

THE GUILD Reporter

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Your ad in this space!

Nine months after its contract expired, and with little progress to show for 21 sessions at the bargaining table, the St. Louis Newspaper Guild has made its discontent public. The billboard at right is the first of five it is erecting along interstate highways within a few miles of downtown.

The message? While the Pulitzer-owned Post-Dispatch historically has editorialized against legislation to create open shops at unionized employers, management is pushing for a con-

tract provision that would give Guild members a 30-day window each year in which they could quit the union and stop paying dues. Although that might strike some observers as hypocritical, the newspaper says it is only seeking language similar to that found in some other Guild contracts.

TNG-CWA represents approximately 600 Post-Dispatch employees and has had a union shop provision since 1938. CWA staffer Carrie Biggs-Adams is assisting the campaign.

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CanWest loses byline dispute

A Québec labor tribunal has ruled that reporters, photographers, artists and other employees of The (Montréal) Gazette—and not local management or Winnipeg-based CanWest Global Communications Corp.—have an absolute right to control use of their bylines and credit lines on stories, photos and other works.

The decision restores voice, and a right of protest, stripped from the Gazette's staff by management decree on Dec. 7, 2001, as turmoil peaked over the company's now largely discredited "national editorial" policy. Journalists have the right to withdraw their names from the newspaper at any time they wish, ruled the arbitrator, Jean-Pierre Lussier, whether to protest Gazette or CanWest Global policies or for any other reason.

Moreover, Lussier added, the Gazette's employees can exercise their right individually or as a group. "It's not because many

employees make the same demand at the same time," Lussier declared, "that the (contract) clause becomes ambiguous." The arbitrator's decision is immediate and has the force of law.

Following its \$3.2 billion takeover of the Southam newspaper empire, CanWest Global had planned to run "national editorials" as often as three times a week in more than a dozen of Canada's largest newspapers. The plan drew immediate condemnation from the country's journalists as an unprecedented attempt to reduce the breadth of public debate and to serve corporate interests. Dozens of Gazette employees withdrew their bylines from two successive daily editions in early December 2001 before Peter Stockland, the newspaper's editor-in-chief, ordered their immediate restoration. The Montréal Newspaper Guild promptly filed a grievance, contending that Stockland's order violated the Employee Integrity section of

the collective bargaining agreement.

The arbitrator's 18-page ruling, issued after six full days of hearings, concluded that contractual language covering byline discretion had been in effect at the Gazette since 1977 and, as written, "this right is absolute." For newspaper stories other than analyses, columns and opinion pieces, The Gazette "has the obligation . . . to respect the choice of its journalists when they demand the withdrawal of their byline," Lussier wrote, and thus an obligation not to threaten or impose disciplinary actions.

"The byline is a reflection of the reporter's personality and belongs to him as surely as the colour of his eyes and other personal features," Lussier added. "It follows that what he does with his name is his business."

Lussier's decision was cheered by numerous Canadian Guild leaders, who view employee discretion over byline use as

a means of ensuring editorial honesty. "The power, scope and protection offered by our byline clauses has never been so emphatically affirmed by any arbitrator anywhere," said Arnold Amber, Director of TNG Canada, which represents news-industry employees across Canada.

The ruling, added Jan Ravensbergen, first vice-president of the Montréal Guild, "is a magnificent victory for all who value public debate and respect reasoned dissent in a civilized society. We expect the arbitrator's ruling should protect our members from ownership retribution for protest against CanWest Global policies. This is of particular importance now that the Senate of Canada has launched an in-depth examination of media ownership and control issues."

Guild officials said they would publish the full text of the Lussier decision, in the original French and with an English translation, on the web at www.tngcanada.org.

Providence Guild notches one more

Maintaining its unblemished record, the Belo-owned Providence Journal has lost another legal scrap with the Providence Newspaper Guild, this time over its cancellation of dues check-off.

In a summary judgment issued from the bench—in itself an unusual event—a U.S. Court of Appeals ruled in the Guild's favor in the amount of more than \$165,000 in past dues delinquencies and, in the words of one Guild lawyer, "read the Providence Journal the riot act for having brought their suit to set aside the arbitration award."

The decision came three years and nine months after the Journal cancelled dues check-off and told Guild members they did not have to pay dues. The Guild promptly filed for arbitration, and in July, 2002, an arbitrator affirmed that the Journal had a right to cancel dues check-off once its contract with the Guild had expired—but that paying Guild dues was still a condition of employment for anyone holding a bargaining-unit job. Because the company had wrongly told employees they did not have to pay the dues, the arbitrator ruled, it was on the hook for the delinquent amount, then \$210,000.

The company instead sought help from

the courts, losing twice in U.S. District Court before appealing to the Court of Appeals. But while the appeals court upheld the arbitrator's decision, it urged the Guild and Journal to work out a compromise on payment. The result: resumption of dues check-off by the Journal and an "ironclad promise" to enforce members' dues-paying obligations, in exchange for payment of back dues by the employees who owe them rather than by the company.

The compromise means the loss of back dues owed by employees who have left the company, but Guild officials hope it signals a new Journal willingness to negotiate differences. And while some Guild members liked the idea of having the company make up for lost dues because of its misleading "advice," others resented the possibility that some coworkers would be getting off scot-free.

"For the last three years, most of our members have been helping to carry on this fight by paying their fair share," said Guild President John Hill. "This settlement restores some fairness for them and more properly puts the burden for the effort on all of those who will in the end benefit from a new contract."



TONY JAZVO/CWA LOCAL 9423

'Chip in, don't chip out'

Silicon Valley high tech workers organized by TechsUnite and CWA Local 9423 walk a picket line Sept 16 in front of the Hyatt Regency at San Francisco Airport, site of a meeting titled "The Nearshore and Offshore Outsourcing Conference." Nearly 50 demonstrators, including members of WashTech, Alliance@IBM and the Teamsters, protested a growing trend that has already sent nearly 400,000 white-collar jobs overseas.

Inside this issue



New York, Detroit, Hawaii ratify contracts page 3

We ignore history's lessons at our peril page 5

War on organized labor ignored by media page 8

AP's Japanese staffers carry their fight to U.S.

Associated Press technicians and operators, still banging away at contract talks, joined forces recently with an unusual ally: Japanese employees of the wire service who are protesting the firing of one of their own.

The U.S. employees, represented by TNG-CWA Local 1314, joined their Japanese co-workers in a Sept. 22 demonstration and leafletting at AP's headquarters in New York, at Rockefeller Center. Also joining the protest were several members of the News Media Guild, which represents AP's editorial employees.

At issue was the company's dismissal last year of photographer Atsushi Tsukada, a 19-year veteran with the wire service who chaired his union local in Japan. Tsukada received his dismissal notice last Oct. 25, less than three weeks after his Tokyo co-workers started voting on a possible strike in the middle of contentious contract bargaining.

Tsukada has filed a lawsuit against AP, charging he was fired illegally because of his union activities, and has been supported by the Japan Federation of News-



Union attorney Kanae Doi, left, and fired AP photographer Atsushi Tsukada carry their fight to the enemy, in the lobby of Rockefeller Center.

paper Workers Unions and the International Federation of Journalists. He was in the U.S. to request a meeting with AP's headquarters officials about his termination, but had not received a response.

The wire service has never claimed that Tsukada's work is unsatisfactory—and, indeed, his pictures have graced the pages of

AP's internal magazine, AP World. According to the Japanese union, AP claims that Tokyo bureau chief Myron Belkind terminated the photographer as part of an economic belt-tightening—although the union also notes that Belkind continues being chauffeured around town by an AP-provided driver.

Belcarz struck down at 51

John Belcarz, president of the Montréal Newspaper Guild since 1998, died suddenly and unexpectedly Oct. 20. He was 51.

Although Belcarz had battled cancer for more than a year, he had appeared in good health at the TNG Sector Conference in August and was taking care of Guild business over the telephone from his hospital bed mere days earlier. His death was described by fellow workers as peaceful, following a struggle "fought with his characteristic vigor, extraordinary tenacity and unrelenting hard work."

Visibly shaken Guild members conveyed their grief, support and love to John's wife of 29 years, Mary, and two sons, Mark and Paul. "He was a wonderful human being, a loving husband and an extraordinary father," said Jan Ravensbergen, first vice-president

of the local. "He was also a man whose patience and tireless efforts served the Guild and its members at The Gazette with great distinction for more than two decades. His wisdom and good heart will be sorely missed."

Added Arnold Amber, Director, TNG Canada: "John was a tower of strength during the past two turbulent years of battles between the Montréal Newspaper Guild and CanWest Global over the company's national editorial policy and other disputes. He also made a valuable contribution as a member of the Executive Committee of TNG Canada/CWA. John was a man who gave his all for his family and his union mem-

bers and will be sorely missed."

The son of Polish immigrants, Belcarz had worked at the Gazette since 1979 as a district manager and became a member of the local's executive committee in 1980. Although the newspaper eliminated its district managers five years ago, Belcarz stayed on as an independent distributor. J.P. Tremblay, the Gazette's chief labor negotiator, said he and Belcarz remained friends over the past 20 years despite their opposing positions because "he had a very high sense of ethics. He was very forthright, and always very professional."

In lieu of flowers, family members requested donations be made to the Canadian Cancer Society.

NE Ohio Newspaper Guild Seeks Administrative Officer

This top post in Local 1 will represent 700 members in bargaining units in Cleveland, Akron, Canton and Massillon.

The qualified candidate should have experience in grievances, bargaining, labor law, administration and training and should possess strong communication skills.

Must have a commitment to union organizing, mobilization and diversity. Experience in newspaper industry, TNG/CWA, a plus.

