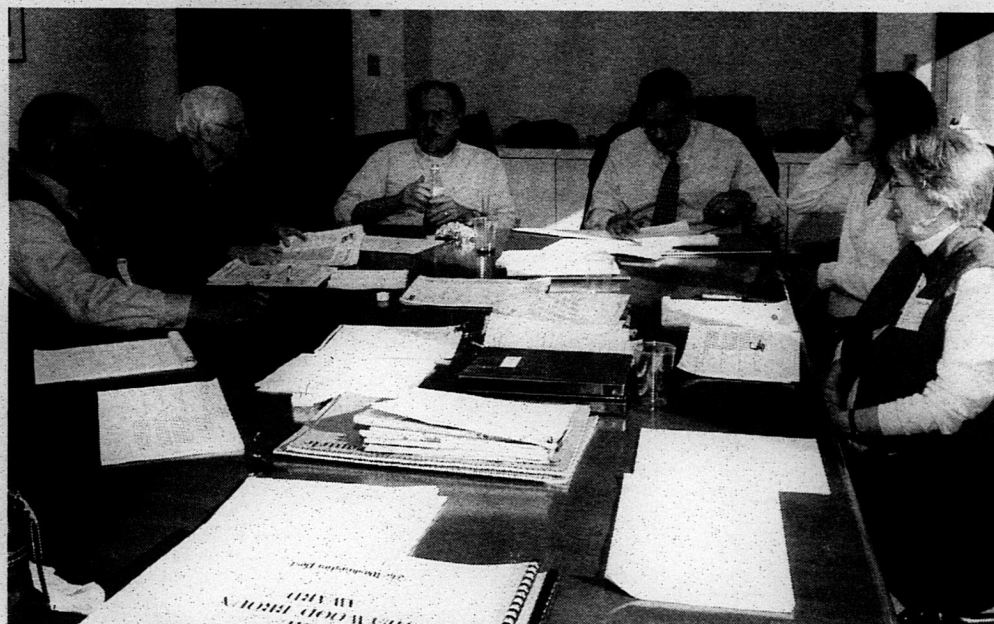


THE GUILD Reporter

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Nearing the end of their task, the print judges of the Heywood Broun Award competition include (left to right) Richard Prince, Nan Robertson, Peter

Perl, Juan Gonzalez and Lori Robertson. At extreme right is retired Guild staffer Larkie Gildersleeve, who chaired the panel.

RAY CROWELL/WASHINGTON-BALTIMORE GUILD

Labor gives nod to politics, but divisions fester

By Mark Gruenberg
Staff Writer, Press Associates Inc.

By a substantial margin, the top leadership of the AFL-CIO has rebuffed efforts to consolidate U.S. unions and has agreed that the federation's primary emphasis will be on politics and legislation, with organizing second.

The political emphasis was proposed by federation President John J. Sweeney and adopted by the AFL-CIO's executive committee in a long meeting March 2 in Las Vegas. The proposal triumphed over a competing plan from Teamsters President James Hoffa that emphasized rebating half of every union's AFL-CIO dues to those unions that develop strategic organizing plans.

But the full AFL-CIO Council did not take a final vote on Sweeney's plan, seeking more details. That means talks about revamping the AFL-CIO will continue over the next several months, giving union leaders critical of Sweeney's leadership additional time in which to expand their gains.

Hoffa's plan, building on proposals initially advanced by Andrew Stern, president of the service workers' union, went beyond rebating dues to propose a wholesale restructuring of the AFL-CIO. Among its elements were economic incentives for more unions to merge, streamlining the AFL-CIO structure, restricting the federation's activities to "core issues" and reducing the size of top leadership bodies. Hoffa later told Press Associates his plan would cut the AFL-CIO budget from the present \$170 million to \$88 million.

The executive committee vote for Sweeney's plan was reported as 15-9, while Hoffa's plan was rejected by either 14-8 or 15-7, depending on the source. Because the executive committee's meetings were closed to outsiders, there were no independent accounts of what transpired.

Despite the apparently lopsided outcome, labor sentiment is

much more closely divided than the vote would suggest. Hoffa ally Bruce Raynor, president of UNITE HERE, reported that unions representing 5 million workers—about 40% of the federation's 12.95 million members—backed Hoffa's plan. And there is some indication that this percentage may be growing. Backers of the dues rebate and its allied issues thus far include SEIU, the Teamsters, UNITE HERE, the United Food and Commercial Workers, the Laborers

As union leaders meeting in Las Vegas pondered how to save the labor movement, the urgency of their task was underscored by news that annual average AFL-CIO membership dropped by 167,775 from 2003 to 2004, to 12.95 million.

The figures follow a pattern the Labor Department reported last month, which showed unions represent 7.9 % of private sector workers, more than 36% of public sector workers and one in every eight workers overall.

The toll has been especially heavy on unions in the retail and manufacturing sectors.

and the United Auto Workers.

Sweeney's prevailing proposal would allocate approximately half of the per-capita dues payments received by the federation—now 61 cents per worker per year—to politics, for an estimated \$45 million to \$47 million. But bowing to pressure for more financial help for organizing, the Sweeney plan also would allocate \$15 million in rebates to unions that develop strategic organizing plans, as Hoffa proposed. That money, to be returned in the form of one-to-four matching grants, would be a slight increase from the current \$12.5 million that the federation alone spends on organizing, Sweeney said.

AFL-CIO spokeswoman Denise Mitchell estimated that national unions alone spend another \$200 million for organizing.

