

Unions bare teeth, picket Pioneer Press

Subscriber boycott launched

The rally was held outside the St. Louis Post-Dispatch building, which like the chain of Suburban Journals ringing the city is owned by Pulitzer. "It's our choice to have union newspapers in St. Louis, and we have thousands who have pledged to support us," TNG-CWA President Linda Foley told the crowd.

In 2001, 80 Pioneer Press employees were laid off or took early retirement, while parent company Knight Ridder posted strong profits and paid its top executives \$10 million in bonuses.

Meanwhile, the Guild's contract with the Post-Dispatch ended this past January and contract talks there also have been described as difficult.

The April 8 slayings have prompted worldwide condemnation because of their seemingly unprovoked natures and because they are being interpreted as an attempt to intimidate reporting that is unfavorable to the U.S. Al-Jazeera's reporting has been far more graphic than the relatively antiseptic coverage provided by American networks, and it had no qualms about showing footage of

Continued on page 2

Journalists are older, poorer Page 8

FCC rule-making challenged by small business advocate

The sometimes beleaguered forces seeking to fend off media deregulation got an unexpected assist this month—unexpected not only because it comes from a government agency, but because the agency represents business interests.

Wading into a battle that is now many months old, the Office of Advocacy for the U.S. Small Business Administration fired off a petition April 9 to Michael Powell, chairman of the Federal Communications Commission, asserting—when stripped of its acronyms and legal jargon—that the deregulatory move is all wet. The FCC, the letter asserts, didn't do its homework, hasn't played by the rules and is causing huge and unnecessary costs for private industry.

Even worse, the petition added, this isn't the first time the FCC has been warned about playing fast and loose with its rule-making, to no apparent effect.

More specifically, the Office of Advocacy—charged with ensuring that federal rule-makers don't unfairly burden small businesses—faults the FCC for conducting rule-making hearings when it's still in a fact-finding stage. The FCC “does not propose the actual terms or drafts of any proposed rules,” the advocate observes. “Instead, the Commission sought general comment on dozens, if not hundreds, of issues that addressed the value of diversity, competition and localism.”

Although the questions raised by the FCC are worthwhile, the advocate added, they do “not counter the fact that the Commission is not proposing anything concrete in its proposed rulemaking.” Moreover, such an open-ended approach to rule-making “is very

costly to the telecommunications industry” because of the uncertainty it creates. Such uncertainty results “in thousands of comments that, at best, can only speculate as to what action the FCC may take and the potential impacts.”

Furthermore, the advocate noted, the FCC did not comply with requirements of the Regulatory Flexibility Act of 1980 that it analyze the impact of any proposed rule on small businesses, limiting its review to reporting and record-keeping requirements. Missing is an FCC assessment of media deregulation “on small broadcast affiliates, the impact on small advertisers, or the impact on small program providers, if there is further consolidation.”

In short, concluded the advocate, the FCC needs to come back with specific rule changes—and an assessment of how they will affect small businesses—and seek comment on those, too.

The intervention of the Office of Advocacy may further derail a process that deregulation proponents had hoped would be concluded by now. New public hearings keep getting scheduled—in Detroit, San Francisco and Los Angeles on April 25, 26 and 28, respectively—and fresh voices of alarm over the FCC's plans are being raised.

In late March, for example, U.S. Senators Wayne Allard, Olympia Snowe and Susan Collins urged Powell to ensure that both the public and Congress have an opportunity to review specific rules before they are issued in final form. A letter supporting that position has been signed by a coalition of 21 union and community groups, including TNG-CWA.

Probe sought in Iraq deaths

Continued from page 1

U.S. soldiers April 7. Early in the conflict, two Israeli journalists and a Portuguese television reporter allegedly were roughed up and then detained for 48 hours by U.S. troops, prompting a protest from Sindicato dos Jornalistas in Portugal.

In addition, following the precedent it set during the Kosovo War, when it attacked the offices of state-owned Radio-Television Serbia, the U.S. launched air strikes against government-run Iraqi TV on March 25. Although the U.S. justifies such actions by describing media facilities in enemy countries as propaganda vehicles, and therefore legitimate military targets, the International Federation of Journalists contends such targeting violates the Geneva Convention. The U.S., said an IFJ spokesman, targeted Iraqi TV “simply because they don't like the message it gives out.”

Whatever the merits of the government's case in bombing Iraqi media, world journalistic opinion is more united against the U.S. military on the April 8 incidents. “A media outlet cannot be a military target under international law, and its equipment and installations are civilian property, protected as such, under the Geneva Conventions,” declared Robert Ménard, secretary-general of Reporters Without Borders, in calling on the International Humanitarian Fact-Finding Commission for an “objective and impartial inquiry” of the Baghdad killings. Ménard's is the first request for such an inquiry since the commission was created, in 1991.

Independent inquiries also have been demanded by the IFJ and by the New York-based Committee to Protect Journalists, which labeled the U.S. attacks as “a violation of the Geneva

Convention.” “The bombing of hotels where journalists are staying and targeting of Arab media are particularly shocking events in a war which is being fought in the name of democracy,” observed Aidan White, IFJ general secretary, who also condemned Iraqi tactics of “using civilians and journalists as a ‘human shield’ against attack.”

While professional Western organizations were trying to strike an even-handed tone despite their assertions that war crimes had been committed, Arab reaction—public and journalistic—was more assertive. “A black day for the press: three martyred, a number injured and a siege to silence Arab satellites,” reported the Saudi-owned, London-based Al-Hayat, according to a BBC report. “The lack of international criteria and rules governing wars has become clear after the strikes against civilian installations, including journalists covering the war and trying to establish the truth,” chimed in Egypt's Al-Ahram.

Unlike the shooting death early in the war of Terry Lloyd of ITN, by American troops who apparently mistook his car for an Iraqi vehicle, reporters at the Palestine Hotel were consistent in their belief that there was no possibility of mistaken identity. “I was driving on a road between the tanks and the hotel at the moment the shell was fired—and heard no shooting,” reporter Robert Fisk wrote in the Independent UK. “The French videotape of the attack runs for more than four minutes and records absolute silence before the tank's armament is fired.”

In brief...

Radio Free Asia workers want TNG

Language service employees of Radio Free Asia in Washington, D.C. have filed a petition with the NLRB seeking TNG-CWA representation for collective bargaining. Because a “substantial majority” of the 125 full- and part-time employees—including senior editors, broadcasters, researchers, and administrative and production assistants—have signed authorization cards, TNG-CWA requested voluntary recognition by the employer April 4.

Big Brother spying in Canada, too

The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation has agreed with the Canadian Media Guild that the installation of a hidden surveillance camera in the Toronto Broadcasting Centre violated federal privacy legislation. The camera was installed last year by a subcontractor, ProFac, supposedly to gather evidence of theft, but without the knowledge of senior management at CBC or of the union. Two letters from CBC regarding the situation, one for employees and the other to ProFac management in Toronto, can be read at www.cmg.ca/cbc/profacspiesapr703.html.

Chinese workers mark 2-year freeze

Seven TNG-CWA-represented employees of the Chinese Daily News marked the second anniversary of their vote to join the union by meeting with staff members of NLRB Region 21, while U.S. Rep. Sherrod Brown honored their struggle with a speech on the House floor. The Taiwan-based newspaper has refused to accept the election results or to bargain a contract, resulting in numerous unfair labor practice charges that are still pending before the board. NLRB staffers blamed the decision-making delay on inadequate staffing and a high case load.

Ohio Suburbanites vote to join Guild

All employees of the weekly Suburbanite in Ohio, a Copley newspaper, voted 5-1 to be represented by the Northeast Ohio Newspaper Guild. The local already represents two daily Copley-owned papers in Ohio, The Canton Repository and the Massillon Independent.

AP finally springs for ‘escape hoods’

Responding only under pressure from a Guild-filed arbitration, the Associated Press finally has delivered “escape hoods” for staff members to use at its New York headquarters to enable escape from a contaminated area. The single-use devices offer about 15 minutes of respiratory protection and had been promised many

months ago in response to fears of terrorist attacks; similar masks were being promised for AP's Washington offices.