The job offers full benefits and a chance to make a difference. Salary negotiable. Send resume within two weeks to:

Search Committee
Northeast Ohio Newspaper Guild
P.O. Box 93841
Cleveland, OH 44101

In brief...

BNA docks Isabel victims, lays off 11

Penny-pinching has become the order of the day at the Bureau of National Affairs, which virtually along among Washington-area employers notified its employees that anyone who didn't make it into work because of Hurricane Isabel would be charged personal time off. The Washington-Baltimore Guild has other ideas. Meanwhile, although the company's chief operating officer recently announced strong earnings, 11 BNA employees have been told their jobs are being cut, including one with 15 years' service and another with 13 years.

Tribune won't play ball—again

Talk about a mega-media conglomerate being cheap: the Tribune Company refused this year to pay league fees—a whole \$280—for the Baltimore Sun softball team. So the Washington-Baltimore Newspaper Guild stepped in, voting Sept. 10 to sponsor the team this year, retroactively, and next year, too. Maybe union logos will grace the team T-shirts?—Press Associates, Inc.



'Birthday' cake delivered to NLRB

Two years to the day after Chinese Daily News employees filed charges with the National Labor Relations Board against their anti-union employer, TNG-CWA staff members Kathy Mulvey and Kathleen Price delivered a cake—decorated with "Happy Birthday" in Mandarin—to the NLRB's Washington headquarters as a reminder of the board's inactivity. Meanwhile, the Los Angeles City Council passed a resolution calling on the management of the Chinese Daily News "to immediately recognize the decision of its employees who voted for the union and to commence good-faith labor negotiations."

Guild VP made homeless by fire

Lesley Phillips, a TNG-CWA regional vice president and president of the Greater Boston Newspaper Guild, quit smoking a year ago. But on Sept. 7 she had to flee her town house when a fire, started by "careless disposal of cigarettes" in another unit, swept through the row of six attached homes. Phillips is still living elsewhere, but says co-workers passed a hat and raised \$2,000 to help ease the transition while her home is repaired.

Canada reclaims Schneider Corp.

The "repatriation" of Schneider Corp. by Maple Leaf Foods Inc.—which recently bought the company from U.S. pork giant Smithfield Foods Inc.—was widely hailed in Canada as a huge win for that country's food industry. Less certain is what the change in ownership bodes for the company's 160 employees represented by TNG Canada, although Arnold Amber, Director of TNG Canada, anticipates the best. "It would remove an extremely anti-union American company from our midst," he said of the ownership change, which still has to be approved by the Canadian Competition Bureau.

Leuchter deadline approaches: Nov. 1

Applications for the Irving Leuchter Memorial Scholarship, a \$10,500 grant that underwrites a 6-week residential seminar in labor studies at Harvard University, must be submitted directly to the university's Trade Union Program by Nov. 1. The seminar is scheduled to run Jan. 12-Feb. 20. For more information, contact program director Dr. Elaine Bernard at 617-495-9265 or www.htup.harvard.edu.

Former CBC leader dies, 70

Former CBC union leader Bill Martin died October 6 at the age of 70. Martin was very active with the Guild's Unit 3 predecessor union, the Canadian Union of Public Employees, serving as the Toronto local president and as a member of the union's bargaining committee; he also was one of the founders of the Employee Assistance Program for CBC Toronto. Although he retired from the CBC in 1990, Martin remained active as a volunteer Guild rep on the CBC Toronto EAP committee up to the time of his death.

Milwaukee Guild elects new VP

Greg Pearson was named to the Milwaukee Newspaper Guild's second-highest post Sept. 22, while President Lauria Lynch-German and other top officers were re-elected. A day-desk copy editor, Pearson was elected 1st vice president, a position whose duties include overseeing grievances and other efforts to protect members' rights.

Pittsburgh Guild reelects officers

The Pittsburgh Newspaper Guild has reelected all of its officers for new one-year terms, including: Mike Bucsko, president; Sally Kalson, first vice-president; Annie O'Neill, second vice-president; Natalie Hill, third vice-president; Ken Fisher, treasurer; and Ed Blazina, secretary.

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Contracts won in New York, Detroit, Hawaii

Overcoming one of the most difficult bargaining environments in many years, Guild locals in Hawaii, Detroit and New York have ratified recently negotiated contracts.

Members of the Hawaii Newspaper Guild, as well as of the Pressman and CWA-ITU locals, overwhelmingly ratified a 15-month extension of their contract at the Hawaii Tribune Herald, in Hilo. More than 400 union members in Detroit ratified a new contract, effective Oct 13 through Jan. 14, 2007, for Guild, Teamster and Pressman units at the Free Press and Detroit News. And Guild-represented employees of The New York Times overwhelmingly ratified an eight-year pact, 271 yes to 9 no.

The New York contract, covering approximately 1,500 employees, provides wage increases of 3% in each of the first five years (retroactive to this past March) and 2% annually thereafter. Although it drops a no-layoff guarantee that the Times had insisted on expunging, the pact requires all staff reductions to begin with "non-regular employees"—independent contractors, temps, consultants, freelancers and stringers—before layoffs can affect regular full- and part-time employees on the company payroll at the time of contract ratification. The agreement also gives employees with at least three years of service the right to transfer into a vacant position to avoid layoffs, and protects such employees from salary loss if they have at least six years of continuous service.

The Times also agreed to increase pension plan payments to maintain benefits at their current level—an increase Guild leaders estimated could total \$45 million over the life of the contract.

The three-year Detroit agreement, the company's "last, best offer," requires employees to start paying part of their health insurance premiums, with initial costs ranging between \$15 and \$70 a month depending on income level and type of coverage. Moreover, the premiums are scheduled to

increase 30% in each year of the contract.

Draconian though such increases may be, they represented considerable back-stepping by the company after two previous "last, best and final" offers—which explains why the last package was ratified by a margin of more than 80%. The company initially planned to impose the same wage and insurance package it had imposed on non-union employees this past May, which union leaders estimated would have cost Guild members up to \$350 a month for family coverage.

Members of the Guild-represented maintenance unit will receive a 2.75% wage increase each year of the contract, while Free Press employees will receive a 2% raise each year. Employees of the Detroit News will continue to receive merit raises only. Other gains: the Free Press will offer a fifth week of vacation, after 15 years.

In Hawaii, meanwhile, the three unions representing employees at the Hawaii Tribune Herald accepted the recommendation of a federal mediator for a 15-month extension of the existing contract, to Dec. 31, 2004. The agreement may be seen as a setback for hired gun Michael Zinser, who as chief spokesperson for the newspaper had approached bargaining with a lengthy list of concessionary demands.

While union leaders expressed surprise that the company accepted the mediator's proposal, they noted that the Tribune Herald's publisher had recently attended his first bargaining session and suspected that his participation was crucial to the outcome.

Maintaining the status-quo means employees will not receive across-the-board wage increases during the extension—but also means health insurance cost increases will not be passed along. The employer will continue to pay 100% of the premium for the HMO and 90% of the Blue Cross premium.



Once-docile employees at Dow Jones have been increasingly agitated by the company's "take it or

leave it" approach to bargaining and demands for cutbacks—even as profits rebound.

Getting testy at Dow Jones

If timing is everything, Dow Jones & Co. has a whole lot of nothing. Scarcely a month after it presented its "final offer" in contract negotiations with IAPE (TNG-CWA Local 1096)—including no pay increase in the first year, a freezing of wage scales for a third consecutive year and double-digit increases in employee health care costs—the company released its third-quarter earnings.

It's hard to argue poverty when net income more than triples at The Wall Street Journal, your flagship publication. Overall results, meanwhile, exceeded analysts' projections.

The unfortunate contrast only heightened employee anger that had already been percolating for several months. IAPE members across the U.S. and Canada have been sporting Band-aids that say CUTS HURT. Several demonstrations at the corporate campus in New Jersey have so rattled the company that its attorneys have threatened unspecified disciplinary measures against "disruptive" employees. Reporters from Dow Jones Newswires and The Wall Street Journal have held work-to-rule days, showing up at work en masse and putting in the required seven hours—but no more. And, in a move with potential financial repercussions, Dow Jones reporters launched a boycott Sept. 22 of voluntary appearances on CNBC, with whom the company has a "content sharing" relationship.

"As long as the company refuses even to bargain with us as adults, we see no reason to give freely of our time," explained Theo Francis, a Wall Street Journal reporter and New York location director.

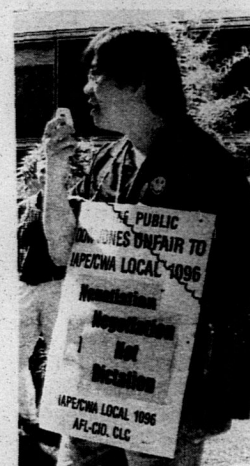
Meanwhile, the company's characterization of its "final" contract offer resulted in the filing of unfair labor practice charges at the National Labor Relations Board. "The company threw its 'final offer' on the table before the parties had even discussed many important items," complained IAPE attorney Lowell Peterson. "This is

not good faith bargaining. It is a thinly-veiled attempt to stampede the union into a deal which is simply not acceptable."

As with many—perhaps most—contract negotiations these days, one of the biggest obstacles to an agreement has been company insistence on sweeping cutbacks in health care benefits. The company wants employees, who already are shouldering 17% of composite medical and dental expenses, to incur an additional 5% of health-care costs through higher premiums in 2004, rising to 6% in 2005 and 7% in 2006. And the company already has told non-IAPE members that in addition to higher premiums they'll pay higher deductibles.