Continued on page 6

Top Broun entrants focus on loss of care Prize goes to Fallis of Washington Post

When death came to Theresa Buford, she was cold and alone," began the first of four articles by Washington Post reporter David S. Fallis, reporting on Virginia's assisted living "industry" for disabled adults. But as Fallis went on to demonstrate, "alone" did not mean unprecedented.

In a thorough audit of more than 600 privately run homes, Fallis found 51 questionable deaths and roughly 4,400 instances of abuse and neglect since 1995. The victims included a man whose leg was amputated because of an untended wound and a woman who lay dead in her room for days before anyone checked on her—all in a system ostensibly over-

seen by state regulators.

The series, as well as the flurry of official responses it kicked up, was so compelling it earned the unanimous approval of this year's panel of judges for the Heywood Broun Award. Earning awards of substantial distinction were Kevin Fagan of the San Francisco Chronicle, for a series on homelessness titled "Shame of the City"; and "Fighting for Care," an ABC News PrimeTime examination, Diane Sawyer reporting, of the quality of care delivered by VA hospitals.

Commenting on Fallis's work, the Broun judges said his stories "painted a devastating picture of a dys-

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Government funds color press group's objectivity

By Diana Barahona
Northern California Media Guild

Over the past year, U.S. news stories about press freedom increasingly have cited the work of a Paris-based organization, Reporters Without Borders (Reporters sans Frontières, or RSF). Indeed, despite its small size and lack of high-profile principals, Reporters Without Borders has achieved nearly the same name-recognition as the New York-based Committee to Protect Journalists, which can boast of having Walter Cronkite, Dan Rather and Tom Brokaw on its board of directors.

To be sure, RSF has embraced many causes near and dear to American journalists. For example, it was among the more outspoken organizations demanding a Pentagon investigation of the shelling of the Hotel Palestine, in which two journalists were inexplicably killed. More recently, it has lambasted federal prosecutors for targeting Judith Miller, Matthew Cooper and other journalists in an effort to force them to disclose their sources.

But RSF, unlike the CPJ, is heavily funded by government grants, raising questions about its objectivity.

And a closer examination of the battles RSF wages—and those it ignores—strongly suggests a political agenda colored by its choice of patrons. Unfortunately, the organization appears unwilling to address such concerns: RSF's New York representative, Tala Dowlatzahi, terminated a telephone interview when asked if the organization had applied last year for any U.S. government grants other than one received from the National Endowment for Democracy.

Most notable, perhaps, is the group's obvious political bias in its reporting on Haiti. RSF expressed its support for the Feb. 29, 2004, Franco-American overthrow of Haitian President Jean-Bertrand Aristide at the same time that it received 11% of its budget from the French government (\$397,604, or approximately \$465,200 in 2003). According to Haiti-based journalist and documentary film-maker Kevin Pina, the organization selectively documented attacks on opposition radio stations while ignoring other attacks on journalists and broadcasters to create the impression of state-sponsored violence against Aristide's opponents.

RSF blamed Aristide for the unsolved murders of two journalists, calling him a "predator of press free-

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Former Int'l Chairperson dies page 8

HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH

Minorities still bumping up against a promotion ceiling

By Debbie Thomas
Human Rights Director

February was Black History month, and while we were all embracing and celebrating the accomplishments of African-Americans, I had the opportunity to attend a panel discussion on recent developments at the Washington Post. What I learned was that minorities working in newsrooms are still bumping into a ceiling that blocks them from rising above a certain level.

The choice of a new managing editor caused quite a stir in the newsroom, as the diversity committee of minority journalists discovered that while there were several qualified non-white, non-male candidates—in particular one African-American and one woman—all were overlooked. As reported by Washingtonian magazine, the Post's executive editor, Leonard Downie, was well aware that two white men would again lead the newsroom. But as Downie also told a staff meeting, "the next level of 30-40 editors was diverse. And the paper has set annual goals for hiring women and minorities," implying that the Post had done enough to ensure newsroom diversity.

The Post, however, has a long history of racial exclusivity. In 1972, Post reporters filed a discrimination complaint with the Equal Opportunity Commission

regarding the newspaper's hiring and promotion practices. A newsroom survey on diversity was commissioned in 1986, and in 1993 the Gettler Commission issued a report critical of the Post's treatment of minority staffers.

The recently formed, employee-driven diversity committee plans to deal not only with the issue of hiring and promotion, but also with retention: for every three minority journalists hired, two leave the paper. Other areas the committee is concerned about include newsroom culture, wages, evaluations and career mobility.

The committee noted that the Post's coverage area is 43% non-white, and that the paper should work harder at finding news stories that reflect the community it serves. More minority staffers, including African-Americans, Latinos, Asians and women, would help the company better achieve those goals.

Elsewhere, the Times Union in Albany, N.Y. has formed its first diversity committee and plans to focus on staff development to improve the paper's connection with its community. Local President Tim O'Brien says the committee was formed by the company but that Guild members are an integral part of it.

At the Star-Tribune in Minneapolis, the African American Forum recently hosted a black history luncheon. Part of the program

honored the memory of Larry Williams, a typographical union member, with a donation in his memory made by the local toward a scholarship to a historically black college. This committee has been around since the 1990s.

What's happening at your local? Does your company have a diversity committee? Does your local? Please let me know via e-mail to Dthomas@cwa-union.org.

STICKS AND STONES

Oriental—Many Asian-Americans, especially younger ones, liken "Oriental" to "Negro." A vestige of British imperialism, the term is at least vague: in art it may include countries such as China and Japan, but not Turkey. In rugs it may mean India and China as well as Turkey. In food it may mean China or Japan, but not India, Vietnam or the Philippines.