Publisher's ouster brings ANG hopes

The Alameda Newspaper Group, as reported in this space last month, has such lousy wages—many reporters are paid as little as \$26,000—that its staff has a 30% turnover rate. Latest contributor to that statistic? P. Scott McKibben, the group's hard-charging publisher, who officially stepped down for “personal and professional reasons.” Unofficially, word was that McKibben had been fired, raising tentative hopes among Guild members that the bleeding will stop and the chain will start investing in its staff to improve journalistic quality.

Dow Jones survey: inverted bell curve

Most folks are familiar with the bell curve, in which the norms occupy a central bulge and the extremes taper off to either side. But when TNG-CWA Local 1096 asked its members to rate their managers on a five-point scale, the results on five key measures were inverted bells: very few got a C, while big numbers got either very high marks or dismal and failing ones. For example, 47% got a thumbs-up for their “concern for employees,” vs. 43% who got a thumbs down—leaving just 10% in the middle.

In Chicago, tearing down a fake wall

When the Chicago Tribune and Chicago Sun-Times launched competing “Red” tabloids last fall to snag younger readers, the Guild-represented Sun-Times pretended its Red Streak was an entirely different operation—and therefore didn't have to honor its contract with the Chicago Newspaper Guild. Not any more. “We built a wall between Red Streak and the Sun-Times newsroom, and the union knocked it down,” editor-in-chief Michael Cooke was quoted as complaining.

Congratulations to TNG Pulitzers

A significant number of Pulitzer Prize winners also are Guild members. Congratulations to Clifford J. Levy of the New York Times, winner for investigative reporting; Diana K. Sugg of the Baltimore Sun, for beat reporting; Mary Jordan of the Washington Post, for international reporting; and Stepher Hunter of the Washington Post, for criticism. In addition, three staffs at Guild-represented newspapers won Pulitzers collectively: the Boston Globe, public service; The Wall Street Journal, explanatory reporting; and the Rocky Mountain News, breaking news photography.

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The Newspaper Guild International



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Guild locals push shareholder actions

Spring brings more than leaves and flowers: this also is shareholder season, when corporate boards of directors face annual—if usually fleeting—scrutiny by the people who actually own the companies they operate. This year, at least four employers of TNG-CWA-represented employees are being peppered by Guild representatives on behalf of specific proposals.

Peter Szekely, Reuters unit chair and TNG-CWA vice chair, was to appear April 17 before Reuters shareholders at their annual meeting, in London, to oppose the company's executive compensation plan. Szekely's appearance came on the heels of a letter to Reuters shareholders from CWA President Morton Bahr and TNG-CWA president Linda Foley, sent April 4, declaring that it is in shareholders' own best interests to ensure that executive pay "is transparent and reflects the performance of the company."

Prompting the Guild's intervention is a new British law that for the first time requires UK companies to submit to shareholders an annual "Remuneration Report" that describes how corporate directors are compensated. As the New York Guild has observed, Reuters' chief executive Tom Glocer's cash bonus last year rose 20% "despite a dismal 2002, in which Reuters lost £394 million and shareholders lost nearly three-quarters of their investments."

The company's other top executives, the chief operating and chief financial officers, had bonus increases of 27% and 15%, respectively.

The losses prompted warnings that the company will slash another 3,000 jobs over the next three years—in addition to 2,500 lost in the past two—and will continue consolidation of operations and facilities. Thus far, however, management has been unable to tell the Guild how many Guild-covered positions will be affected.

The disparity between operational results and executive compensation caught the attention of Pensions Investment Research Consultants, an independent, London-based provider of research and other services to pension funds, which also has recommended that shareholders reject the remuneration report. The PIRC report cited "inadequate" performance targets for rewarding management, resulting in "potentially excessive" bonuses.

Bahr's and Foley's letter, in addition to echoing the PIRC's criticisms, expressed concern "about the potential for excessive executive pay in light of major recent lay-offs, corporate restructuring and the related impacts on working conditions at Reuters."

Separately, TNG-CWA President Linda Foley was to attend the Knight-Ridder shareholders' meeting April 22, where a Guild member's has submitted a proposal regarding executive stock options. And TNG-CWA Local 1096 President Ron Chen was to

address Dow Jones shareholders April 16 on behalf of a shareholder proposal requiring that the company split the positions of chairman and chief executive.

The IAPE proposal was being backed by a petition signed by approximately 500 Dow Jones employees who are less than happy about the way their company has been managed. Peter Kann has been chairman and chief executive for more than a decade, as Dow Jones stumbled badly over several management misadventures, causing some to question whether the chief executive should be overseen by a more independent board.

"Fundamental conflicts of interest can exist" when a CEO "also runs his company's board," observed Jeffrey Garten, dean of the Yale School of Management, in a statement supporting the proposal. As Garten further explained, "it is much more difficult for a board to monitor a chief executive's performance and hold him accountable for results if the CEO is also the chairman."

(Earlier this year, the Dow Jones board agreed to a separate IAPE shareholder proposal abolishing staggered terms of office for directors. Staggered terms are the bane of shareholder activists, because they prevent a majority of the board from being voted out of office at one time.)

Finally, a fourth shareholder initiative was mounted by employees of the Bureau of National Affairs, represented by the Washington-Baltimore Guild. The unit has urged support for a change in BNA's corporate bylaws that would create a board seat for a non-supervisory employee. Currently, the board has seats for in-house directors and for outside directors. "This resolution would create a third category, giving rank-and-file employees a guaranteed voice on the board," a unit spokesperson explained.

The proposal would not automatically create a Guild seat, since all Class A stockholders—not just Guild members—would vote on candidates. But the Guild would expect to nominate a candidate, in addition to any nominees presented by the board itself, as it customarily does. Nor, the Guild hastened to add, would the proposal create a seat for a single constituency. "No class of employees has a lock on fiscal responsibility or a fair-minded concern for all, BNA employees and stockholders," it explained.

"Just as it is unfair to believe that a supervisor on the board cannot represent non-supervisory employees, or that outside directors represent only the marketplace, it's unfair to believe that a rank-and-file employee on the board would represent only rank-and-file employees."

So why support a change? "Simply put, to strengthen the board" by bringing a fresh perspective—"and, hopefully, a touch of sunshine in this era of scrutiny and concern about corporate governance."



In your ear!

Bob Baughman finds a unique place to wear his Guild pin while attending a mobilizing party on St. Patrick's Day in Canton, Ohio. Baughman is a union steward and truck driver at The Repository, a Copley-owned daily newspaper in Canton, where the Northeast Ohio Newspaper Guild has been bargaining for a new contract since last summer. A large majority of the 200-plus Guild members at the paper have been wearing Guild pins recently on bargaining days.

Red Deer settles

Unionized employees of the Red Deer Advocate voted by a 95% majority March 23 to accept a new contract proposal, ending more than a year of negotiations. The contract between the Advocate and the Media and Communications Workers of Alberta will extend to Feb. 28, 2006.

Under the new agreement, union members will receive a lump sum payment equivalent to 3.2% of the average wage for full-time employees. Salary increases

between 5.75% and 9% will be paid over the next three years, depending on the cost of living index. New hires, however, will receive wages that are 2% to 4% lower in some departments during their first year of employment.

"We certainly didn't achieve everything that we had hoped to, but it's something we can live with for the next three years," said Jack Wilson, president of the local.

The union represents about 155 workers in all departments, including 42% who are part time.

Notice given of per capita dues increase

Official notice has been delivered to all TNG-CWA locals that the TNG-CWA per capita on May dues, payable by locals to TNG-CWA on or before June 15, 2003, will be \$18.01. Combined with the 50-cent CWA Defense Fund payment, the total amount due from locals per member, per month will be \$18.51 for U.S. locals. Canadian locals will pay 76 cents to the CWA Defense Fund monthly, for a total of \$18.77 (50 cent exchange rate for Feb. 2003).

The CWA Defense Fund payment of 50 cents U.S. per member, per month, is payable on the following classifications: (1) regular full-time; (7) regular less-than-full-time; (5) at-large full-time; (H) at-large less-than-full-time; (8) paid leave full; (F) agency fee full-time; and, (G) agency fee less-than-full-time.

The increase in the annual per capita rate is 58 cents per month from the previous rate of \$17.43, which has been in effect since May 1, 2002. The per capita payable on behalf of employed members

whose dues are less than \$18.01 per month is \$7.20 (\$7.70 U.S. and \$7.96 CDN with the CWA Defense Fund payment). By operation of the per capita formula in the constitution, the increase in the average top reporter minimum in Guild contracts with daily newspapers is translated into a percentage increase in the monthly per capita payable by locals to TNG-CWA.