And that's not all. Dow Jones wants to eliminate the cost-of-living provision; doesn't want to pay information-technology workers who solve problems from home; wants to deny holiday pay for printing-plant employees; wants to require younger employees to work longer before qualifying for retirement benefits; and wants to require laid-off employees to sign a release promising not to sue the company in exchange for severance pay.

Meanwhile, IAPE officials point out, the company too broke to give its employees a raise just spent \$200,000 for a gigantic flat-panel television.



Phil Chan's placard says it all, as he addresses a lunchtime rally.

Minnesota high court strikes down shield law

By Randy Furst
Minnesota Newspaper Guild

The struggle by reporters and the news media to protect confidential sources has suffered a major setback in Minnesota, where the state Supreme Court has ruled that a journalist must disclose his sources for a 1997 newspaper article.

The 5-2 decision could mean that Wally Wakefield, a reporter for a suburban Twin Cities newspaper, must reveal his sources for an article that was critical of a suburban high school football coach. If he refuses, he faces a \$200-a-day fine imposed by a state district court judge in St. Paul.

"The state Supreme Court decision is an affront to all journalists," said Mike Sweeney, executive officer of the Minnesota

Newspaper Guild. "Reporters cannot function without their ability to protect confidential sources. We hail Wally in his courageous stand and we continue to support him."

Wakefield's attorney, Mark Anfinsen, said he remained hopeful that a new judge assigned to the case might withdraw the demand for disclosure and, in the process, lift the fine, which has been in abeyance since the case was appealed. "I've got a fighting chance," Anfinsen said.

Wakefield, 73, is a retired elementary school teacher who writes stories and columns for the Lillie Suburban Newspapers, a small local newspaper chain.

In the majority opinion, written by state Supreme Court Justice Alan Page, the court said that Minnesota's shield law does not apply to plaintiffs in a defamation suit in

which malice has been alleged against individuals who made comments about the coach. Wakefield's newspaper, the Maplewood Review, was not itself sued in the case.

Two dissenting judges, Helen Meyer and Paul Anderson, said the state's shield law, the Minnesota Free Flow of Information Act, protected Wakefield. "The majority applies Minnesota's Free Flow of Information Act to deny the reporter the First Amendment's protection, even though the purpose of the Free Flow Act is to provide a shield against disclosure of confidential sources—a shield that was intended to give more protection to reporters than is available under the First Amendment," Meyer wrote.

The Newspaper Guild, at its convention in 2002, passed a resolution supporting Wakefield and the international joined the

Minnesota local in an amicus brief drafted by the Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press, based in Washington, D.C. More than a dozen other media organizations also filed an amicus brief on Wakefield's behalf. John Borger, an attorney representing those media groups, accused the state Supreme Court of taking "an unnecessarily narrow view of reporter's privilege."

Star Tribune columnist Doug Grow, writing that "the journalist issues in this case are large," quoted Wakefield as saying that he initially felt anxious about the judge's order to divulge names. "But at the moment I made the decision I would not reveal the sources, I felt good about it," Wakefield added. "It was like a weight had been lifted off my shoulders. I knew then I had done the right thing."

Labor round-up

Score one for labor on overtime rules

In a rebuke to George W. Bush, 21 Republicans joined with House Democrats to vote 221-203 against an administration revamp of work rules that would have eliminated overtime pay for as many as 8 million workers. The White House has threatened to veto the provision, which is part of a funding bill for labor, health and human services and education. It also retaliated against organized labor, which had led the charge against the new rules, by announcing less than 24 hours later that unions would have to provide much more detailed financial reporting than has already been required by federal law. Complying with the new rules, union leaders say, will cost as much as an additional \$1 billion a year; they further observe that the new rules are much stricter than reporting requirements for public corporations and were pushed by such anti-worker groups as the National Right to Work Committee.

H1-B cap reverts to 1998 level

In the absence of congressional action, the cap on the H-1B "professional guest worker" program has returned from 195,000 to its pre-1998 level of 65,000. The controversial program, which filled many U.S. high tech positions with foreign workers on 7-year visas, was expanded five years ago after the industry claimed it couldn't find enough properly trained American programmers and software engineers. WashTech and other groups representing American workers have long complained the H-1B program was poorly administered and little more than a pretext for driving down wages. A recent study by the Atlanta Federal Reserve Bank, on the other hand, found little evidence that H-1B workers depressed wages but did conclude the program "may have an adverse effect on unemployment." One reason for the confusion: the General Accounting Office says the program is so poorly monitored that federal officials don't even know how many H-1B visa holders are in the U.S. Moreover, although the GAO contacted 145 companies to discuss their H-1B use, only 36 agreed to interviews.

Senate scuttles FCC ownership rules

The U.S. Senate on Sept. 16 handed the Federal Communications Commission its second major setback in two weeks, voting 55 to 40 on a seldom-used "resolution of disapproval" to wipe out the full slate of controversial media ownership rules adopted by the FCC on June 30. The resolution, so bipartisan that it was co-sponsored by Sen. Trent Lott of Mississippi, came two weeks after a federal appeals court in Philadelphia issued an order blocking the FCC from imposing the unpopular new rules, which allow single companies to control more TV and radio stations, as well as newspapers, in a single market. The resolution now goes to the House, where it faces more opposition, and the White House has threatened a veto.

Pushing labor standards after Cancun

With the collapse of world trade talks in Cancun, Mexico, the AFL-CIO is pushing negotiators to address labor rights and the impact of globalization on people outside the elite. The talks crashed when 22 "middle-income" countries, led by Brazil and India, walked out in mid-September amid claims the U.S., Japan and the European Union were demanding that other nations open their markets while refusing to give up their own subsidies, notably for farm goods. On a related note, a coalition of union activists and environmentalists is mobilizing to protest a meeting of trade ministers in mid-November to further craft the Free Trade Area of Americas. Organizers hope to gather 15,000 to 25,000 demonstrators in Miami to protest the budding trade treaty, often described as "NAFTA on steroids."

Bush fails 'show me the money' test

The Bush administration's claim that privatizing government jobs would save an average of 10%-40% of current costs is not supported by the evidence, according to "Show Me the Money," a new report from the Economic Policy Institute. "The administration may be willfully misreading the research or engaging in some wishful thinking, but there's no question that the facts do not lead where the administration says they do," said EPI economist Max Sawicky. The report is at www.epinet.org/content.cfm/briefingpapers_bp145. Meanwhile, another EPI website, JobWatch, at www.jobwatch.org, reports the Bush tax cuts are not creating the number of jobs the White House said they would. While the administration promised the cuts would generate 344,000 new jobs a month, beginning in July, JobWatch reports the number of actual jobs created falls 672,000 short of the administration's projections.

Scholarships for union members

Applications for the 2004 Union Plus Scholarship program are available on the web, at www.unionplus.org/scholarships, or by sending a postcard with your name, return address, telephone number and international union affiliation to: Union Plus Education Foundation, c/o Union Privilege, P.O. Box 34800, Washington, DC 20043-4800. The application deadline is January 31, 2004. This year, 105 students representing 42 AFL-CIO unions were selected to receive \$150,000 in scholarships.



JIM WEST

Si, se puede!

The Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride stops Sept. 27 for a rally in Detroit en route to the East Coast. Inspired by the civil rights Freedom Riders of the 1960s, a thousand immigrant workers boarded buses from nine cities to tour the country for two weeks on behalf of a campaign to campaign to put

immigration issues on the national political agenda for 2004. Converging in Washington, D.C. to lobby lawmakers, the freedom riders then continued to New York City for a massive, day-long Celebration of America's Immigrants in which they were joined by more than 100,000 supporters.

With 20 dead, journalists push for U.S. accounting

With the journalistic body count in Iraq now at 20—including seven journalists killed by U.S.-led forces in four separate incidents—the pressure for a full accounting is growing.

Pentagon "investigations" of two of the incidents—the Aug. 17 shooting death of Reuters cameraman Mazen Dana, and the April 8 tank shelling of the Palestine Hotel, which killed two—absolved the military of any culpability while keeping the reports themselves secret, prompting accusations of a cover-up. Now the Committee to Protect Journalists has filed three Freedom of Information requests with the U.S. Defense Department, including a request for information on a U.S. air strike on Arab broadcast network Al-Jazeera, which has not been investigated by the military.

CPJ also is seeking information on the March 22 death of British ITV News reporter Terry Lloyd, whose two colleagues remain missing and are rumored dead. Lloyd and his camera team reportedly came under fire from coalition forces in broad day-

light while driving a clearly marked media vehicle.

The International Federation of Journalists, meanwhile, has issued a 41-page report chronicling the killings, titled "Safety Sidelined and Justice Denied on the Road to Baghdad." The report, said IFJ General Secretary Aidan White, "poses questions that must be answered, discusses the need for long-overdue changes in international law to give new levels of protection for media staff, and rallies support for the International News Safety Institute, a new global campaign to improve journalists' safety."

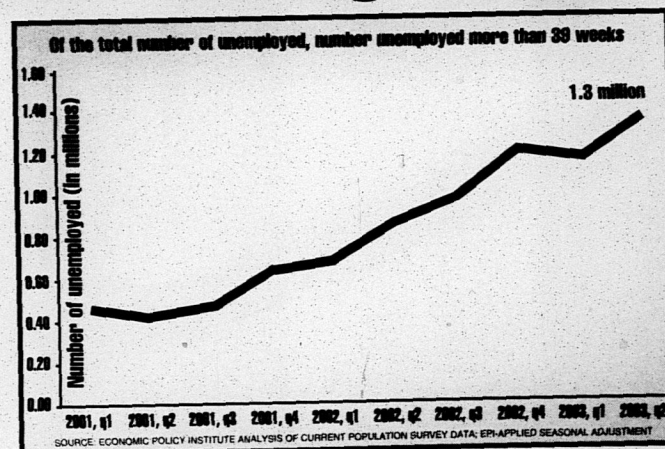
The U.S. military's cavalier attitude—capsulized by the Army spokesman who said the soldiers who shot Dana at point-blank range "acted within the rules of engagement"—has even galvanized the trade publication Editor & Publisher, which in an Oct. 6 editorial described the Pentagon's reports as "shoddy and secretive." Newspaper publishers, it suggested, need to be more aggressive in ferreting out investigations "locked up in Pentagon file cabinets."