Aunt Jemima—Born a slave in 1834, Nancy Green became the advertising world's first living trademark as "Aunt Jemima." Working as a domestic in Chicago, Green contracted at the age of 59 to portray a happy cook to promote a pancake recipe by Pearl Milling Co. She died in 1923, but her image as the "pancake queen" lives on. Some view the icon as a painful reminder of slavery and her character's apron-clad cook with a bandana on her head as a negative stereotype of black women.

TNG to convene in Victoria

The 70th convening of The Newspaper Guild-CWA has been set for May 5-8 at the Fairmont Empress in Victoria, BC. This year's sector conference is the third in a three-year cycle, held in advance of the CWA convention to allow sufficient time for election of Guild officers. The CWA convention is slated for Aug. 29-31 in Chicago.

Candidates for TNG president, secretary-treasurer, sector chairperson and director of TNG

Canada may be nominated on the conference floor. Also open for nomination are eight regional vice-presidential positions. All terms of office are for three years.

The bulk of the sector conference is scheduled to continue the work that started at Convergence II, a meeting of Guild activists in Baltimore in early 2004. The five committees created at the Baltimore meeting submitted a series of recommendations to last year's sector conference, where they were debated, refined and forwarded to the executive council for its input.

While some committee recom-

mendations are being implemented by staff and some only require an executive council decision, others are subject to convention resolution and will be brought to Victoria for final action.

Hotel reservations may be made at www.newsguild.org or by calling the Fairmont Empress directly, at 1-866-540-4433; the cut-off date for reservations is March 31.

Delegate credentials and copies of any resolutions to be introduced at the conference must be received by Secretary-Treasurer Bernie Lunzer at TNG-CWA headquarters no later than April 20.

Correction

The February Guild Reporter asserted that the Cape Breton Post is "Nova Scotia's only daily newspaper." That's so dumb a statement it almost doesn't bear correcting, if not for the well known observation that the dumbest statements cling to life most tenaciously (cf. WMDs in Iraq, compassionate conservatism, etc.).

Readers therefore may wish to note that neither the Chronicle Herald—at which more than 100 Guild members are employed—nor The Halifax Daily News have passed from existence. The Post, meanwhile, remains the only daily newspaper circulated entirely within Cape Breton.

Guild briefs . . .

Mixed ruling for CDN employees

An administrative law judge in California has found management at the Chinese Daily News guilty of at least 13 violations of the National Labor Relations Act, including threats, interrogations and retaliation against union supporters. As punishment for repeatedly breaking the law, the company was ordered not to do it again. The order is to be posted in English and Chinese.

Two new units sign on in Beltway

Two Washington, D.C. employees have signed recognition agreements with the Washington-Baltimore Guild. The new unit at Hotel and Restaurant Employees Local 25 (UNITE HERE) includes 15 professional staff organizers, business agents, researchers and support staff. Also joining the local are the support staff and communications, research, and program and funding development professionals at American Rights at Work, a non-profit organization chaired by former congressman David Bonior.

CWA modifies strike payout rule

In a move with implications for striking Guild members in Youngstown, Ohio, the CWA has modified the rules for payouts from the Members Relief Fund, effective Feb. 28. The change limits strikers, victims of collective bargaining strategies and locked-out members to payouts that do not exceed their regular weekly wage rates. In Youngstown, a significant number of strikers had been receiving more in strike benefits than they earned as part-time employees.

2 IAPE members win Polk honors

Wall Street Journal reporters Ellen Schultz and Theo Francis, a director of IAPE, TNG-CWA Local 1096, were winners of the George Polk Awards for excellence in journalism in 2004. The pair won the award for economic reporting for an investigative article titled "Financial Surgery: How Cuts in Retiree Benefits Fatten Companies' Bottom Lines." The page-one article showed how employers have exaggerated the cost of retiree health care and are profiting by cutting benefits.

AP locals moving toward a merger

Leaders of the News Media Guild and of Technicians Local 1314 have unanimously endorsed a merger, a move that would unite all unionized employees at The Associated Press for the first time. If approved by members of both locals—ballots were being

mailed at press time—the merger would add three seats to the Guild's representative assembly and one seat on its executive committee, but leave separate, intact bargaining units for each group.

Ma Bell turns into Albany Big Brother

The Albany Times Union apparently has a new wrinkle on the "Big Brother is watching you" approach to its employees: it issued GPS-enabled cellular phones to its circulation department district managers without telling them about the added feature or that it could be used to track their movements. And when some of the district managers discovered the feature and turned it off, they got contacted—not by the company but by Nextel, which told them that under the subscriber agreement the global positioning feature had to be left on. The Albany Guild is investigating.

Dow Jones CEO hits 8-digit income

As in years past, IAPE, TNG-CWA Local 1096, has submitted a shareholder proposal that would split Dow Jones' two top positions. And, as in the past, the Dow Jones board of directors is opposing the move, arguing that combining the responsibilities of the chairman and the chief executive "is in the best interests of the company." It certainly appears to be in the best interests of chairman and CEO Peter Kann, whose gross 2004 earnings—including stock options—ballooned to more than \$10 million after a very mediocre year for the company he heads.

Anti-sweat group targets Kaplan

CWA-represented mailers at the Washington Post, who have been working without a contract for more than 20 months, are getting some help from United Students Against Sweatshops. The student group has pledged to promote a boycott of a significant Post subsidiary, Kaplan Education Services, which is one of the company's biggest profit centers. USAS has identified 69 undergraduate Kaplan programs on U.S. campuses.