This year the per capita rate was adjusted to add funding to the TNG-CWA Mobilization and Defense Fund (MDF), pursuant to Article 18, Section 7(a) of the TNG-CWA Constitution:

Effective April 1, 2002, the above per capita tax shall increase to 1.997% (.01997); the increase to be deposited into the Guild Mobilization and Defense Fund. A local may act to meet this per capita obligation to the Guild Mobilization and Defense Fund by increasing dues or by paying it out of existing local funds.

Fifty-three cents per member per month will be deposited into the TNG-CWA MDF.

The average top reporter minimum in Guild contracts with daily newspapers on April 1, 2003, was \$901.43; this is an increase of \$38.02, or 4.4%, over the \$863.41 average top minimum on the same date a year earlier. The 58-cent per month increase in the per capita rate, from \$17.43 to \$18.01, is an increase of 3.33%.

The formula for computing the monthly per capita requires averaging top reporter minimums in all contracts with newspapers published at least five days per week. On April 1 of this year, there were 91 such contracts.

Guild statistics show that TNG-CWA locals have 90 daily newspaper contracts with top reporter minimums at or above \$500 a week. The number at or above \$600 is 89; of these, 80 are \$700 or over, 64 are over \$800, 40 are over \$900, 27 are \$1,000 or more, 15 are \$1,100 or more and 4 are \$1,200 or more.

The TNG-CWA Constitution provides that per capitas payable on behalf of regular members employed full time, and other

employees covered by a TNG-CWA contract which requires them to pay an agency or similar fee equivalent to dues, shall be recalculated each year in April. The formula is described in Article XVIII, Section 7.

TNG has computed the average top reporter minimum by adding these minimums in 92 separate contracts with newspapers published at least five days a week, using only those amounts which are actually being paid on April 1, 2003.

The \$901.43 was multiplied by .01997, producing a figure of \$18.0015 which, rounded up to the next cent, produces \$18.01, 58 cents over the present per capita of \$17.43.

The per capita payable on behalf of regular members employed full time and persons paying agency fees becomes \$18.01 per month, plus 50 cents for the CWA Defense Fund for a total of \$18.51 for U.S. locals. Canadian locals will pay 76 cents to the CWA Defense Fund monthly, for a total of \$18.77 (50 cent exchange rate for Feb. 2003).

Labor round-up

Oakland protesters shot with dowels

Longshoremen in Oakland, California, threatened a few months ago with possible intervention by the National Guard during contentious contract bargaining, came under the gun again April 7—literally. City police opened fire with wooden dowels, “sting balls” and beanbags on 500 anti-war demonstrators picketing outside the Port of Oakland, then turned their guns against nine members of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union standing to one side while they awaited instructions to report to work. At least a dozen demonstrators and five ILWU members required hospital treatment; many had been shot in the back. Adding insult to injury, one of the targets of the protest was Stevedoring Services of America, which was blamed by the ILWU last fall for undermining negotiations—and which has been awarded a \$4.8 million contract by the Bush administration to manage the port at Umm Qasr, Iraq.

Ullico stock trades split union leaders

The long-sought public release of an internal investigation into insider stock trading at Ullico, Inc., a union-owned insurance company, prompted AFL-CIO President John Sweeney to call on the company's officers and directors to return more than \$6 million in profits from the transactions. A handful of directors—including CWA President Morton Bahr—had already done so, but Ullico chairman Robert Georgine insisted that board members had acted no differently than the directors of many corporate boards and resisted pressure to step down. The trades and profit-making, characterized by investigators as “self-interested” transactions that might have violated civil laws, are being investigated by one state and three federal agencies and have deeply divided top labor leaders.

AFL-CIO website advises reservists

With more than 175,000 reservists called up to help with the U.S. war with Iraq and homeland security, a new website area provides resources for reservists and their families about reservists' rights on the job during their leave. See www.aflcio.org/reservrights.

U.S. job losses keep escalating

Job losses in March more than doubled the number analysts had expected, as the U.S. economy shed 108,000, for a total loss of more than 2.6 million in the private sector during Bush's term. The unemployment rate held steady at 5.8%, however, with the job loss offset in part by increased government hiring and in part by people leaving the workforce—voluntarily or otherwise.

Got an old camera you don't need?

Unseen America, a project of SEIU Local 1199's Bread and Roses cultural program, is looking for tax-deductible donations of used 35mm cameras. Donated cameras are given to migrant workers, janitors, homecare workers, homeless men, autistic adults, steelworkers, restaurant employees and other marginalized groups to create a photographic record of their otherwise undocumented lives, producing what Bread and Roses director Esther Cohen describes as “the only working people's art gallery in the country.” More than 1,500 people have already taken photo classes from Bread and Roses, a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organization; some of their work may be seen at www.bread-and-roses.com. For more information about making a donation, contact Cohen at estherc@1199.org.

RadFest includes look at media reform

RadFest 2003, an annual weekend conference for progressive activists and academics, has been scheduled for the weekend of May 30-June 1 at the George Williams-Lake Geneva Campus of Aurora University, about 50 miles southwest of Milwaukee. Organized by the A. E. Havens Center for the Study of Social Structure and Social Change at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, the conference is now in its 20th year. Plenaries will include “The Iraq War and the Anti-War Movement” and “The State of Black Politics,” a wide array of social, political and economic topics will be addressed in more than two dozen workshops and panels, including one titled “Where is the U.S. Media Reform Movement Going?” with Bob McChesney and John Nichols. To learn more, see www.ssc.wisc.edu/havenscenter/radfest03.htm

AFA board votes for CWA affiliation

Facing declining dues and a loss of members because of the airline industry depression, the Association of Flight Attendants board voted 16-1 on April 2 to move ahead on merging with the Communications Workers of America. The vote came after AFA board members discussed the issue and heard a presentation by Linda Foley, president of The Newspaper Guild, about her union's merger with CWA several years ago. Due to the layoffs, AFA's present size is approximately the size of TNG when it merged. AFA said it lost 9,000 members in the depression that hit the airline industry after the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. AFL-CIO records show that in 2002, AFA had 39,795 dues-paying members and CWA had 635,092.—Press Associates, Inc.

Moving in fits and starts at the Providence Journal

The current “plateau” theory of evolution posits that genetic change comes in short bursts interspersed with long, uneventful periods. Which is as apt a metaphor as you'll find for union-management relations at the Belo-owned Providence Journal.

Members of the Providence Newspaper Guild have been working without a contract since early 2000, but that doesn't mean contract bargaining has lasted three years. Indeed, much of 2002 passed without a bargaining session—until an administrative law judge found the Journal guilty, last September, of 22 charges of unfair labor practices. That apparently convinced the company that it should at least look like it was going through the motions.

Instead of standard bargaining, however, the company sought a series of informal, off-the-record talks. The Guild agreed and 12 such sessions were held, the last on Feb. 25. And then: nothing. The company, said local administrator Tim Schick, wouldn't say when—if ever—it would meet with the union again.

Waiting a month, the Guild finally requested the company's permission to discuss its latest contract offer with union members to get their feedback.

Hand-delivered letters to three top company officers, noting that “it has become apparent that further progress on the remaining major unsolved issues may not be possible at this time,” observed that Guild members should have an opportunity to learn what was discussed and to speak their minds.

The company didn't respond to that request, either.

And then, after several more weeks, it did—sort of. “We got a response from the company saying we could present information to our members under certain rules,” Schick said, “and we responded by saying let's sit down and talk about those rules.”

That was April 14. Now there's more waiting—or maybe not. Because later that day, the same judge who last fall found the company guilty of 22 labor law violations added five more to the list. While dismissing other complaints, William Kocol concluded that the Providence Journal, among other illegal actions, had engaged in direct dealing in February, 2002, by communicating a contract proposal to Guild members before union negotiators had a chance to review it.

It's a slow business, this evolution thing.

Patriotism, coffee catch eye of Barr scholarship judges

The high school writer of an editorial questioning the sincerity of post-Sept. 11 patriotism, and a college student who reported on the worldwide coffee crisis, are the winners of the 2003 David S. Barr awards. The awards, named after a former TNG general counsel, include a \$500 and \$1,500 scholarship for the high school and college winners, respectively.