Joblessness lasting longer

Some recent rosy numbers on consumer spending notwithstanding, the economic glass continues to be more half-empty than half-full for a growing number of Americans.

The graph at right, courtesy of the Economic Policy Institute, illustrates a particularly dire dimension of the problem. Although state unemployment benefits usually are paid for a maximum of 26 weeks, Congress responded to the growing incidence of chronic joblessness in March, 2002 by enacting the Temporary Extended Unemployment Compensation (TUEC) program. TUEC pays a maximum of 13 weeks of additional unemployment to most workers, and a maximum of 20 weeks of additional compensation in a handful of states with extremely high unemployment.

But unemployment has gotten worse, and the number of workers who remain unemployed even



after this extended period has almost doubled since TUEC was adopted, from just under 700,000 to 1.3 million. "If the unemployed needed income support back in March of last year, they surely need it now, as the persistent lack of job creation has extended jobless spells to historic highs," concludes an EPI press release.

In a related development, recently released census data show that poverty increased and median household income fell in 2002 for the second consecutive year. The number of poor people increased by 1.7 million, to 34.6 million; the poverty rate rose from 11.7% to 12.1%; and median household income fell by \$500, or 1.1%.

Labor round-up

Score one for labor on overtime rules

In a rebuke to George W. Bush, 21 Republicans joined with House Democrats to vote 221-203 against an administration revamp of work rules that would have eliminated overtime pay for as many as 8 million workers. The White House has threatened to veto the provision, which is part of a funding bill for labor, health and human services and education. It also retaliated against organized labor, which had led the charge against the new rules, by announcing less than 24 hours later that unions would have to provide much more detailed financial reporting than has already been required by federal law. Complying with the new rules, union leaders say, will cost as much as an additional \$1 billion a year; they further observe that the new rules are much stricter than reporting requirements for public corporations and were pushed by such anti-worker groups as the National Right to Work Committee.

H1-B cap reverts to 1998 level

In the absence of congressional action, the cap on the H-1B "professional guest worker" program has returned from 195,000 to its pre-1998 level of 65,000. The controversial program, which filled many U.S. high tech positions with foreign workers on 7-year visas, was expanded five years ago after the industry claimed it couldn't find enough properly trained American programmers and software engineers. WashTech and other groups representing American workers have long complained the H-1B program was poorly administered and little more than a pretext for driving down wages. A recent study by the Atlanta Federal Reserve Bank, on the other hand, found little evidence that H1-B workers depressed wages but did conclude the program "may have an adverse effect on unemployment." One reason for the confusion: the General Accounting Office says the program is so poorly monitored that federal officials don't even know how many H-1B visa holders are in the U.S. Moreover, although the GAO contacted 145 companies to discuss their H-1B use, only 36 agreed to interviews.

Senate scuttles FCC ownership rules

The U.S. Senate on Sept. 16 handed the Federal Communications Commission its second major setback in two weeks, voting 55 to 40 on a seldom-used "resolution of disapproval" to wipe out the full slate of controversial media ownership rules adopted by the FCC on June 30. The resolution, so bipartisan that it was co-sponsored by Sen. Trent Lott of Mississippi, came two weeks after a federal appeals court in Philadelphia issued an order blocking the FCC from imposing the unpopular new rules, which allow single companies to control more TV and radio stations, as well as newspapers, in a single market. The resolution now goes to the House, where it faces more opposition, and the White House has threatened a veto.

Pushing labor standards after Cancun

With the collapse of world trade talks in Cancun, Mexico, the AFL-CIO is pushing negotiators to address labor rights and the impact of globalization on people outside the elite. The talks crashed when 22 "middle-income" countries, led by Brazil and India, walked out in mid-September amid claims the U.S., Japan and the European Union were demanding that other nations open their markets while refusing to give up their own subsidies, notably for farm goods. On a related note, a coalition of union activists and environmentalists is mobilizing to protest a meeting of trade ministers in mid-November to further craft the Free Trade Area of Americas. Organizers hope to gather 15,000 to 25,000 demonstrators in Miami to protest the budding trade treaty, often described as "NAFTA on steroids."

Bush fails 'show me the money' test

The Bush administration's claim that privatizing government jobs would save an average of 10%-40% of current costs is not supported by the evidence, according to "Show Me the Money," a new report from the Economic Policy Institute. "The administration may be willfully misreading the research or engaging in some wishful thinking, but there's no question that the facts do not lead where the administration says they do," said EPI economist Max Sawicky. The report is at www.epinet.org/content.cfm/briefingpapers_bp145. Meanwhile, another EPI website, JobWatch, at www.jobwatch.org, reports the Bush tax cuts are not creating the number of jobs the White House said they would. While the administration promised the cuts would generate 344,000 new jobs a month, beginning in July, JobWatch reports the number of actual jobs created falls 672,000 short of the administration's projections.

Scholarships for union members

Applications for the 2004 Union Plus Scholarship program are available on the web, at www.unionplus.org/scholarships, or by sending a postcard with your name, return address, telephone number and international union affiliation to: Union Plus Education Foundation, c/o Union Privilege, P.O. Box 34800, Washington, DC 20043-4800. The application deadline is January 31, 2004. This year, 105 students representing 42 AFL-CIO unions were selected to receive \$150,000 in scholarships.



Si, se puede!

The Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride stops Sept. 27 for a rally in Detroit en route to the East Coast. Inspired by the civil rights Freedom Riders of the 1960s, a thousand immigrant workers boarded buses from nine cities to tour the country for two weeks on behalf of a campaign to put

immigration issues on the national political agenda for 2004. Converging in Washington, D.C. to lobby lawmakers, the freedom riders then continued to New York City for a massive, day-long Celebration of America's Immigrants in which they were joined by more than 100,000 supporters.

With 20 dead, journalists push for U.S. accounting

With the journalistic body count in Iraq now at 20—including seven journalists killed by U.S.-led forces in four separate incidents—the pressure for a full accounting is growing.

Pentagon "investigations" of two of the incidents—the Aug. 17 shooting death of Reuters cameraman Mazen Dana, and the April 8 tank shelling of the Palestine Hotel, which killed two—absolved the military of any culpability while keeping the reports themselves secret, prompting accusations of a cover-up. Now the Committee to Protect Journalists has filed three Freedom of Information requests with the U.S. Defense Department, including a request for information on a U.S. air strike on Arab broadcast network Al-Jazeera, which has not been investigated by the military.

CPJ also is seeking information on the March 22 death of British ITV News reporter Terry Lloyd, whose two colleagues remain missing and are rumored dead. Lloyd and his camera team reportedly came under fire from coalition forces in broad day-

light while driving a clearly marked media vehicle.

The International Federation of Journalists, meanwhile, has issued a 41-page report chronicling the killings, titled "Safety Sideline and Justice Denied on the Road to Baghdad." The report, said IFJ General Secretary Aidan White, "poses questions that must be answered, discusses the need for long-overdue changes in international law to give new levels of protection for media staff, and rallies support for the International News Safety Institute, a new global campaign to improve journalists' safety."

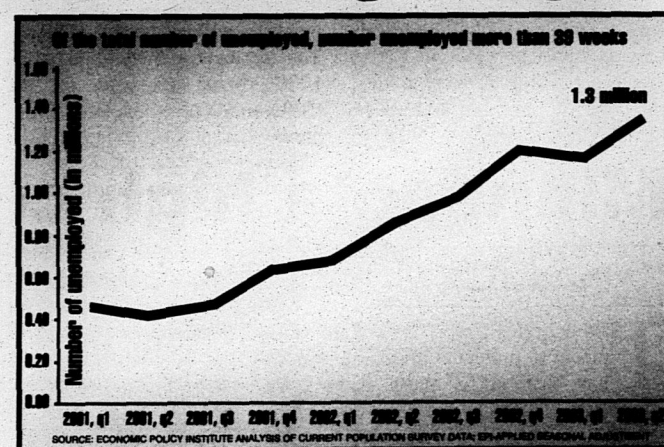
The U.S. military's cavalier attitude—capsulized by the Army spokesman who said the soldiers who shot Dana at point-blank range "acted within the rules of engagement"—has even galvanized the trade publication Editor & Publisher, which in an Oct. 6 editorial described the Pentagon's reports as "shoddy and secretive." Newspaper publishers, it suggested, need to be more aggressive in ferreting out investigations "locked up in Pentagon file cabinets."

Joblessness lasting longer

Some recent rosy numbers on consumer spending notwithstanding, the economic glass continues to be more half-empty than half-full for a growing number of Americans.

The graph at right, courtesy of the Economic Policy Institute, illustrates a particularly dire dimension of the problem. Although state unemployment benefits usually are paid for a maximum of 26 weeks, Congress responded to the growing incidence of chronic joblessness in March, 2002 by enacting the Temporary Extended Unemployment Compensation (TUEC) program. TUEC pays a maximum of 13 weeks of additional unemployment to most workers, and a maximum of 20 weeks of additional compensation in a handful of states with extremely high unemployment.

But unemployment has gotten worse, and the number of workers who remain unemployed even



after this extended period has almost doubled since TUEC was adopted, from just under 700,000 to 1.3 million. "If the unemployed needed income support back in March of last year, they surely need it now, as the persistent lack of job creation has extended joblessness to historic highs," concludes an EPI press release.