UPAGRA leaders returned to office

Angel Baez and Nestor Soto were unopposed Jan. 29 in their reelection bids as executive secretary and president, respectively, of UPAGRA, TNG-CWA Local 33225. Elections will be held for the contested positions of vice president and secretary-treasurer. The union celebrated the retirement of Israel Rodriguez, who served the local for 28 years as secretary-treasurer and unit chair at El Vocero.

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The Newspaper Guild International



For information about your benefits, contact Scott Bush, assistant to the trustees:

1-888-893-3650
sbush@cwa-union.org

Illinois interpreters have first contract

By Michael Ulrich
President, Chicago Newspaper Guild

After three years of hard work and intense negotiations, the interpreters in the criminal court system of Cook County, Illinois have signed their first contract with the Chicago Newspaper Guild.

Unit members provide interpretive services in more than 80 different languages for persons appearing before the Cook County Criminal Court. Guild members have seen interpreters Kathleen Orozco and Jorge Carbajosa in action at Guild sector conferences, where they interpret mostly for the Puerto Rican delegation.

Under the terms of the three-year contract, full-timers will receive a 13% increase in the first year; part-timers, previously categorized as independent contractors, will get an 8.3% boost. In addition, the part-timers—also known as session employees—will have exclusive rights to at least eight full-time positions that are to be

created under the terms of the agreement.

Ninety employees will be covered by the contract, eventually including 34 full-timers. Approximately 60% of the new unit voted Jan. 20 to ratify the contract.

"It was a long, slow process and a very careful process, especially with the county, because they had no previous experience with the Guild," said Jerry Minkinen, executive director of the Chicago Newspaper Guild. "Eventually we started making progress and reaching agreements on the structural parts of the contract and didn't start discussing the economic parts of the contract until very late in the process last year." Negotiations started in the winter of 2002.

Before bargaining could even begin, the Guild had to withstand several court challenges. When a judge with the Illinois Labor Relations Board ruled that the per diem employees were in fact county employees, not independent contractors, the county appealed to the full board. The Chicago Federation of Labor then inter-

vened, getting the chief judge to agree to delay a final hearing on the county's challenge pending an attempt at bargaining.

As a result of the settlement, the county's court challenges will be withdrawn.

"It's just great to have all these new members," said Guild attorney Craig Rosenbaum. "It's a thrill. Everybody worked so hard. This campaign started in 1999 with Jerry and (former Guild attorney) Ken Edwards, before I came here. To keep everyone together for five years is just a great accomplishment."

Under the new contract, per diem employees will receive an increase to \$130 per day and a wage reopener in 2005 and 2006. The new contract includes union recognition and union rights, a vacation schedule and such benefits as health and life insurance plans, personal days, seniority lists and a grievance procedure.

Minkinen said he discovered that negotiating with the political public sector isn't the same as bargaining with a private

firm with a profit motive.

"It was a different experience, in that we had to deal with political pressures rather than profit motives," he said. "We just had to work through it and create whatever pressure we could, both through the labor movement and through the willingness of the employees to take on the employer."

The interpreters did take a strike vote in the summer of 2004, prompting the intervention of a federal mediator. Minkinen said that it wasn't until the mediator stepped in that the negotiations established new full-time positions, which was critically important to the session employees, as well as job upgrades for the full-timers.

"Once those pieces were in place, it was settled very quickly," Minkinen said. "But it took an awfully long process. There were times you thought it was never going to end. There were many frustrating moments along the way. I really have to give credit to the guts and perseverance of the interpreters, because they just slogged through it."

Reuters workers give strike okay

Guild-represented employees of Reuters, frustrated by working more than two years without a contract amid a rising wave of off-shored jobs, have given overwhelming support to a possible walkout.

increases in each of the next three years.

In a run-up to the Feb. 18 strike vote, more than 350 U.S. employees staged a byline strike in January to protest the off-shoring of editorial jobs, principally to India.

Meanwhile, Reuters said Feb. 16 that its operating profits in 2004 jumped 52%, to \$373 million, even as revenues fell 11%, to \$5.44 billion. While revenues have been in a three-year slide, Reuters' profitability has been pumped up through asset sales, widespread layoffs and compensation cuts. Among its most recent strategies: an attempt to create a two-tiered system of employment security that Lipton characterized as an attempt to pit Guild members against each other.

Separately, Reuters entered contract talks with the Canadian Media Guild in mid-January by criticizing participation of Canadian reporters in the U.S.-led byline strike. The Guild's bargaining team pointed out that such participation was a spontaneous and unofficial show of support for U.S. colleagues.

Managers of Reuters America, the company's main U.S. operating subsidiary, are demanding cuts in company pension contributions and increases in health care costs which, when combined, would cost employees more than 3% of annual pay. The company is proposing a year-long wage freeze starting March 1, 2003, a 1% raise for the year just ended, and 2%



Puerto Rican static

Participants in the race called "The World's Best 10K" were greeted by a massive union message at the Teodoro Moscoso bridge in San Juan, as UPAGRA, TNG-CWA Local 33225, took its Univision campaign to the streets. Approximately 10,000 runners entered the Feb. 27 event, in which nine of the 10 top finishers were from Kenya. UPAGRA has been hammer-

ing on Univision's anti-Boricua (Puerto Rican), anti-worker behavior with signs, banners and t-shirts and is joining in plans for a Peoples' March on March 27 to protest foreign television programming. Cancellation of local programming has resulted in layoffs, gaps in local news coverage and charges of cultural insensitivity. As if to prove the point, a Univision letter to its Puerto Rican employees, contesting the Guild's accusations, was written in... English.