Sarah Waites Elkins, an 18-year-old student at The Holton Arms School in Bethesda, Maryland, said she wrote “The ‘fairweather’ flag wavers” a year after becoming the Maryland state winner of a speech contest sponsored by the Veterans of Foreign Wars. “The topic of that contest, ‘What Price Freedom,’ caused me to seriously reassess my own definition of patriotism,” she explained.

Her conclusion—that patriotism demanded real commitment, occasional effort and sometimes great sacrifice—“was reinforced by my meetings with the veterans themselves, some of whom still had scars from their battles in Vietnam. After 9/11, I couldn't help comparing their sacrifices to the easy patriotism I saw all around me.”

“The ‘fairweather’ flag wavers,” published Feb. 14, 2002 in Scribbler Opinions, decried the superficiality that made the American flag “the trendiest accessory since the Tiffany's tag bracelet.” Patriotism, Elkins wrote, “means more than waving a flag—it means voting, serving jury duty, paying taxes, backing the military and supporting the American dream through community service and political activism.”

The winning college entry, meanwhile, took on a more global topic: a worldwide glut of coffee production that has impoverished 25 million farmers, prompting the relief agency Oxfam to launch the “Fair Trade Coffee” campaign. The five-part series was written by Katherine M. Peters, 21, a student at Spring Hill College in Mobile, Alabama.

Written last fall for Peters' senior seminar project, the series documents a 50% drop in coffee prices over the previous three years that forced farmers to sell their crops for less than the cost of production. Today's average price of around 45 cents a pound provides a typical small-scale coffee farmer with annual income of about \$500—even as coffee roasters like Kraft, Nestlé and Sara Lee continue to be highly profitable.

Oxfam's “Fair Trade Coffee” campaign eliminates some of the middlemen in the coffee chain, guarantees that farmers will receive \$1.26 a pound for their beans and certifies that its beans conform to certain quality and environmental standards. “Oxfam has got it right,” Peters wrote, quoting U2's lead singer, Bono. “It wouldn't cost much to change the rules of trade so that poor countries can work their way out of poverty.”

The Barr scholarships will be presented May 6 at the Newspaper Guild Freedom Award Fund banquet in Washington, D.C. Also to be honored will be Broun Award winner Andy Furillo, of the Sacramento Bee, and Northwestern University professor David Proffess and his students in the Medill Innocence Project, winners of the Herbert Block Freedom Award.

Seattle Times jobs on the line?

The fog of uncertainty hovering over The Seattle Times thickened the past several weeks, as a memo to all employees from publisher and chief executive Frank Blethen warned of budget—and possible job—cuts. Citing the economic downturn, a state budget crisis and the war in Iraq as threats to the company, Blethen wrote that he has no choice “but to begin to pare back” and that “the only things that are sacrosanct in this process are core content and our 5:30 a.m. delivery time.”

To date, however, the only job cuts that have been identified involve a reorganization of home delivery.

The problems cited in the memo, wrote freelance reporter Bill Richards the next day, boost the prospects for a shutdown of the rival Seattle Post-Intelligencer, which shares revenues with the Times under a joint operating agreement. Blethen has suggested in recent months that he might seek to exercise a clause in the JOA that permits him to terminate the agreement upon showing three consecutive years of losses.

Several publications have printed articles recently speculating that the Times deliberately went on a hir-

ing spree last year—it expanded staff by 71 positions, at a time when layoffs were sweeping the industry—in order to lose money for that critical third year. Times officials, on the other hand, say the hiring was necessary to compensate for down-sizing the previous year because of the recession and a Guild strike. The staff had to be beefed up, Blethen wrote early this year, “to rebuild the business to preserve our reader base and protect our franchise.”

Richards reported several signs that the Times may be feeling a cash squeeze, including attempts to sell land and cancellation of plans to build a printing plant. Newspaper brokers, meanwhile, are speculating that getting rid of the P-I would increase the value of the Times by as much as 50%, to \$1.4 billion.

Although ending the JOA wouldn't necessarily mean the P-I's death, the termination clause provides an 80-year payout provision to owner Hearst if the P-I closes. The Justice Dept. didn't approve that provision and is now reviewing it, since it “could be seen as an incentive to Hearst” to close the paper, in violation of federal antitrust laws, Richards wrote.

It's a small world, after all

UK outsourcing firm tells Seattle companies why they should send jobs to India

By Mike Blain
WashTech

While union activists handed out fliers and carried signs reading "Where do you want your job to go today?" on a sidewalk in downtown Seattle recently, two British executives extolled the virtues of outsourcing tech jobs to India in the offices of the Seattle Chamber of Commerce, 24 floors above.

"Our local economy is in crisis, and that crisis is partly being caused by corporations sending good living wage jobs to other parts of the world, where workers will do them for a quarter of the cost," said Jake Carton, an organizer for Jobs With Justice, who was among those demonstrating outside.

Sure, agreed Mike Cast, managing director of British outsourcing firm Mastek Ltd. The growing offshoring trend is driven primarily by cost, but it's all about needing to "deliver more for less" due to global competition. Citing significantly lower labor costs as the top reason why U.S. or British companies should consider outsourcing tech jobs to India, Cast jokingly said that the acronym CIO, for Chief Information Officer, should be Calling India Over.

Cast was one of two British executives invited to the city by the Trade Development Alliance of Greater Seattle to give a presentation titled "Indian Software Industry: Current Condition & Future Prospects." The alliance's board includes representatives of such companies as Boeing, Microsoft and Wells Fargo, as well as representatives of the King County Council, Seattle City Council, and organized labor.

Cast said that more than half of Fortune 500 companies outsourced some software

development to India in 1999 and 2000, that more than 60% are doing so this year, and that the percentage will only rise in coming years.

"We are just at the beginning of the offshoring wave," announced Peter Kelly of Capita Group, the largest outsourcing firm in the United Kingdom. Comparing India as an outsourcing destination with the Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, China, South Africa, Russia and Eastern Europe, Kelly added: "India is unmatched for breadth and volume of software skills."

But while Kelly maintained that corporations in the United Kingdom and the United States still have difficulty finding skilled employees, and further claimed that offshore outsourcing does not displace tech workers in either country, union activists attending the presentation and on the street below disagreed.

"Sending family-wage technology jobs overseas means fewer jobs are created in our region, and we have greater job insecurity, fewer benefits and lower wages for all workers," said WashTech President Marcus Courtney. "We need to stand up and keep technology jobs in our area for the future."

Even the Information Technology Association of America (ITAA), a D.C.-based employer lobbying organization, has acknowledged that more than 500,000 U.S. tech workers lost their jobs in the past year. While the ITAA attributes most of the losses to economic stagnation and the dot.com implosion rather than offshoring, as U.S. tech employment has slumped, the Indian tech industry has been booming.

"Clearly, the motive of these companies is not to provide a fair standard of living but to find the cheapest place to do it," said

Carton, of Jobs With Justice. "They have placed a moral value on making the highest profit, to the detriment of other values that we hold, such as working people deserve a living wage, health care and education. Their moral values are all askew."

So what is the role of the city of Seattle, King County, and regional trade organizations or alliances when it comes to programs

But Rick Bender, who heads the Washington State Labor Council and is also listed as a trade alliance board member, says he thinks the alliance should discourage offshoring outsourcing, not woo more of its practitioners to the area.

"Why are we outsourcing these kind of jobs when we have a lot of people out of work?" he asks. "We have people putting in



KAROLE GORMAN/WASHTECH

Jake Carton, at right, an organizer with Jobs With Justice, holds one of several signs that line 5th Avenue in downtown Seattle.

that would seem to encourage Washington-based companies to ship jobs overseas?

According to William Stafford, president of the Trade Development Alliance, the organization's board does not take policy positions. He says the alliance focuses most on helping local companies build overseas markets for exports, or on encouraging companies to locate in the Seattle area.

time and effort and training and we are going to give this job to someone else because they will only cost a third of what you will cost as an American worker?

"We should be investing in our workers, making them the most educated and highly skilled workers in the world," Bender adds, "not reducing the living standard of American workers."

New visas encroach on white-collar turf

By Mark Gruenberg
Staff Writer, Press Associates Inc.

When a New Jersey woman files the necessary paperwork to qualify for her state's Temporary Assistance to Needy Families—the program that replaced welfare—the computer keyboarding is handled by workers hired by a private contractor.