In a related development, recently released census data show that poverty increased and median household income fell in 2002 for the second consecutive year. The number of poor people increased by 1.7 million, to 34.6 million; the poverty rate rose from 11.7% to 12.1%; and median household income fell by \$500, or 1.1%.

History's lesson: organization counts

[One of the most progressive—and provocative—voices within the labor movement is that of Bill Fletcher, Jr., former assistant to AFL-CIO President John Sweeney and a principal organizer of the Black Radical Congress. He is currently president of TransAfrica Forum and delivered the keynote speech at the biennial Labor Notes Conference in mid-September, from which the following remarks are excerpted.]

By Bill Fletcher, Jr.
President, TransAfrica Forum

The implicit question in looking at the period of the 1920s and early 1930s is this: how was trade union organization able to survive? How was it that in the 1920s the death of organized labor was regularly predicted, but several years later there was nothing short of a labor renaissance with the formation of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) and the organizing of millions of workers? Answering this question has great relevance to our current situation, where the working class—and organized labor in particular—exist in nothing short of a *de facto* 'state of siege.'

Consider, for a moment, some of the features of the 1920s. This was the era of what was referenced as 'welfare capitalism.' Unions appeared to be demonstrating themselves to be useless to workers as capitalists advanced various paternalistic schemes.

Labor peace was the watch-word. Employee-involvement programs and organizations were created in order to give workers a sense of involvement in the system. By 1929, David Brody reports, industrial disputes involved less than 1/6 the number of workers involved in 1916, and 1/17 the number of those involved in the peak year of 1919. In the 1920s, and contrary to popular wisdom, there was a demonstrable trend of children breaking with their parents and ceasing to identify with the working class in general, and trade unions in particular. Workers were moving further and further from their places of employment. I reference this because we act as if this is a new phenomenon. It has been in the makings for nearly a century.

The 1920s was a period of severe political repression. The infamous Palmer Raids of 1919 led to the jailing and deporting of thousands of anarchists, socialists, communists and other leftists. Much like the activities of Attorney General Ashcroft and the crackdown on alleged terrorists, anyone on the political left was in jeopardy of imprisonment, irrespective of cause or evidence, with the soon-to-be-incarcerated being led through the streets of Boston like Gallic prisoners following Caesar's chariots.

The Garvey Movement, the largest that Black America has ever seen which aimed at Black awareness and a return to Africa, was repressed, eventually leading to the jailing and deportation of Garvey himself. The Industrial Workers of the World, otherwise known as the Wobblies, weakened during World War I due to a massive government crackdown and the arrest of its key leaders resulting from their anti-war stand, was essentially finished off in the early 1920s.

In a phrase, the 1920s represented a period of an offensive of capital. An important lesson it taught is that when capital occupies state power it, by definition, has the advantage. In other words, when those who control the gold rule either directly or indirectly, they are in the driving seat. We are always playing catch-up, but this does not mean we cannot win. We can have no illusions about the situation, however. The so-called "open-shop offensive" during the 1920s was aimed at making that point to the working class.

A second lesson from this period is one

that is much more difficult for progressive activists to accept. Most workers—and most people, for that matter—want social peace. They desire quiet and stability. They are not looking for upsurges, even though an upsurge might alleviate the pain that they feel on a daily basis. Capital offers the illusion of labor/management peace to the worker, at least peace on their terms. This can take the form of the illusion of upward mobility or the myth of rugged individualism.

In the 1920s, through various schemes associated with welfare capitalism, capital seemed to offer—much as it did in the 1980s and 1990s—a place in the sun for individual workers at the same time as it was crushing workers and their organizations. The notion of a partnership with capital, and I mean that in a strategic sense rather than a tactical sense, as is often found in collective bargaining agreements, is seductive. The 1920s demonstrated that this appeal had a resonance among many workers, particularly those that were fortunate enough to be employed by larger corporations. But it was not only them. The problem that was faced at that time, and which we continue to face, is illustrated by the fear many workers have of tax increases *on the wealthy*. Yes, these are the wealthy today, but ... hold on ... *I might be wealthy tomorrow!* Any illusion, accepted by workers, can become a material obstacle to the development of class consciousness and the blocking of forward motion.

In such an inhospitable world, what could be done? What was done?

Contrary to the wishes of the capitalists, the 1920s was a period of great turbulence. The problem, from the standpoint of progressives, is that this turbulence did not ignite into a mass conflagration. Take, for instance, the Garvey movement. The Universal Negro Improvement Association organized millions of African Americans, as well as West Indian immigrants, but the Garvey movement was not, primarily, a confrontational movement. Garvey hoped he could achieve some sort of detente with white supremacy, resulting in the peaceful exodus of African Americans from the USA, returning to Africa. This did not happen, but the experience and organization of the Garvey movement provided many of the seeds for pro-CIO organizing that would take place in the 1930s.

Organizing also took place in the Southwest, particularly among miners. This included the work of IWW affiliates or influenced groups, as well as independent Mexican and Chicano labor unions. In Hawaii, significant organizing was led, originally, by the Japanese Federation of Labor and the Filipino Federation of Labor. On the mainland, real possibilities for a breakthrough by progressives took place when long-time radical trade unionist—and later Communist Party leader—William Z. Foster helped form the Trade Union Educational League.

What was particularly interesting about the TUEL was that it was not a separate union or union federation. Though it had chapters, it was more of a network, at least as we use the term today. In some respects

similar to Labor Notes and a group out of the 1980s called the National Rank & File Against Concessions, this organization brought together activists from various AFL unions who were committed to transforming the union movement. It had an explicit program for the renewal of the trade union movement and, for a while, had substantial ties not only within the left-wing of labor but among more middle or center forces.

Unfortunately for progressives, due to sectarianism on the part of the Communist Party and an unrealistic assessment of the period, the TUEL isolated itself and lost its effectiveness. The TUEL underestimated the need for united fronts; overestimated the political consciousness of most AFL workers; underestimated the resiliency of AFL leaders,

regardless of their being decrepit; and, much like many of us to this day, failed to acknowledge that reactionary union leaders do have a social base within the memberships of their unions (that is, these leaders are not floating on the surface without some ties to the base).

Let me suggest to you some concrete lessons from the pre-CIO period that we should reflect upon when doing our work in the struggle against capital and reactionary politicians.

• Social movements are not willed into existence. This is critically important for us to keep in mind.

As I mentioned earlier, most people are looking for security and stability. It takes a number of different factors to influence a social eruption. The 1960s was not just the Civil Rights movement, or the anti-Vietnam war movement, but was a series of movements that came to influence one another. It is much like the igniting of an atomic bomb. There has to be critical mass in order for the explosion to take place. That critical mass, when it comes to social movements, may be struggles taking place in different sectors that come to influence one another. Organizing in one sector demonstrates to others that organizing, and success, is possible.

• Mass campaigns are critical as training grounds for activists as well as forces for influencing public opinion. In addition to the Garvey movement, which was not exactly a campaign, there were two significant campaigns initiated by the left that helped to lay the foundation for the eruptions of the 1930s. The campaign in support of the trade union anarchists Sacco and Vanzetti, accused of a murder during a robbery, was a mass campaign that united Italian immigrants, trade unionists, civil libertarians and the left. While the campaign was unsuccessful in preventing their execution, it was in many respects an earth-shattering experience for those who participated in it, and for the country as a whole. [Editor's note: It also marked a crucial turning point in Heywood Broun's life, leading directly to his determination to create a union for newspaper workers.]

In the early 1930s, the Scottsboro Boys case, which was led by the Communist Party in defense of black men accused of raping a white woman, played a similar role. I would suggest to you that the Scottsboro case

should also be seen as part of the embryonic elements of what came to be known as the Civil Rights Movement.

• Organization and Vision: I want to make a general point here, that the pre-CIO period was not about the good activity of individuals. Organization was essential. The Universal Negro Improvement Association, the Wobblies, the TUEL, the Hawaiian Labor Association—each such organization was not simply a structure, but contained within itself a vision of a different world.

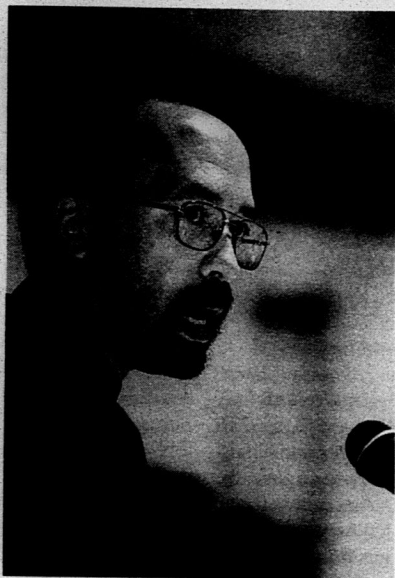
In 1985 I had the honor and opportunity to interview Harry Bridges, the legendary founding leader of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union, which split off from the East Coast-based International Longshoremen's Association. It became very clear to me that what sustained Bridges during the difficult times prior to the 1934 general strike that he led, and which shut down San Francisco, was a vision of what could be different. That, and feeling part of an international movement. In some sense I think that one can see this as grounding him at a point when virtually everything in his environment mitigated against success. This grounding for Bridges was in Marxism and his alignment with the Communist Party. Other great leaders and many unknown greats were equally grounded, albeit within any number of groups.