Broun, Barr, Block winners announced

Continued from page 1

functional system and were presented in a vivid, compelling narrative rich with facts and individual human stories. It was remarkable work by one reporter, supported by database editors and researchers.

"Fallis' work sparked changes in the state regulatory system and clearly exemplifies the spirit of Heywood Broun," the judges added.

The Broun winners are to receive their awards—a plaque and a \$5,000 check for Fallis, mounted certificates and \$1,000 apiece for the awards of substantial distinction—at the annual Freedom Award Fund banquet, to be held March 30 in Washington, D.C. Also to be honored at that time will be the recipient of the Herbert Block Freedom Award, which this year is being given to the men and women of The New York Times for

fighting to uphold the principle of news source confidentiality.

In addition, two students will receive David S. Barr scholarships at the banquet. This year's winners include Bana Varmon of Dayton High School in Dayton, Texas, who will receive a plaque and \$500; and Virginia Moore of Gonzaga University, who will be presented with a plaque and \$1,500. The duo bested a record-setting field of nearly 200 entries.

This year's panel of Broun judges was chaired by Larkie Gildersleeve, former TNG-CWA director of research, information and technology. The print panel included:

- Juan Gonzalez, a New York Daily News staff columnist since 1988, co-host of the Pacifica Network show Democracy Now! and past president of the National Association of Hispanic Journalists;

- Peter Perl, director of newsroom training and professional development at The Washington Post since last year, and prior to that an award-winning staff writer of the newspaper's Sunday magazine;

- Richard Prince, who maintains the web site of the Maynard Institute of Journalism Education, edits the Black College Wire, works part-time as a copy editor at The Washington Post and chairs the Media Monitoring Committee of the National Association of Black Journalists;

- Lori Robertson, managing editor of American Journalism Review and winner of the 2003 Bart Richards Award for Media Criticism;

- Nan Robertson, a former Pulitzer Prize-winning reporter for The New York Times whose landmark book, "The Girls in the Balcony: Women, Men and the New York

Times" was instrumental in changing the newspaper's sexist practices.

Judging the much smaller field of broadcast entries were S. Tyrone Barksdale, a producer and on-air personality for WHUR-FM in Washington, D.C.; and Debra Pettit, an Emmy Award-winning producer for NBC News.

Keynote speaker at the awards banquet will be syndicated columnist Helen Thomas, whose decades of White House coverage earned her the affectionate title of "First Lady of the Press." Bob Edwards, the eponymous host of the show now broadcast on XM Public Radio, will reprise his role of two years ago as master of ceremonies; television anchor Gordon Peterson, who also moderates and produces Inside Washington and who served as emcee last year, will be presenting the awards.

News round-up

Without government, still no job gain

Four years after the start of the Bush recession, the economy has rebounded to such an extent that the number of jobs has increased by—drumroll, please—0.3%. But the gain of 332,000 jobs is due entirely to growth in government, which added 809,000 jobs over the past 47 months, even as the private sector lost 477,000. Overall, reports the Economic Policy Institute, this is the economy's worst job performance since the Bureau of Labor Statistics began collecting monthly jobs data in 1939.

U.S. a trillion-dollar debtor society

The U.S. merchandise trade deficit hit a record \$666.2 billion in 2004, a nearly incomprehensible number that basically signifies Americans keep borrowing money from other countries to finance their lifestyles. Combined with a soaring federal budget deficit, the U.S. is piling up more than a trillion dollars a year in debt—an achievement more indicative of a debtor society than of the ownership society promoted by the White House.

Rising health care costs are killing us

One expense the U.S. does not share with other industrialized nations is universal health care. Instead, out-of-control health care costs continue to dominate contract negotiations, with Peter Hurtgen, former head of the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, warning that health care will eclipse all other issues in 2005 for labor-management contentiousness. Companies also are resorting to slashing health care coverage for retired union employees who thought their benefits were guaranteed for life, a trend that is to be explored by the PBS weekly newsmagazine *NOW* on Friday, April 1. The nation's tab for health care could hit \$3.6 trillion by 2014, or nearly 19% of the entire U.S. economy, up from 15.4% now. Growth in health care spending is projected to outpace economic growth through the next decade.

Budget reflects Bush's priorities

While the Bush administration's proposed budget for the next fiscal year takes a meat axe to virtually every social program, there's one domestic priority slated for a substantial raise: the cynically titled Labor Dept., for which the White House is seeking a 7% percent hike, to \$54.5 billion. A chunk of that increase is being targeted for the Office of Labor-Management Standards, whose budget would be boosted 17% so it can better fulfill its mission of overseeing "union accountability." By way of contrast, the proposed budget would cut job training funds 5.3%, to \$7.53 billion.

Labor Dept. censors its own union . . .

Just how supportive of labor is the Dept. of Labor? Not supportive enough to allow federal employees to criticize the Bush administration's attempts to change Social Security. Last month it blocked distribution of a quarterly newsletter to its employees that included a column referring to "the risky, ill-conceived White House plan to save Social Security by destroying it." The department distributes the newsletter as part of its contract with the National Council of Field Labor Locals.