In Bombay, India.

In past years, U.S. employees would have handled such paperwork. Not now. But the outsourcing of white-collar jobs from Trenton to Bombay is only the more publicized aspect of a two-sided problem: the flip side is the use of specialized visas to import labor to fill white-collar jobs here in the U.S.

A little-known visa, the "L-1," lets corporations bring in workers from foreign subsidiaries, train them for five to seven years, and then return the workers—and the jobs they filled—to their home countries.

"We've been marching with signs at Microsoft asking, 'Where do you want your job to go today?'" says WashTech organizer Mike Blain. "These visas don't even have the restrictions of the H-1B," a more well-known, and controversial, visa program. The H-1B program has a cap of 195,000 visas per year for private firms, for instance, although there is no limit for educational and non-profit institutions. But the L-1 program has no numerical limits at all.

The L-1 program was created to let companies train foreign workers for executive, managerial and "specialized knowledge" at U.S. company headquarters, where resources and job responsibilities presumably could be better matched. But the overall lack of con-

trols has caught the eye of the AFL-CIO's Dept. for Professional Employees, which has started lobbying lawmakers on the issue.

DPE's Michael Gildea says there appear to be only two basic requirements for companies to import L-1 workers. First, the L-1 candidate must have been employed abroad continuously for one year, at which time he or she qualifies for an "intra-company transfer" to the U.S. And, second, employers must get approval for the visas from the federal Immigration and Naturalization Service, now renamed and part of the new Homeland Security Department.

INS did not return a call seeking comment regarding the number of L-1 or L-2 visas issued. L-2 visas are for accompanying family members.

The lack of more explicit criteria for issuing the visas, fret the program's critics, leave L-1 workers vulnerable to employer exploitation. And, like the H-1B program, the L-1 visas pose a long-term threat to American jobs.

"Companies like Hewlett-Packard are saying 'We'll offshore everything possible'" using visas, Blain explains. "They'll do to white-collar jobs via outsourcing what they did to manufacturing" in trade treaties, adds Gildea, who says that the financial services, information technology and health care sectors appear most vulnerable.

Letters and e-mails to lawmakers protesting the L-1 visas have started flowing, especially from states where the program seems to be posing the biggest threat, including New Jersey, New York, California, Illinois, Texas and Washington. The shipping of jobs to Bombay also prompted an attempt by pro-worker New Jersey lawmak-

ers to ban outsourcing of state government jobs overseas, but despite a WashTech-organized blitz of 150,000 supportive e-mails and faxes, employer-backed lobbyists (including one representing Indian technology companies) blocked the effort.

H-1B visas, meanwhile, have been an employer favorite for several years. Although the program legally ended last Sept. 30, the Bush administration is considering whether to renew it.

A CWA analysis of the H-1B program, used by the AFL-CIO and the Department for Professional Employees in lobbying on Capitol Hill, identifies many problems with those visas. Among them:

- Disregard of labor market conditions. By letting workers immigrate to specific jobs, then shop their services to other employers, H-1B "does not protect U.S. workers' jobs."

- "The current size of the H-1B workforce relative to the overall number of information technology professionals is large enough to keep wages from rising as fast as might be expected."

- Although employers are supposed to make "good faith efforts" to ensure no U.S. workers are available before seeking to import H-1B workers, the actual efforts are "laughable." Employers tailor job descriptions to fit H-1Bs instead of U.S. workers, while the Labor Department lacks enforcement tools to root out such deception.

- H-1B visas last six years, which is hardly "temporary." There also is widespread visa fraud.

- Employers have been able to avoid paying prevailing wages, required by law, to H-1B workers. "Over the last 4-1/2 years, 83%

of H-1B investigations found violations" of wage and hour laws, the report notes.

- Layoff protection is weak. "So-called safeguards to prevent employers from laying off U.S. workers and hiring H-1Bs are ... limited to the employer's actions over a 90-day period" before it hires the H-1B workers.

"White-collar sweatshops? You already have that with H-1B," Gildea says.

In addition to the two visa programs that employers can use to undercut U.S. white-collar workers, a third threat to their jobs is on the horizon, Gildea warns: Executive branch action.

"Now, the U.S. Trade Representative, in the 'free trade' agreements with Chile and Singapore, has included 'professional visas' for workers from those countries to come to the U.S.," he explains, with Singapore to get 5,400 visas, Chile 4,000.

What's a professional visa? That's up to the USTR's office, Gildea explains, and "they say they'll continue to redefine U.S. immigration law in trade treaties." Moreover, he adds, there are no controls on importing workers under trade treaties into areas of highly sensitive technologies, such as military aviation electronics.

While Gildea says the DPE is lobbying Congress on all three threats to U.S. workers, Blain points out that the threat to white-collar workers can be used to help organize them. Financial service workers, for example, are the least-unionized sector of the workforce, at 1.9%.

"The AFL-CIO is missing an enormous opportunity to do out-reach to technical workers" on the issue of outsourcing their jobs overseas, Blain says. "Lobbying on the issue can be tied to organizing."

Do reporters have personal lives?

Corporate sense of 'ethics' leaves less and less room for conscience

By Henry Norr
Northern California Media Guild

I'm a technology reporter and columnist for the San Francisco Chronicle. Or at least I was until recently, when I was suspended, without pay, for getting arrested in peaceful civil disobedience against the war.

The offense the Chronicle is charging me with is falsifying my timecard, but this is a bogus, after-the-fact cover for an act of political retaliation and an attempt to intimidate other employees. The plain truth is that the paper's senior editors ordered my column pulled from the paper before I had even filled out the timecard. Not because of any objections to the column's contents (it was about spam, and they hadn't even read it), but simply because I had been arrested the day before, just as I had previously informed my supervisors I would be.

Here's the sequence of events. Back on March 14, I applied for a month's leave of absence from my job so I could devote myself to antiwar work. That request went to the paper's top editorial honchos, editor Phil Bronstein and managing editor Robert Rosenthal, and though I heard nothing from them about it—still haven't—I was informed indirectly that they had "concerns." On Wednesday, March 19, after the bombing of Baghdad began and I got home from a long protest march in the rain, I sent e-mail to my immediate supervisors informing them that I planned to get arrested the following morning and wouldn't be in until I got out of jail.

Early the next morning, my wife, my daughter and I joined thousands of others protesting the war in San Francisco's Financial District. We helped block the intersection of Market and Sansome, in front of Citicorp and the British Consulate. When the police ordered us to leave, we sat down, and a little after 8 a.m. they hauled us off. We were kept in jail until around 10 p.m. that night and then released, after being cited for being a pedestrian in a road (an infraction) and refusing an order to move (a misdemeanor).

I returned to work the next day and finished my column, which was to run on March 24. Late in the day I filled out my timecard for that week. For Thursday, the day I spent in jail, I took a sick day. I did so because I was sick: heartsick over the beginning of the war, nauseated by the lies and the arrogance and the stupidity that led to it, and deeply depressed by the death and destruction it would bring.

Ironically, the Chronicle on the day I was suspended had a front-page article clearly explaining the ailment I was suffering from. Under a headline reading "The Home Front: Battles with depression, stress are taking their toll," health writer Ulysses Torassa quoted Philip Zimbardo, a professor of psychology at Stanford and an authority on the psychological effects of terrorism and disasters: "It's really a complex set of all negative emotions—anger, rage, anxiety, sadness, grief, helplessness, distress—and those are terrible for you. It's extreme stress, and it affects your everyday functioning—it makes

you less able to focus, and it lowers your immune system."

Nevertheless, claiming sick pay for the day wasn't a point of principle for me. My supervisor knew exactly why I was out of work that day. If he had objected to the sick-day claim (even though the Chronicle does not, as far as I can tell, have a formal definition of what qualifies as sickness) before signing the timecard, I would cheerfully have changed it to make the day a personal day, a vacation day or simply an unpaid day.

On Monday, March 24, another supervisor informed me that I could not write anything for the paper until further notice. I asked why, but was told "no explanation."

On March 26, I was called to a meeting with Rosenthal and Cynthia Burks, vice president of human resources. A representative from my union, the Northern California Newspaper Guild, accompanied me. Burks asked me to explain what I did last Thursday and why I took a sick day. After I had done

that notorious 1988 episode and accuses Iran of using "blood agents" containing cyanide, not the nerve agent sarin. In other words, the DIA report suggests that Iran may have used chemicals, too, not that Iran was completely responsible.