• The fight for legislation should be an integral part of our struggles, and such victories help to provide us with legitimacy. There has been a debate for years about whether the passing of Section 7 of the National Industrial Recovery Act in 1933, and of the National Labor Relations Act in 1935, ignited a movement or were the results of a movement. I think that the honest answer is both. Clearly, sections of the ruling class aligned with Franklin Roosevelt sought an arrangement with organized labor. Section 7 was part of the deal. It was also the case that the agitation and organizing that preceded Section 7 made its passing and that of the NLRA possible.

But I would ask you to recall my earlier remarks about consciousness. Section 7 and the NLRA gave legitimacy to the workers' demands for self-organization and collective bargaining. One need only remember that famous FDR quote, used by many a CIO organizer, in which the president said: "If I were to go to work in a factory, the first thing I would do would be to join a union." As my friend AFSCME Regional Director Jose La Luz reminds us, why could we not get such a quote out of Clinton? What did it mean that the movement could get one from FDR?

• My final point: Please forgive me if I step on toes or if I go beyond my mandate. It seems to me that many of us who are progressive in the labor movement attempt to construct a strategy for renewal by drawing selectively on lessons from the past. We discuss organizing the unorganized, for instance, and reference the 1930s without acknowledging that the demand or insistence on organizing the unorganized was part of a larger demand or struggle for democracy. The movement in the 1930s was not simply insisting that labor needed to grow, but it connected this growth directly to the need for a broad democratic social movement to combat fascism and to construct a different USA. It also contained the seeds of what came to be the early Civil Rights Movement. This is just as true when it comes to questions of organization. Were it not for the existence of the Communist Party, the Socialist Party, the Muste-ites, the Trotskyists, I think it is fair to say that the sort of labor renaissance that we witnessed would not have taken place. It was not just

Continued on page 7



JIM WEST

Convergence II comes amid historic shifts

By Andy Zipser
Editor, The Guild Reporter

When TNG-CWA activists and leaders converge on Baltimore this January for three days of brain-storming and strategizing, their work will be cut out for them.

Recent contract settlements in Baltimore and St. Paul, to name just a couple of prominent examples, were deplored by the very people who negotiated them because of the concessions that were wrung from the Guild. Publishers everywhere have made no secret that they're itching for a fight, gearing up for a strike almost as soon as bargaining begins. The industry's in-your-face attitude toward employees is exceeded in audacity only by its insistence on profit margins formerly expected from high-tech, high-growth companies.

But it's not just the newspaper industry that's at war with its unions. Labor everywhere in the U.S. (and to a lesser but growing extent in Canada) is on the run, from the relentless attacks of the Bush administration on public employees to the private sector's open disdain of labor law and its duty to negotiate contracts in good faith. Kate Bronfenbrenner and Robert Hickey have documented the rise of anti-union tactics with depressing precision: 52% of employers faced with an organizing drive threaten plant closings, 26% illegally fire workers for union activity, 10% use electronic surveillance of union activists.

If this were a traditional war, of the von Clausewitz variety, our newspapers and other media would be cracking with dispatches from the front. Instead, as noted by the Project Censored folks at Sonoma State University (see page 8), the effort to make unions disappear is one of the 10 most under-

"Convergence II: A Strategic Forum," will be held January 23-25 at the Maritime Institute of Technology and Graduate Studies (MITAGS), near Baltimore-Washington International Airport. Guild leaders throughout the union who understand the challenges we face, at the bargaining table and in organizing drives, are strongly encouraged to attend. The expectation is that the forum will culminate in a general action plan for the union.

Room rates at MITAGS are approximately \$165 per night, which includes meals and shuttle transportation between the facility and BWI Airport. Those interested in attending are asked to contact Malinka Franklin (mfranklin@cwa-union.org or 202-434-1274) so TNG-CWA can reserve an adequate number of rooms.

reported significant stories of the past year. It's hard to imagine any other population of 16 million being so ignored by the press, but the effect is extraordinarily isolating.

It should come as no surprise, under such challenging circumstances, that the labor movement overall is struggling to redefine itself. Questions abound. How much of what we do is about "labor" and how much is "movement," as in the civil rights or women's movements? In other words, how much of what we do is about protecting wages, benefits and job security—and how much is about advocating for wider social change to improve the human condition? If the latter, who decides—and how—what is and isn't an "improvement?" What happens, as just one example, when an emphasis on job creation conflicts with environmental (think Arctic oil drilling) or other values?

The confusion isn't just over thumb-sucking, Big Picture issues, but over tactics and strategy. The CWA, for example, is a leading advocate of negotiating company neutrality and card-check agreements into its contracts, but not all unions embrace the idea, and companies like Verizon have shown an appalling

willingness to trash their promises when it suits them. CWA also has taken the lead in creating non-conventional organizing models, including WashTech and Alliance@IBM, which support previously unorganized workers even when they haven't been recognized as a bargaining unit. Eminently defensible as a long-term strategy, the approach nonetheless requires patience and persistence that may be in short supply in times of stress.

Stress, on the other hand, is a notorious wellspring of demands for strong, even authoritarian leadership, as witness U.S. public opinion post-9/11. Labor's version of this phenomenon can be seen in the recent emergence of something called the New Unity Partnership, a corporatist restructuring of the labor movement that is being pushed by the presidents of five of the country's largest unions: SEIU, HERE, UNITE, the Laborers and the Carpenters. Long on management-theory buzzwords like "growth," "density" and "market share," the NUP's leaders would consolidate all of labor into 12 or 15 mega-unions operating under a "strategic growth plan" designed, of course, by the NUP's five architects. That might be the very antithesis

of worker empowerment as preached by most union organizers, but its simplicity and directness can be highly seductive for beleaguered union members who just want someone to tell them what to do.

Convergence II therefore comes at a time of strong historical cross-currents that challenge traditional notions of union structure, leadership and tactics in the marketplace. While each local struggles with its own particular circumstances, many of the issues it confronts are common to other Guild locals and some are endemic to unions everywhere. That could be disheartening: who can be cheered at the realization that we are in fact at war? That this is not just an isolated struggle with a particularly callous employer but, indeed, part of a much larger pattern?

But that realization also places Convergence II in a context described by Bill Fletcher Jr. in the speech he gave at the recent Labor Notes conference in Detroit (see page 5). Recalling an interview he had with legendary labor leader Harry Bridges, Fletcher observed: "It became very clear to me that what sustained Bridges during the difficult times prior to the 1934 general strike that he led, and which shut down San Francisco, was a vision of what could be different. That, and feeling part of an international movement. In some sense I think that one can see this as grounding him at a point when virtually everything in his environment mitigated against success."

In short, the particular challenge of Convergence II is not only to create a vision of what can be different, but to do so within the context of a larger movement that also is struggling to reclaim its identity. That wider context, with all of its missteps and political in-fighting and embarrassments, is what ultimately grounds us—and empowers us, and the Guild.

What do you call a state-corporate merger?

By William Rivers Pitt
Managing Editor, truthout.org

[Excerpted from a speech delivered to the Greater Boston Labor Council's annual breakfast on Sept. 1, 2003.]

Did everyone have a nice weekend? Good. Thank a union. I was tempted to come in here today and deliver a speech about how profoundly important unions have been to the development of this nation, and to me personally. But then it struck me. First of all, you folks don't need to sit here and listen to someone wax poetic about the greatness of unions. You already know. Second of all, giving a speech like that, in this day and age, would be like sitting in the middle of a house fire talking about how warm and cozy we are. This house is on fire, and so today I want to talk to you about how we are going to stomp out those flames before they burn out everything that is important to us as citizens, and as a nation entire.

A man said, "On this Labor Day weekend, Americans pay tribute to the spirit of hard work and enterprise that has always made this nation strong. Every day, our workers go to factories and offices and farms and produce the world's finest goods and services. Their creativity and energy are the greatest advantage of the American economy."

What man said that? George W. Bush said that, on Saturday, from his ranch in Crawford, Texas. Does anyone else appreciate the irony? This house is on fire, and George is sitting in the front yard with a great

big flamethrower and a grin on his face. The history of unions has always been a story of the people versus the powerful, the worker versus the bosses, the folks scratching to keep the lights on at home versus the folks taking CEO salaries home that are so big they need a fleet of Brinks trucks to drive them, laughing, all the way to the bank.

It is all well and good for Mr. Bush to praise the greatness of the American worker. But it behooves us to look long and hard at how the American worker has fared under his administration, and to talk long and hard about what that record means to us, and to this country.

Talking hard is dangerous, especially these days. As a nation we have, since September 11, been cautious and deferential about criticizing the actions and ideologies of the boys and girls in Washington. We've had to deal with the idea, evinced clearly by this administration, that to criticize is to be unpatriotic. We've been told, by none other than White House spokesman Ari Fleischer, to "Watch what we say."

I submit that union men and women have earned the right to speak openly and strongly against the direction this country is headed. They earned that right with the blood and lives of the union men and women who charged headlong into two burning buildings two years ago. Union men and union women do their jobs. On that dark day, union men and union women spent their lives on the job, and they did it without a second thought or a hesitating step. Union men and women earned the right to speak their minds after their fallen brothers and

sisters were used by the Bush administration as props in a photo-op, and then were shamefully slapped across the face by that same administration.

Here's the news, America. 'Homeland Security' is not a bunch of guys in black suits and sunglasses. Homeland Security is cops, and fire fighters, and emergency medical teams, all the people who work every day to save lives. Homeland Security on September 11 was union workers all, and those cops and fire fighters and EMTs have since had their funding eviscerated by an administration that took their pictures and then gave them the back of its hand.

Caution and deference have no place in this conversation anymore. We gave those people our caution and deference, and they have paid us back by steamrolling us. So enough of caution. Enough of deference. It is time to talk hard. If we can't speak the truth in the daylight, we will never be able to begin the process of changing that which desperately needs to be changed. Every great movement in history has begun with one thing: Words exchanged in truth between people of good conscience. So let us, as people of good conscience, exchange a few hard words in the hopes of beginning something whose time has come.