. . . but cozies up to Wal-Mart

As the federal government grows increasingly hostile to organized labor, its warmth toward corporate employers increases in inverse proportion. Latest example: a sweetheart deal between the Dept. of Labor and Wal-Mart, settling 24 instances of child labor violations in three states for a scant \$135,540. More distressing, however, was an unannounced part of the settlement—one with no relation to the child labor complaints—that any wage-and-hour complaints filed with the department by any Wal-Mart employee will be forwarded to the company at least 15 days before the department takes any action. Rep. George Miller has requested an investigation.

Resources for web, newsletter editors

Guild newsletter editors and web masters looking for fresh material are urged to check out two resources. The CWA Editors' News Service supplies content, tips and web resources; to access the password-protected site at www.cwa-union.org/news/editors, send an e-mail to bdawson@cwa-union.org. Also worth a visit is the web site maintained by the International Labor Communications Association, at www.ilcaonline.org; membership in the ILCA gains access to protected parts of the site with additional resources.

Don't leave for picket duty without it

If you have to have a credit card, one union-friendly way to go is with a Union Plus card from Union Privilege. In addition to offering competitive interest rates and other features, the card has long carried a strike/lockout provision that allows union members on a picket line to skip up to three payments. Starting April 1, Union Privilege is adding two additional features: a lifeline trust to assist members with a severe illness or long-term disability, and a disaster relief fund to help members coping with a natural disaster. The new features are available to cardholders after their first 12 months and include grants—not loans—of up to \$2,000. For more information, visit www.unionpluscard.com or call 1-800-522-4000.

U.S. questions Canada's commitment to free press

In a supremely ironic turnabout, the U.S. government has drawn global attention to last year's raid by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police on the home and office of TNG-CWA member Juliet O'Neill, a reporter for the *Ottawa Citizen*.

The U.S. State Department's annual report on human rights practices worldwide, released Feb. 28, cited the Jan. 21, 2004 raid as a threat to freedom of the press. Noting that O'Neill faced the possibility of criminal charges, the U.S. report acknowledged human rights concerns that the Canadian response "infringed on the Charter of Rights, which guarantees the freedom of the press."

O'Neill's notes, computers and other materials were seized by the RCMP after she reported about the alleged torture of a Syrian-born Canadian citizen, Maher Arar. Arar was deported to Syria in 2002—by the United States. The U.S. report did not address possible human rights abuses by U.S. officials in arranging the deportation, which occurred after Arar was detained at a New York airport while enroute to Canada.

The *Ottawa Citizen*, meanwhile, has charged that the raids were intended to chill critical coverage of the Arar case. A motion filed Feb. 22 in the Superior Court of Ontario seeks a judicial order to force government release of all records detailing the purpose of the raids, which were conducted under sealed warrants. "We want to know the real purpose for search-

ing a journalist," declared Richard Dearden, a lawyer for the newspaper.

In an unrelated U.S. case also bearing on press freedom, a federal appeals court panel ruled in mid-February that Judith Miller of *The New York Times* and Matthew Cooper of *Time* magazine can be jailed if they continue to refuse to answer grand jury questions about their confidential government sources. Representatives of both publications said they would seek a stay while they appeal, first to the full appeals court and possibly to the U.S. Supreme Court.

Neither Miller nor Cooper wrote on the case occupying the grand jury, which is trying to determine who told columnist Robert Novak that Valerie Plame was a covert CIA operative. Neither Novak nor the government has said whether he has been subpoenaed by the grand jury, nor has the government explained its strategy in going after Miller and Cooper.

On a contrary note in a different case, however, a federal judge in New York ruled Feb. 24 that *The New York Times* does have a qualified right to protect confidential sources by not releasing its telephone records to a prosecutor. The 120-page ruling, which legal experts said was unlikely to affect the outcome of Miller's and Cooper's cases, observed that the government can obtain confidential records when the information cannot be obtained elsewhere, but that in this case it had failed to show such attempts had been exhausted.

Funding colors RSF agenda

Continued from page 1

dom," then celebrated his departure in a July 2004 article headlined, "Press freedom returns: a gain to be nurtured." "A new wind of freedom is blowing for the capital's radio stations," it proclaimed, adding that Aristide—who had no army—was planning a "scorched-earth ending" to the crisis that began when 300 paramilitaries armed with M-16s invaded from the Dominican Republic.

But RSF fell silent in the bloody aftermath of the coup, even in the face of continued attacks on journalists. For example, the police killing of radio reporter Abdias Jean in a Port-au-Prince slum this January went unnoticed by the group, as did an attack on journalist Raoul Saint-Louis, who was shot this February after receiving death threats and who is now in hiding. In fact, unlike its sustained campaign against Aristide, RSF doesn't blame the current government for anything.

Pina claims the stories told in the press about Aristide losing support and using gangs to hold onto power were a manipulation designed by a U.S. State Department-created opposition and by the national and international media. The story the media—and RSF—refused to show is one of a hugely popular president and a citizenry that wanted him to finish his term. Opponents of Aristide staged demonstrations which the media dutifully covered while ignoring the much larger pro-Aristide marches; at the same time, the country's largest political movement, Lavalas, was portrayed as a violent mob.

Reporters Without Borders also has gone after Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez for allegedly threatening the private media. The conflict between the Chávez administration and the media goes back to before April, 2002, when Venezuela's four private television stations actively aided and abetted a military coup against the government. On the night of the coup, following months of broadcasting anti-Chávez speeches and calling for a "transitional government," media mogul Gustavo Cisneros's station hosted meetings among the plotters—including would-be dictator Pedro Carmona.