Independent experts, including groups like Human Rights Watch and Dr. Christine Gosden, a British medical geneticist who was the first Western doctor to extensively study the Halabja victims, have concluded that Iraq was responsible for using just about everything in their chemical arsenal against the Kurds: mustard agent and the nerve agents sarin, tabun and VX. Blood agents wouldn't cause the injuries suffered by the Halabja victims, would have been very difficult for Iran to produce in the quantities needed to kill so many people and would have quickly dispersed in Halabja's climate, weapons experts say.

A Human Rights Watch report cites audiotapes that Kurdish forces say they captured from Iraqis showing Ali Hassan al-Majid (Saddam's cousin known as "Chemical Ali") bragging about using chemical weapons against Kurds. The report also cites Iraqi documents seized by Kurds that refer to the chemical attacks.

Barahona also seems to believe that the

so, she informed me that I would be suspended, without pay, to give the paper time to "investigate" my "falsification" of the time card. She originally did not put a time limit on the suspension, but when my Guild representative asked, Burks said it would be for at least two weeks.

Like the vast majority of the people of the world, I consider this war immoral, illegal and unnecessary. Whatever the outcome, it's sure to compound the suffering of the Iraqis, to waste American lives and resources, to turn fair-minded people the world over against us, and to increase the risk of terrorist attack.

Under these circumstances, the civil disobedience I took part in last Thursday was an act of conscience—I'd act the same way if I had it to do over. I'm only sorry that the Chronicle feels it has to retaliate against me, on a patently ridiculous technicality, for demonstrating my opinion on the most important issue of the day.

more than 600 journalists "embedded" with the U.S. military were "selected and trained by the U.S. military." That's not true, either. News organizations who requested embed slots chose the journalists who would be sent, not the Pentagon. Many of the embedded journalists are union members, I might add (as are a good number of the Pentagon press corps). Barahona must think all reporters are pretty stupid, since she's implying that a week of media boot camp is enough to turn us all into propaganda-spewing automatons.

I've been fuming for months about the implication I see in the Guild Reporter and other union publications that it's OK for journalists to publicly protest the war. To do so is a breathtaking violation of bedrock journalistic ethics. Our credibility as reporters rests on perceptions, by our sources and our readers, that we are fair and impartial. Marching in the streets, holding signs, signing petitions and the like completely undermine that trust. Such actions by reporters are shameful and must be censured, not encouraged.

Kelley, a member of the News Media Guild, works for the Associated Press as a Pentagon reporter.

Dithering to Bethlehem to be born again

The column that starts at left was written by Henry Norr on March 27, two days after management at the San Francisco Chronicle issued a memo restating portions of the newspaper's conflict of interest policy. Although stressing that the Chronicle is more flexible than The New York Times, the L.A. Times or the Baltimore Sun, which "have very specific and strict prohibitions on their newsroom staffers taking part in political activities"—indeed, the memo noted that "the Chronicle encourages participation in community affairs"—the memo also warned that staff members "should exercise care to avoid involvements that create either the appearance or reality of conflict of interest between those involvements and their journalistic duties."

Norr's suspension came the next day, followed by a grievance on his behalf filed by the Northern California Media Guild.

A week later the Chronicle issued a second memo, this time concluding that the war in Iraq is so contentious that the conflict of interest policy needed "clarification."

"We have to be scrupulous about protecting the paper's integrity and mission to be a source of reliable, unbiased work," the memo advised. Although the Chronicle conflict-of-interest policy "expects early disclosure and discussion with a supervisor" before newsroom employees engage in political activity, "some situations . . . require more decisive action." The Iraqi war, it turns out, is one of them:

Our responsibility as journalists can only be met by a strict

prohibition against any newsroom staffer participating in any public political activity related to the war.

There is simply no other way to maintain our public trust, avoid conflicts and the appearance of conflicts, and to fulfill our duty to provide fair, thorough and objective reporting.

Any violation of this policy will be viewed as a very serious matter.

The Northern California Media Guild begged to differ, responding to the edict with a second grievance. "We view this as an expansion of restrictions on employees far beyond the policy on which we previously negotiated," administrative officer Doug Cuthbertson wrote to management. "Any such major change or expansion must be negotiated. We request that you suspend enforcement pending such negotiations."

Norr, meanwhile, spent his time while on unpaid suspension participating in other anti-war demonstrations, apparently further aggravating his supervisors: "It appears the company is getting ready to terminate Henry," Cuthbertson told The Guild Reporter at presstime.

Cuthbertson said there is "a lot of support" by Guild members for Norr, who is personally well-liked and considered to be a good columnist. But there are "mixed feelings on the overall ethics issue," which some reporters support and others feel is overly broad, especially when applied to copy editors "and others who aren't 'out there.'"

Pentagon's 'big lies' were a lot of clap-trap

By Matt Kelley
News Media Guild

Spare us all propaganda, please!

Diana Barahona's broadside in the March 21 Guild Reporter would be deeply insulting to those of us who cover the military, were it not so pathetically inaccurate.

She lists several "big lies" she believes were propagated by the Pentagon and the news media about Iraq:

- The alleged lack of coverage of the "highway of death" attacks by U.S. forces on Iraqis fleeing Kuwait during the 1991 Persian Gulf War. If having full-color pictures and articles on the front page of every newspaper in America is a cover-up, then Nixon must have succeeded in covering up Watergate, too.

- The "civilian shelter in Rada" struck during the Gulf War. This incident, as well, got very extensive coverage. To be fair, the other side of the story is that Pentagon officials say there was an Iraqi military command center in the same building, several floors below the civilians.

- A Feb. 19 press release from the American Gulf War Veterans Association claiming that a former U.S. soldier says he was ordered to set fire to oil wells in Kuwait dur-

ing the Gulf War. Barahona is incredulous that no mainstream media touched this. The press release quotes one unnamed person (out of half a million troops who participated in the Gulf War) making these dramatic allegations. It doesn't mention anything about the "signed statement" Barahona claims. You get more credible stuff from the alien abduction freaks.

- Her assertion that the media have deliberately reported erroneously that United Nations weapons inspectors were kicked out of Iraq in 1998. Yes, some media outlets made this error, but I and my colleagues reporting from the Pentagon have worked hard to state what really happened: The UNSCOM inspectors left following months of increasingly bitter disputes with Saddam Hussein's regime over Iraq's refusal to let the inspectors inspect. Saddam didn't order the inspectors out of the country, but he wouldn't let them visit large swaths of Iraq he declared as "presidential" or "sensitive" sites, either.

Most puzzling is Barahona's claim that "the Kurds at Halabja were in fact killed by sarin gas used by Iranian forces, as reported by the U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency." The DIA report in question blames both Iran and Iraq for using chemical weapons during

that notorious 1988 episode and accuses Iran of using "blood agents" containing cyanide, not the nerve agent sarin. In other words, the DIA report suggests that Iran may have used chemicals, too, not that Iran was completely responsible.

Independent experts, including groups like Human Rights Watch and Dr. Christine Gosden, a British medical geneticist who was the first Western doctor to extensively study the Halabja victims, have concluded that Iraq was responsible for using just about everything in their chemical arsenal against the Kurds: mustard agent and the nerve agents sarin, tabun and VX. Blood agents wouldn't cause the injuries suffered by the Halabja victims, would have been very difficult for Iran to produce in the quantities needed to kill so many people and would have quickly dispersed in Halabja's climate, weapons experts say.

A Human Rights Watch report cites audiotapes that Kurdish forces say they captured from Iraqis showing Ali Hassan al-Majid (Saddam's cousin known as "Chemical Ali") bragging about using chemical weapons against Kurds. The report also cites Iraqi documents seized by Kurds that refer to the chemical attacks.

Barahona also seems to believe that the



LOOKING AHEAD

DoD news flash: war is dangerous

By Linda Foley, President

Like everything about the war in Iraq, the role of the media has been controversial. Some media critics believe news coverage has been too gung-ho. They accuse journalists, particularly American journalists, of acting more like cheerleaders at a sporting match than as in-depth, impartial reporters of what will become the history of this war. Others accuse them of being too narrow and skeptical, second-guessing military planners and policy makers, only to be proven prematurely judgmental—and, in some cases, flat-out wrong.