A long time ago, a man named Benito Mussolini invented something called Fascism. In the time since, fascism has come to be defined by Nazis, by war, and by crimes against humanity that defy description. But when Mussolini invented fascism, those definitions had not yet established themselves. Mussolini, the inventor of fas-

cism, defined it differently. "The first stage of fascism," said Mussolini, "should more appropriately be called Corporatism because it is a merger of state and Corporate power."

Now, even with all my tough talk about hard words and doing away with caution, I am appropriately cautious about using so bloody a word in this setting. Well I should be. But I ask you: What do we have today if not the beginnings of the merging of state and corporate power? Even if you refuse to see our current situation through Mussolini's eyes, even if you refuse to use that hardest of words, the simple fact that the corporate world and the federal government are becoming one and the same is clear, and unavoidable. Is that merger complete in America? Certainly not. Are we headed in that direction? Lawyers use a Latin phrase: *Res ipsa loquitur*. The thing speaks for itself.

What will the place of unions be in such a world? Where are the rights of workers? I say unions and the rights of workers are and must continue to be at the forefront of a fight that is not new, but is now as desperate as it ever has been. There are millions and millions and millions of Americans who would join a union tomorrow if given the chance. We must fight to see that they are given that chance. A man staring down the barrel of a gun once said, "Don't mourn. Organize." We are staring down the barrel of a gun today, and if we don't organize, we're finished.

Pitt is the author of three books: "War On Iraq," "The Greatest Sedition is Silence" and "Our Flag, Too: The Paradox of Patriotism."



LOOKING AHEAD

Reporters in the cross-hairs

By Linda Foley, President

Every nation, in every region, now has a decision to make. Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists.—George W. Bush, Sept. 20, 2001, in a speech to a special joint session of Congress.

That rejoinder, delivered in the wake of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, drew sustained applause. Millions of Americans engulfed in a swirl of grief and fear that riveted them to their television sets nodded in solidarity from their living rooms. At that moment, most could comfortably relate to a post-9/11 world with two types of people: the terrorists and the rest of us.

Two years and two wars later, it doesn't seem so simple. A world that appeared so stark and crystallized back then now seems a lot greyer and fuzzier. The line between "us" and "the terrorists" likewise has been blurred, depending upon who's defining "us"—and who's defined as "terrorists."

For Bush & Co., however, the paradigm hasn't changed much. Since Sept. 11, this administration is wont to apply the notion of "us vs. them" to every aspect of policy, at home and abroad. Today, the speech's line has morphed into: "Either you agree with us or you are with the terrorists."

Their application of this litmus test ranges from labeling Senate Minority Leader Tom Daschle and former Democratic Senator Max

Cleland (a decorated Vietnam veteran who lost three limbs in that war) as unpatriotic for daring to oppose Bush's policies; to the U.S. attorney general's accusing Iraq War critics of assisting "America's enemies." Even the Dixie Chicks were branded traitors to their country because they expressed chagrin over the actions of a certain fellow Texan.

Because the White House requires everyone to choose sides, bipartisan consensus has become impossible and the public discourse necessary to reach valid public policies is stifled. That puts journalists—whose job is to tell the truth and not champion either a political point of view or promote a particular policy initiative—right smack in the crosshairs of the Bush administration's war on those who don't support it.

The latest volley at the press has come from Bush himself, who has threatened to ignore the "national" media completely by delivering the "good news(!)" of what has become the Iraq morass straight to the regional press corps. Maybe that way Americans will be lulled into ignoring the violence and death facing U.S. soldiers since he prematurely declared the fighting over. (A pretty big insult to the thousands of hard-working journalists of the "regional press" who, like their "national" counterparts, want to report the truth, don't you think?)

Let's learn right lessons . . .

Continued from page 5

that the left provided the best organizers, a point that John L. Lewis was regularly prepared to admit. It was that during the difficult times, organization and vision kept members and supporters going.

Too many of us today act as if we need no such organization and no such vision. We act as if it is enough to plow away in our fields by ourselves or with a few friends. We act as if the existence of an organized left, and specifically an organized left anti-capitalist political party, is a nice idea but not particularly essential in order to carry out our tasks. We act as if we expect that, spontaneously, the dispossessed and oppressed in the USA will somehow come together and unite for social justice. We act as if we can influence coming generations through force

of personality rather than through organization and struggle.

Thus, I would suggest to you that in learning the lessons of the pre-CIO period, let us truly learn the lessons. Let us understand that we need more than fighting overtime grievances; more, indeed, than organizing the unorganized. We need a vision of a different USA, and indeed a different world. We need an organized left that challenges activists to look beyond the borders of the USA and see allies, rather than charity recipients. We need an organized left that challenges activists to reformulate our strategies such that we incorporate issues of race and gender, not as afterthoughts, but as the kernels of our process. We need, in other words, a left-wing framework in order to both understand the world, but more importantly, to change it.

THIS IS WHAT U.S. LABOR LAW LOOKS LIKE!



Labor Rights Are Civil Rights - Let Freedom Ring...Again!

More insidious (and more frightening), however, is the way "us vs. them" played out in the press's involvement in the Iraq War itself. There, it was "embedded" vs. "unilateral" journalists. And from what I gleaned from the remarks of Pentagon representatives at a recent conference of Military Reporters and Editors (MREs), there was no question which group the U.S. military considered "us" and which they considered "them." Even the term "unilateral journalist" (chosen by the Pentagon) conjures up a whiff of reportorial imbalance.

At the Oct. 2-4 conference of MREs (the double entendre of the organization's anagram was not lost on its members), many in attendance, including some journalists themselves as well as the military flacks, had high praise for the accessibility brought on by the policy of embedding journalists among troops on the battlefield.

However, none of the journalists was entirely convinced that embedded reporters got or could get a completely accurate picture of the war. The Pentagon folks, on the other hand, were downright gleeful about how well the program worked from their vantage point.

As vice president of the International Federation of Journalists, I participated in a Saturday panel discussion, along with Frank Smyth of the Committee to Protect Journalists and representatives from Reuters and Great Britain's Independent Television News (ITN), both of whom lost journalists to so-called "friendly fire" incidents in Iraq. Pentagon spokesperson Bryan Whitman also joined us. The panel was moderated by Emmy-award winning journalist Arthur Kent, who covered the first Gulf War for NBC.

Members of an ITN crew were killed early in the war when they were attacked

first by Iraqis and then mistakenly by coalition forces. A Reuters cameraman was killed when U.S. forces fired on the Palestine Hotel during the assault on Baghdad, and award-winning Reuters reporter Mazen Dana was killed by a U.S. tank while filming outside a prison after major hostilities had ended.

In all, seven media workers have been killed by coalition forces during the latest Iraq conflict. All were considered "unilateral" and were not embedded with coalition forces. "We did not lose one embedded journalist to hostility-related actions," crowed one military spokesman at the conference.

Meanwhile, following its own internal investigations of the Palestine Hotel and Mazen Dana killings, the Pentagon concluded that the rules of engagement were followed in both situations. The major portions of reports on both incidents remain classified and have not been released. Neither, by the way, have the bodies of two missing ITN crew members whose deaths have been confirmed by non-military sources.

For his part, the Pentagon's Whitman, while expressing sympathy for families and co-workers of the slain journalists, was unapologetic for the questionable incidents themselves. "We simply cannot be responsible for the safety of non-embedded journalists," he said. But later in the discussion he sounded a more ominous tone. "I don't know what will happen in future wars," he said. "But it may very well be that news organizations will find it too costly to use non-embedded journalists to cover wars in the future."

Given the price some news organizations have already paid, notably Reuters and ITN, that sounded pretty threatening. It's reminiscent of: "Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists."

LETTERS

To the Editor,

I am writing to correct the record regarding the Sept. 12 Guild Reporter story on the tabling of the "freelancer" motion at the Sector Conference.

The point of order I raised questioned whether several delegates (enough to change the outcome) should have been allowed to vote on the proposal in committee, despite the fact that they had not been seated by the Credentials Committee until the day after the vote. One of our delegates (who registered late) had been told he could not take part until he was properly seated. This was a matter of basic fairness!

While I secondarily pointed out that the committee did not appear to have the constitutionally-mandated number of locals represented, it was Guild Counsel Barbara Ca-

mens, not I, who raised the issue of the legitimacy of "every vote taken at the conference."

In my view, this whole sorry episode points out the dramatic need for changes in how the shorter Sector Conference is operated. Namely, we may not be able to allow late registration, and all proposals to be discussed, including those emanating from the Sector Executive Council, must be sent to all locals well in advance of the conference.

—Bill O'Meara, New York Guild

To the Editor,

Coverage of the TNG-CWA Sector Conference (September edition of The Guild Reporter) failed to report in any detail regarding several problems that were raised on the floor critiquing the administration's proposal to admit freelancers to full Guild membership:

- Any freelancer performing any work within the Guild's jurisdiction (journalists, salespeople, clerks, messengers, truck drivers, carpenters, shipping clerks; the list is almost endless) would be eligible. Absolutely no proof of employment would be required.

- Once in, the only way a freelancer's membership would cease is if they stopped paying dues, dues which would only be a fraction of the normal dues rate all of us pay. Freelance members could indefinitely continue their membership without regard to whether or not they were still actively working.

- Freelance members would have all the rights of full membership except for not being able to vote on collective bargaining issues. They could hold office and vote in all Guild elections.

- In essence, freelance members would enjoy super-membership rights now denied to regular members.