The president of Venezuela's broadcasting association signed the decree dissolving the national assembly, and for the next two days the stations blacked out information about the kidnapped president or the retaking of the presidential palace by loyal troops backed by hundreds of thousands of supporters in the streets. No television owners or managers have been prosecuted or lost their broadcasting licenses; nevertheless, RSF continues to side with the private media against the "authoritarian" Chávez.

On November 26, 2004, RSF issued a report criti-

cal of a proposed media reform bill in Venezuela's National Assembly ("Reporters Without Borders criticizes new law threatening press freedom"). Coincidentally or not, the report came just two weeks after RSF had applied for a grant from the U.S. National Endowment for Democracy. Although the NED ostensibly is a private agency, its money is appropriated by Congress and controlled by the State Department.

Human rights lawyer Eva Golinger has documented more than \$20 million given by the NED and USAID to opposition groups and private media in Venezuela, many of them headed by coup participants. The NED granted RSF nearly \$40,000 in January. Although the rights group has criticized Chávez since the time of the 2002 coup—well before the grant—its application for money from a U.S. government agency that has been targeting the Venezuelan president for regime change raises questions about RSF's independence, as well as its willingness to criticize its benefactors.

That brings us to Iraq and RSF's 2004 report on the invasion and its aftermath, which is rambling and contradictory. It reports, for example, that the overthrow of Hussein "opened a new era of freedom . . . for Iraqi journalists;" meanwhile, the International News Safety Institute reports that 44 Iraqi journalists and support staff have died covering the conflict since it began two years ago. Similarly, the RSF asserts that the bombing of the Ministry of Information—a war crime under the Geneva Conventions—"ended] decades of zero press freedom." That sunny assessment is followed by 11 pages detailing journalists killed, wounded, missing and imprisoned.

To its credit, the report doesn't whitewash the killing by U.S. forces of five foreign journalists or missile attacks by the U.S. on Al-Jazeera and Abu Dhabi TV. But these and other attacks on the press in Iraq, such as the closing of Al-Jazeera, apparently haven't hurt too badly the United States' position in RSF's ranking of countries by press freedom, currently a reasonably respectable 17th. By comparison, Venezuela is way down the list at number 77.

And a telling example of how RSF mutes its criticisms of U.S. policies is the way it has responded to the abduction of Al-Jazeera cameraman Sami Al-Haj. Al-Haj disappeared in December 2001, while on assignment in Afghanistan, and ended up in the U.S. concentration camp in Guantanamo, where he remains to this day. Not only has Al-Haj disappeared physically, he has all but disappeared from the RSF web site, where he is mentioned only once in a January 27 press release about Al-Jazeera. By contrast, RSF routinely wages high-profile campaigns on behalf of European journalists kidnapped by Iraqi resistance fighters.

Publishers contribute more than scabs . . .

Baltimore Sun Publisher Denise Palmer has contributed more than \$260 to Guild members on strike at the Youngstown, Ohio Vindicator—and she's expected to donate more. Of course, she may not have intended to be so generous.

In January, Palmer rewarded Sun employees—including nearly 600 Guild unit members—with a major reward for their "hard work, dedication and teamwork" in the past year: a voucher for a free meal in the company cafeteria. The Sun's Guild members, overwhelmed by this generosity, decided such good fortune should be spread around—and since they had watched scabs infect their workplace in 2003, why not share the wealth with Guild members at the latest scab infestation?

So it is that the Baltimore Guild members donated the value of their vouchers to Guild members walking the picket line in Youngstown, where a strike against the Vindicator is now four months old. Donations are still rolling in, "and a better use for Tribune crumbs from the table cannot be imagined, since the Trib did all it could to take pay away from its own workers in the past year," commented one unit leader.

Other Guild members may send contributions directly to: The Youngstown Newspaper Guild, P.O. Box 1135, Youngstown, Ohio 44501. The local's strike paper, the Valley Voice, may be read online at www.valleyvoiceonline.com.

CBC choice: temp or quit

Management at the Canadian Broadcasting Corp. has come up with a fresh way of (illegally) circumventing its contract with the Guild: permanent employees facing layoff can either accept a temporary job or quit—and give up their contractual rights.

That's what CBC tried just days before Christmas, when it told a 16-year employee that her position was being eliminated and that she had a choice of becoming a temp or resigning, giving up her layoff rights and severance pay. Moreover, the company maintained that as a temp the employee did not have a right of union representation in meetings with management about her reassignment.

"This is a huge step backward in our dealings with management on layoffs," said Guild representative Glenn Gray. "In the past, we've worked well together in dealing with layoffs, and it is distressing that the CBC's new position comes from the most senior levels of its Human Resources department."

In response, the Canadian Media Guild has filed both a grievance and a complaint with the Canada Industrial Relations Board.

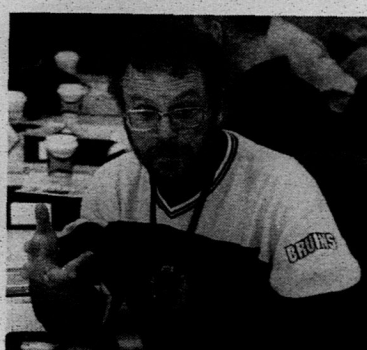
The Guild contract gives employees whose positions are eliminated a number of options: they may accept lay-off, pursue reassignment to a vacant position through the union/management employment committee, or exercise displacement rights. It also gives management a discretionary right to allow such an employee to take a temporary assignment, if he or she chooses, but that option simply defers the displacement process and doesn't terminate it.



Three dozen Guild members attending TNG-CWA's new local officers' seminar poses for the annual class picture, carrying on

a President's Day weekend tradition that goes back 23 years—the Guild's oldest continuous program.