Such is the state of media analysis in the midst of combat-embedded journalists and pundit-embedded military experts in a news cycle that features 24/7 real-time coverage of life on the battlefield.

We'll have to wait for the fog of war to lift a little before we can evaluate whether these arrangements gave viewers and readers a realistic and unbiased picture of the war in Iraq. But what has become clear, even before the U.S. military completely eradicates the remnants of Saddam's loyalists, is the fact that wartime journalism has gotten much more dangerous.

At least a dozen journalists have died in Iraq since the conflict began on March 20, including two Americans: Washington Post columnist and former Guild member Michael Kelly, who died in a Humvee accident, and David Bloom of NBC News, who succumbed to a pulmonary embolism. Both were embedded with U.S. troops at the time of their deaths. Both, tragically, left behind families with young children and many admiring friends and colleagues.

Several other journalists were killed in the midst of combat or as victims of suicide bombings and other violence. Even after the fall of Baghdad to U.S. troops, seven journalists were beaten, robbed and narrowly escaped lynching at the hands of Iraqi militia in the central city. Before the Iraqi government crumbled, Iraqi officials expelled several journalists from Baghdad, including the CNN crew; armed militia kidnapped two Newsday reporters and a freelance U.S. photographer, who eventually escaped to Syria; and Iraqi troops attacked an entourage of Polish journalists.

But the deaths caused by U.S. air strikes on the Baghdad offices of the Al-Jazeera and Abu Dhabi television networks and by a U.S. tank's shelling of the Palestine Hotel, unofficial headquarters of journalists stationed in Baghdad, raised heightened worldwide

alarm over the safety of journalists covering the war.

Taraq Ayyoub of Al-Jazeera was killed on April 8 as U.S. bombs severely damaged the Baghdad office of his Qatar-based network. Cameraman Zuhair al-Iraqi was critically injured in the blast. That same morning, another U.S. air strike damaged the nearby offices of Abu Dhabi TV, trapping 30 journalists for nearly a day. The U.S. military denied that its "smart bombs" had been aimed at the networks' offices.

Also killed on April 8 in the Palestine Hotel were Taras Protsyuk of Reuters and Jose Couso of Spain's Telecinco. Several other journalists also were wounded in that attack. U.S. officials said a tank was responding to what appeared to be sniper fire coming from the hotel, although journalists on the scene disputed the claim.

These weren't the only questionable journalistic casualties involving U.S. troops in Iraq. During the first week of the war, ITN British journalist and NBC News contributor Terry Lloyd and members of his crew were reportedly killed by "friendly fire." And, following the ferocious late March sandstorm, two Israeli journalists and a Portuguese television reporter were allegedly beaten by U.S. troops and detained for 48 hours before they were shipped to Kuwait and let go.

U.S. officials have expressed regret for the loss of life of the slain journalists. They have repeatedly stated they do not target journalists. But they also made clear they would not accept responsibility for protecting journalists who were not officially embedded with U.S. troops. In other words, when it comes to journalists they can't control, the Pentagon feels no obligation to attempt to ensure their safety.

The International Federation of Journalists, the Committee to Protect Journalists, Amnesty International and six U.S. unions representing journalists (including The Newspaper Guild-CWA) have joined a growing chorus of outrage calling for an independent investigation of the Baghdad attacks. Both the CPJ and IFJ have indicated the U.S. may have violated the Geneva Conventions as they relate to "civilian" journalists.

So far, the only word from the Pentagon in response has been an admonition from spokeswoman Victoria Clarke that journalists should remember "war is dangerous business."

I'll say.

LETTERS

To the Editor,

I am appalled at the selection of a manager at Consumers Union to be a judge in the Heywood Broun competition. On the same page as the GR story announcing the winners was an article about the New York Guild's ongoing effort to have Consumer Reports magazine listed on the AFL-CIO's "Don't Buy" list. Our local was never consulted, and TNG should have recognized the conflict. We would have suggested several Guild candidates from CU. This is quite an embarrassment during our battle with a management bent on getting rid of our pension plan and reasonably priced health

insurance at an organization that once had Heywood Broun on its board.

Also, the story about the "code of ethics" at The New York Times claiming a "victim" should have made clear that Lisa Belkin is a freelancer. Freelance contracts at The Times typically have strict language concerning conflicts of interest, and none of the safeguards recently negotiated by our local for staff employees. Even so, the story reveals that Belkin was appearing at a fundraiser for a politician. I believe most reporters would see a problem with that.

—Bill O'Meara,
Secretary-Treasurer, New York Guild

lication of either attack or reply shall not be delayed longer than one issue.

Deadline: Friday before publication. (Next deadline: May 9.) Letters and articles proposed for publication may be e-

mailed to the editor at azipser@cwa-union.org.

For address changes, see the box on page 2 or e-mail to duesinfo@cwa-union.org; sending such changes to the editor will merely delay processing.



When 'journalists' devour their own . . .

When Iraqi TV offices in Baghdad were hit by a U.S. missile strike on March 25, the targeting of media was strongly criticized by press and human rights groups—but not in the U.S.

The Geneva Conventions forbid the targeting of civilian installations—whether state-owned or not—unless they are being used for military purposes. Amnesty International warned that the attack may have been a "war crime" and emphasized that bombing a television station "simply because it is being used for the purposes of propaganda" is illegal under international humanitarian law. Likewise, Human Rights Watch affirmed that it would be illegal to target Iraqi TV based on its propaganda value.

Fox News Channel's John Gibson, however, publicly wondered before the attack: "Should we take Iraqi TV off the air? Should we put one down the stove pipe there?" Fox's Bill O'Reilly agreed: "I think they should have taken out the television, the Iraqi television. . . . Why haven't they taken out the Iraqi television towers?"

MSNBC correspondent David Shuster puzzled "why state-run television is allowed to continue broadcasting. After all, the coalition forces know where those broadcast towers are located." On CNBC, Forrest Sawyer offered tactical alternatives to bombing: "There are operatives in there. You could go in with sabotage, take out the building, you could take out the tower."

On NBC Nightly News, Andrea Mitchell noted on March 24 that "to the surprise of many, the U.S. has not taken out Iraq's TV headquarters." Mitchell's report cautioned that "U.S. officials say the television headquarters is in a civilian area. Bombing it would further infuriate the Arab world, and

the U.S. would need the TV station to get out its message once coalition forces reach Baghdad." She did not offer the Geneva Conventions as a reason to avoid bombing.

After the facility was struck, some reporters expressed satisfaction. CNN's Aaron Brown recalled that "a lot of people wondered why Iraqi TV had been allowed to stay on the air, why the coalition allowed Iraqi TV to stay on the air as long as it did." CNN correspondent Nic Robertson seemed to defend the attack, saying that bombing the TV station "will take away a very important tool from the Iraqi leadership—that of showing their face, getting their message out to the Iraqi people, and really telling them that they are still in control." It's worth noting that CNN, like other U.S. news outlets, provides all these functions for the U.S. government.

New York Times reporter Michael Gordon appeared on CNN to endorse the attack: "And personally, I think the television, based on what I've seen of Iraqi television, with Saddam Hussein presenting propaganda to his people and showing off the Apache helicopter and claiming a farmer shot it down and trying to persuade his own public that he was really in charge, when we're trying to send the exact opposite message, I think, was an appropriate target."

According to the New York Times, Fox's Gibson seemed to go so far as to take credit for the bombing of Iraqi TV, suggesting that Fox's "criticism about allowing Saddam Hussein to talk to his citizens and lie to them has had an effect."

Adapted from a piece by FAIR (Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting, which can be visited at www.fair.org).

U.S. journalists: older, poorer, not as happy

Every ten years, stretching back to 1971, a group of researchers has poked and prodded at U.S. journalists to figure out who they are and what they think. Judging by the latest results, it's been largely downhill for the past 30 years.

According to the results of the latest survey, conducted last year by researchers at Indiana University's School of Journalism with funding from the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, the "average" American journalist today is 41, or five years older than a decade ago; is more likely than in the past to be a college graduate; and is a little less likely to be a Democrat.

But more education and more years of experience don't translate into greater job satisfaction or a higher standard of living. The median salary for American journalists in 2001 was \$43,588—or roughly \$7,000 less than it would have been had it merely kept pace with inflation since 1971. One

bright spot, relatively speaking: average annual pay for the civilian labor force in 2001 was \$36,200.