Was the failure to report on these important issues just a case of sloppy reporting or a continuation of a somewhat distasteful effort to jam this proposal through?

—Barry F. Lipton, President, Newspaper Guild of New York

[Editor's reply: The September GR published the complete text of the freelancer proposal so Guild members could analyze it for themselves and provide a constructive critique. As Brother Lipton knows, the proposal from the Executive Council was late getting to the conference in part because it was amended to address concerns he himself raised while attending council debate on the issue.]

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: Nov. 14.) Letters and articles proposed for publication may be e-

mailed to the editor at azipsr@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.

In brief...

Several locals report organizing successes:

WashTech has been recognized by the Washington Public Employment Relations Commission as representing nine employees of the Peninsula School District IT Department and six employees in the communications division of Pierce County Emergency Management. In both cases, more than 70% of the employees signed union representation cards, exceeding the minimum needed for automatic recognition.

Separately, Wayne Cahill of the **Hawaii Newspaper Guild** negotiated a card-check agreement for 23 workers at Pacific Media Publishing, which is owned by Gannett Co., Inc.

Meanwhile, the California State Mediation and Conciliation Service certified the **CFI-BACI** unit of Local 39521 for court interpreters in Los Angeles, Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo, where 74% of eligible employees signed cards. It also certified the CFI-BACI unit for court interpreters in the San Francisco and North Bay Area, where 76 of 82 eligible employees signed cards, and certified the unit for court interpreters in San Diego. Of the 92 eligible employees, 77 signed cards.

Finally, newsroom and advertising employees at the St. Claire Journal, Ill. voted 10-9 to be represented by the **St. Louis Newspaper Guild**.

Fresh twists and turns in Seattle's JOA saga

The Seattle JOA saga continues its twists and turns. The latest developments: A judge hearing the case, in which the Seattle Times is seeking to dissolve its joint operating agreement with the Post-Intelligencer, rules Sept. 25 that the Times can't claim a normal operating loss for 2000 because its profits were adversely affected by a Guild strike. The Times concedes that using the same logic, it probably would have posted a profit in 2001, too—but is appealing the decision in arguments that were to be heard Oct. 24. Times publisher Frank Blethen ups the ante by suggesting that if the appeal is unsuccessful he just might consider selling his family's majority stake

in the paper. P-I owner Hearst, meanwhile, announces that it has taken that newspaper off the market because of the lower court's ruling.

CEP obtains ban on Guild e-mails

Locked into a battle with the Canadian Media Guild over representation of employees at the Canadian Broadcasting Corp., a rival union has landed one below the belt: the Communications, Energy and Paperworkers union has convinced a federal board to bar the Guild from e-mailing its members at work. While CEP complained of the Guild's "unfair access" to employees, CMG President Lise Lareau warns the government decision could have "devastating consequences for all unions, including CEP," because of the precedent it sets.

Norristown Guild OKs three-year contract

The Norristown Guild has ratified a contract with the Times Herald, following a lengthy session in which an acceptable package was hammered out under the watchful eye of a federal mediator. The three-year pact provides annual 2% wage raises, a \$250 signing bonus, an outside activities clause and a clause protecting the unit against layoffs resulting from the use of copy from other Journal-Register newspapers. On the flip side, the employee share of health insurance premiums will rise from 25% to 29% in the first year, 31% in the second year and 33% in the third.

Boston Herald buyouts prune union ranks

The Boston Herald, already a bare-bones operation, is becoming even leaner: a second wave of buy-out offers has been made, to newsroom employees with nine to 10 years' seniority, following company acceptance of 13 of 16 applications from those with more than 10 years on the job. Lesley Phillips, president of the Greater Boston Newspaper Guild, says management won't disclose how many buy-outs it is seeking but has said the buy-outs are among several options it is pursuing "to effect long-term savings"—language Phillips interprets as possible layoffs.

Unfit to print?

Sherlock Holmes, in "The Hound of the Baskervilles," was able to solve a mystery by taking note of the sound that wasn't there. So perhaps one clue to understanding some of life's contemporary mysteries is to observe what stories aren't being told in the mass media.

That, more or less, sums up the work done at Sonoma State University each year over the past three decades by "Project Censored." Accepting hundreds of nominations from journalists, academics and other interested parties, the project's faculty and student volunteers look for stories with major economic, political or social implications that nevertheless got short shrift in the mass media. The results, not surprisingly, typically include stories that challenge the status quo or threaten vested interests.

At right above is the project's list of the 25 top "censored" stories of 2002-2003—"censored" not in the conventional sense, of government officials banning publication, but of receiving scant coverage from increasingly corporate media more interested in news as entertainment, *a la* saturation coverage of the Kobe Bryant and Washington sniper trials. A full discussion of each "winner" can be read at the project's web site, at www.projectcensored.org.

Given the nature of the stories that make it onto the list, union members may not be surprised that one of the top entries—at number five—is headlined "The Effort to Make Unions Disappear." Documented by niche publications like *The Progressive* and *The American Prospect*, the corporate and White House campaign to eviscerate organized labor, redistribute income away from the working class and establish business-friendly rules for a global economy has received only glancing attention from the mass media.

"It's revealing that the story of a labor movement with more than 13 million members can be censored with relative ease,"

Top 25 Censored Media Stories of 2002-2003

- #1: The Neocorporative Plan for Global Domination
- #2: Homeland Security Threatens Civil Liberty
- #3: US Military Removes Pages from Iraq U.N. Report
- #4: Rumsfeld's Plan to Provoke Terrorists
- #5: The Effort to Make Unions Disappear
- #6: Closing Access to Information Technology
- #7: Treaty Busting by the United States
- #8: US/British Forces Continue Use of Depleted Uranium Weapons Despite Evidence of Negative Health Effects
- #9: In Afghanistan: Poverty, Women's Rights, and Civil Disruption Worse than Ever
- #10: Africa Faces Threat of New Colonialism
- #11: U.S. Implicated in Taliban Massacre
- #12: Bush Administration Behind Failed Military Coup in Venezuela
- #13: Corporate Personhood Challenged
- #14: Unwanted Refugees a Global Problem
- #15: U.S. Military's War on the Earth
- #16: Plan Puebla-Panama and the FTA
- #17: Clear Channel Monopoly Draws Criticism
- #18: Charter Forest Proposal Threatens Access to Public Lands
- #19: U.S. Dollar vs. the Euro: Another Reason for the Invasion of Iraq
- #20: Pentagon Increases Private Military Contracts
- #21: Third World Austerity Policies: Coming Soon to a City Near You
- #22: Welfare Reform Up For Reauthorization, but Still No Safety Net
- #23: Argentina Crisis Sparks Cooperative Growth
- #24: Aid to Israel Fuels Repressive Occupation in Palestine
- #25: Convicted Corporations Receive Porks Instead of Punishment

writes Lee Sustar, author of "Employers Attack: Unions Blink" in *Z Magazine*, in an update for the Project Censored awards. "The dominant media view in recent years has been that unions are artifacts of an earlier era and are simply no longer relevant in the 'new' information economy. Full-time labor beat reporters, once fixtures in big-city newsrooms, virtually disappeared years ago."

More recently, Sustar adds, labor coverage has taken a more ominous turn as the economy remained in the doldrums: worse than being irrelevant, unions increasingly are portrayed as being at the root of today's ills. So, for example, New York Times labor reporter Steven Greenhouse wrote that the airlines were financially vulnerable because pilots, machinists and other unionized airline workers had negotiated excessively high wages in organized labor—not because of overcapacity or mismanagement. And never mind such inconsistencies as United Airlines ending up in bankruptcy despite its unionized workers accepting massive concessions in 1994.

Meanwhile, few reporters have examined the human costs of an estimated \$35 billion in similar airline labor concessions.

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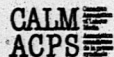
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DAYBOOK

- Western District Council,
Oct. 24-26, Eugene, Ore.
- New England District Council,
Nov. 1-2, Plymouth, MA
- Southern, Great Lakes Councils,
Nov. 8-9, Cincinnati
- Convergence 2 Strategic Forum,
Jan. 23-25, Baltimore
- Deadline for Broun, Barr award
entries, Jan. 30 (postmark)
- New Local Officers' Seminar,
Feb. 13-16, Meany Center
- CWA Legislative Conference,
March 28-31, Washington DC
- CWA Civil Rights Conference,
April 22-25, Jacksonville, FL
- Freedom Award banquet,
May 19, Washington DC
- CWA Annual Convention, Aug.
30-31, Anaheim, CA

FROM THE MORGUE

Fifty years ago this month:

Guild-represented employees of the Seattle Times reach agreement on a new contract that includes "substantial money and fringe gains," ending a strike that started July 16—but remain idled as other unions continue bargaining. . . . A business group headed by Robert Wood Johnson, chairman of Johnson & Johnson, publishes a 52-page report that concludes every worker is entitled to a "moral" wage—i.e. "a wage sufficient to provide an entire family with a decent living standard"—and that management is obliged to consider such a wage a "basic cost of doing business."

Twenty-five years ago this month:

The New York Times agrees to pay \$350,000 and to start an affirmative action program to settle an antidiscrimination lawsuit brought by seven women employees, including TNG regional vice president Betsy Wade. . . . The Wire Service Guild and eight former and present Associated Press employees sue the wire service, charging it discriminates against women and racial minorities. . . . Federal fact-finding is scheduled to resolve a months-long shutdown of New York City's dailies.

Ten years ago this month:

Charles Dale rebuffs an election challenge by Bruce Meachum to win a second four-year term as TNG president, while Linda Foley decisively wins her bid to be secretary-treasurer. . . . Editorial employees at the Worcester, Mass., Telegram & Gazette vote 78-59 to affiliate with the Providence Guild.

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