "an astonishing" 60% of net cuts in 2001 among the publicly held newspapers.

On a related note, the study asked whether high-quality papers have more generous staffing—and concluded, unsurprisingly, that the answer is more often yes than no. Overall, in comparing five highly regarded newspapers with five "identified informally [and unnamed] as weaker," the survey takers found that "the well-regarded papers were 25% better staffed."

### THE GUILD Reporter

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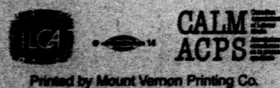
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### DAYBOOK

Deadline for Broun, Barr  
entries, Jan. 31 (postmark)

Midwest District Council,  
Jan. 31-Feb. 2, Milwaukee

New Local Officers Seminar,  
Feb. 14-17, Silver Spring, MD

New England District Council,  
Feb. 22-23, Boston

Amer. Copy Editors Soc. conf.,  
March 6-8, Chicago

CWA Leg.-Political Conference,  
March 9-12, Washington, DC

CWA Nat'l Women's Conference,  
April 3-6, Atlanta

TNG Canada Council,  
April 26-27, Winnipeg

TNG-CWA Executive Council,  
May 4-5, Washington, DC

Freedom Award Fund Banquet,  
May 6, Washington DC

### FROM THE MORGUE

#### Fifty years ago this month:

Forty-five employees of The San Francisco Chronicle are fired or forced into retirement, prompting editor Paul Smith to resign. . . . Guild President Harry Martin, in a lengthy column in *Academy* magazine, argues that television news will never make newspapers obsolete. . . . The Rocky Mountain News raises eyebrows by appointing a male "society" reporter.

#### Twenty-five years ago this month:

The election of a TNG vice president from the U.S. South is run a second time, after incumbent Warren E. Howard polled 971 votes to challenger Faye McCracken's 973, but with several disputed ballots marring the outcome. . . . The Guild and the typographers' union jointly petition U.S. Attorney Griffin Bell to deny an application by the Cincinnati Post and the Enquirer for a joint operating agreement. . . . Thirty-three straight hours of bargaining obtain contracts with the Seattle Times and the Post-Intelligencer less than three hours before a strike deadline.

#### Ten years ago this month:

Responding to pressure from the Guild and community activists, Hearst says it will delay closing the San Antonio Light for at least a month in hopes of finding a buyer. . . . The Detroit Free Press moves its staffers to newly refurbished quarters—and is hit by Guild complaints of extensive ergonomic hazards that make the new facility unsafe. . . . Gil Bailey, a past president of several Guild locals, calls for a national Day of Outrage for all newspaper employees to protest management greed and incompetence.