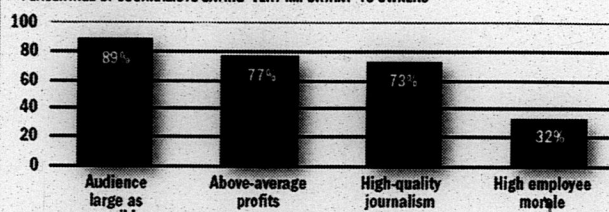
Job satisfaction, meanwhile, bounced up six points from the 1992 survey, with 33.3% of journalists describing themselves as "very satisfied" with their jobs last year—but that's still markedly below the 49% who gave that response in 1971.

Meanwhile, women journalists continue to get paid less than their male counterparts and, no surprise, also are less happy about their circumstances. Although the pay disparity narrowed between 1971 and 1991, it held steady in 2001, when the median for women was \$37,731 vs. \$46,758 for men. Job satisfaction among women journalists last year was 15% lower than among men.

The researchers—David Weaver, Randal Beam, Bonnie Brownlee, Paul S. Voakes and G. Cleveland Wilhoit—also asked several questions about business values in

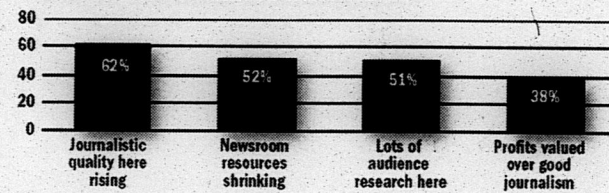
Perceptions of Owners' Values

PERCENTAGE OF JOURNALISTS SAYING 'VERY IMPORTANT' TO OWNERS



Priorities: Business vs. Journalism

PERCENTAGE OF JOURNALISTS AGREEING WITH GIVEN STATEMENTS



The American Journalist in the 21st Century

the newsroom. The results, summarized in the graphs above, were somewhat contradictory. For example, 89% of respondents felt that keeping as large an audience as possible was "very important"

to media owners, and 77% thought that earning high, above average profits also fit that description. But a still-significant 73% felt that "producing journalism of high, above-average quality" also is

"very important" to owners.

(Tellingly, only 32% believe that maintaining high employee morale makes the list.)

Further underscoring an apparent mis-match in perceptions, the researchers wrote that "about half the journalists agreed that their newsroom resources have been shrinking over the past few years, but 62% agreed that the quality of journalism at their organization has been rising steadily during that time."

One other finding is especially worth noting because of its implications for "mass" media: since 1971, a steadily declining number of journalists has agreed with the statement that concentrating "on news which is of interest to the widest possible audience" is "extremely important"—down to 15.4% in 2002, "the lowest ever."

Additional survey results and a description of the methodology used can be found on-line at www.poynter.org.

Newsroom diversity up, still lags U.S. profile

The good news is that the ethnic diversity of U.S. daily newspaper newsrooms improved last year, increasing by half a percentage point over 2001. The bad news is that minority representation in newsrooms is only 40% of its presence in the overall population.

These and other findings about newsroom minority employment were part of a Knight Foundation report presented April 8 at the annual meeting of the American Society of Newspaper Editors. Researched by Bill Dedman and Stephen K. Doig, the survey found that minority journalists now comprise 12.53% of newsroom staffs; 31.1% of the U.S. population is non-white.

ASNE, which once set itself a goal of achieving newsroom parity with the community served by each newspaper by the turn of the century, is now attempting to reach parity by the year 2025. But increased minority hiring remains too modest to meet that schedule, with newsroom diversity already three percentage points short of ASNE's benchmarks.

Dedman and Doig attributed the lack of overall progress to the industry's skewed per-

ceptions of the communities they serve. "One reason that editors may be making only slow progress... is that many editors believe they're a lot closer to the goal than they actually are," they wrote. "When the American Society of Newspaper Editors asks them the size of the minority populations in their communities, their estimate is far more often underestimated, not overestimated."

Another reason, which they don't cite, is the difficulty of increasing minority representation in an industry that has been roiled by repeated layoffs and hiring freezes. Last year ASNE also claimed—correctly—that minority newsroom representation had increased by nearly half a percentage point over 2000, but made less effort to explain that this increase amounted to all of four people. The percentage "gain" actually reflected a loss of nearly 2,000 jobs in 2001.

Last year was better, with an overall gain of about 300 jobs nationwide. But with minorities gaining a total of 278 more jobs than they had in 2001, it's clear that increased diversity is highly dependent on newspapers becoming a growth industry. Current economic conditions and the ongo-

ing push for consolidation suggest otherwise.

Other general trends also raise red flags for diversity supporters:

- An even smaller percentage of supervisors, 9.9%, are minority members.
- Both the number and the percentage of minority interns has declined, to 30.6% from 31.1%.
- The percentage of women in daily newsrooms continues a slight but steady decline, to 36.86% of all staffers, from 37.05%.
- Seven out of 10 U.S. newspapers are less than halfway to ASNE's goal.

The long-term trend, comparing 2003 to 1990, is not encouraging: of the 100 largest newspapers, 30 are at their high-water mark in minority representation—and 61 have slipped below their peak. Of all newspapers, 143 are at their high-water mark and 616 are below.

Moreover, at least 372 U.S. dailies, with a combined circulation of more than 4 million, continue to have all-white newsrooms. (The number probably is higher, because 493 newspapers—35% of the total—didn't

respond to the survey.) Although that represents something of an improvement over the 429 all-white newsrooms in 2002, the astonishing news is that a couple provide news coverage to communities in which whites are a distinct minority. The all-white newsroom of the Greenwood Commonwealth in Mississippi, for example, serves an area that is 65% non-white; the similarly all-white newsroom of Las Cruces Sun-News, in New Mexico, serves a community that is 59% non-white.

Finally, it bears noting that corporate commitment to diversity apparently gets results. The newspaper companies with the highest "diversity index," a weighted-average (by circulation) index of all newspapers in a chain, are Gannett, at 79; Knight-Ridder, 74; McClatchy, 71; Advance (Newhouse), 64; and Community Newspaper Holdings, 61. "The list is led by companies with well-known programs of rewarding managers—with bonuses—for minority recruitment," the ASNE study notes.

Bringing up the rear, meanwhile, are Paxton, 9; Liberty, 19; Ogden, 22; Media General, 27; and Morris, also 27.

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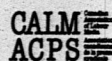
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DAYBOOK

TNG Canada Council,
April 26-27, Winnipeg

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

Freedom Award Fund Banquet,
May 6, Washington, DC

Tri-Council (Great Lakes,
Midwest, Southern) Meeting,
May 17-18, Buffalo

Western District Council,
May 17-18, San Jose

New England District Council,
May 31-June 1, Portland, ME

Native American Journalists,
June 18-21, Green Bay, WI

Jobs with Justice annual mtg.,
June 19-22, Miami

Nat'l Assoc. Hispanic J'nalists,
June 26-28, New York City

Nat'l Assoc. of Black J'nalists,
Aug. 6-10, Dallas

FROM THE MORGUE

Fifty years ago this month:

Los Angeles Guild member and drama critic William E. Oliver resigns from the Hearst-owned Herald-Express, one day after refusing to testify before the House Un-American Activities Committee. . . . Senator Wayne Morse, claiming the AP had distorted his speech on the Taft-Hartley bill, warns that a growing segment of the public is losing confidence in the objectivity and accuracy of press coverage. . . . The Guild polls its locals to find out how many people are employed by the 650 radio and TV stations owned by newspapers.

Twenty-five years ago this month:

New York Guild contracts with the New York Times, Post and News all expire March 30 and contract talks move to Washington, amid Guild charges that the papers are all demanding "massive" givebacks. . . . The EEOC concludes the AP is guilty of four counts of race and gender discrimination, while a reporter wins \$5,434 in a sex discrimination case filed against Reuters. . . . A multi-union strike in Wisconsin against Madison Newspapers enters its sixth month.

Ten years ago this month:

The Newspaper Association of America petitions OSHA to postpone new ergonomics rules, claiming more research is needed. . . . Both Detroit dailies are fined by Michigan for failing to protect employees from work-related injury. . . . A four-year-old byline strike by Guild-represented employees of the Salem (Mass.) Evening News turns into a byline lockout after reporters try to end the strike as a goodwill gesture.

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