'All we have is each other.' —instructor Bruce Nelson



Clockwise, from top above: Marie Ratliff and Jason Robertson; Amy Hetzner (left) and Renee Iannone; Dave Rubenstein; and Timothy Raub.

ALL PHOTOS THIS PAGE BY BILL BURKE
WASHINGTON-BALTIMORE GUILD

John Tucker listens to Scott McLennan, top, as Dave Haney takes notes; bottom, Randy Gillia and Asha Taylor.



The latest batch of new local officers from across the U.S. and Canada goes to work at the Meany Center in Maryland, learning

the basics of union organizing, mobilizing, contract bargaining, grievance handling and local administration—all in three days.

For all the bluster, labor's revamp still a work in progress

By Mark Gruenberg
Staff Writer, Press Associates Inc.

For all the long and sometimes acrimonious meetings of the AFL-CIO's executive council in Las Vegas, March 1-3, a lot has been left undone. And that means more meetings and a lot more uncertainty between now and late July, when the federation's quadrennial convention will be asked to approve any major changes in how the 12.95-million-member organization conducts itself.

What came out of the closed-door sessions often sounded more like a

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wish-list than a plan, postponing the tough decisions. Consider, for example, this instance of deferred responsibility: "The Executive Council shall establish specific categories of core federation activities, which shall describe the areas of responsibility of the federation. The council shall further establish specific funding levels for these areas."

Agreement in principle often was just as vague on substance. The leadership agreed, for example, that state federations and central labor councils should be given a wider role and more accountability. But the details remain to be worked out.

In other cases, agreement seemed just a hair out of reach. For example, the federation's communications director, Denise Mitchell, said the leaders were "that close"—holding her hands inches apart—to approving a plan for encouraging voluntary union mergers. Voluntary mergers were a key part of a comprehensive revamp plan offered by Teamsters President James Hoffa, and AFL-CIO President John J. Sweeney actually drafted a blueprint reflecting his understanding of the consensus. But when Andrew Stern of the Service Employees reiterated his demand for forced mergers, the agreement fell apart.

In another example of incomplete decision-making, the federation's executive committee—a smaller set of leaders—spent much of the week hashing out a position on spending for politics and legislation. The final result: allotting \$45 million to \$47 million—about half of per capita dues

sent to the federation—for grass-roots politics and legislative campaigns, lobbying and member mobilization on key issues, such as preserving Social Security. But the full executive council didn't vote on the plan, Sweeney said, asking that it first receive more details at its May and June meetings.

A host of other questions were left undecided. Besides mergers, they include governing structure, cuts in staff and AFL-CIO functions, what the movement-wide target would be for spending on organizing, organizing in the South and what to do about Wal-Mart. And a prominent national issue—the war in Iraq—never came up, Sweeney told Press Associates.

Why should any of this matter to U.S. workers, especially to the seven of every eight workers who are non-union? The union leaders in Las Vegas provided several answers to that question, all of which come down to the political environment facing unions and workers, and how political decisions can hurt everyone's standard of living.

"The 'union-free' crowd," including President George W. Bush, "is using the concentration of political power to take away the right to organize," explained Paul Booth, top assistant to AFSCME President Gerald McEntee. "A decision to join a union should be like a decision to join a church, a synagogue or a temple."

"If you continue to turn out the lights on workers' rights here, you'll continue to turn out the lights on democracy," observed CWA Executive Vice President Larry Cohen.

Bottom line, said Postal Workers President Bill Burrus, the debate over the future of the labor movement is about "how we regain some influence on public policy."

"It's all about hope," Hoffa concluded in an interview with Press Associates. "Unions bring hope at a time of despair in America. When millions of people are unemployed, when the jobless rate is really closer to 10%, when manufacturing jobs are going to China, when people are forced to take a lesser job and end up at Wal-Mart or punching a cash register at the local Mobil station as others buy groceries or gas, they live in fear."

But first there's the pesky little problem of dealing with the nitty-gritty details.

Labor reform from a local perspective

Visitors to the AFL-CIO website will discover that just one local has waded into the debate over labor's future. Here is what it has to say:

We at TNG-CWA Local 32035, the Washington-Baltimore Newspaper Guild, are encouraged by the national discussion on re-organizing organized labor. Clearly, what the labor movement has been doing has not produced the results we'd all want. Something has to change.

Most of the discussion has been at the international level. We'd like to respond as a local. Our primary concern is the future of the labor movement, but we do have another important concern—you might say "a special interest"—that we should identify. Our local represents the professional staff at the AFL-CIO and at several of its trade and industrial departments, allied organizations and sponsored programs, as well as the staff at three international unions.

It's not our goal to respond in detail to any one of the restructuring proposals, but, rather, to add our voices and our viewpoint to the dialogue. Here are our reactions:

1. We need to start the discussion by looking at functions, not by allocating per-caps. We're not averse to shifting resources among the federation, internationals, state feds, CLCs and locals, but we think the first question has to be: What functions can best be performed at each level? Allocations of resources should follow from the answer to that question.

2. The movement needs to deliver its message better, and this is a primary function of the federation. It's clear to us in the movement that unions are in workers' interest. The membership numbers prove it isn't clear enough to the unorganized. This isn't to minimize the importance of organizers on the ground or of labor law reform, but an effective message makes all other components of organizing (and representation and political action) work better. We need not only to communicate an overall message in a more powerful way, but we need to develop better methods of informing the public (consumers) which employers treat their workers honorably and which don't.

3. The message has to be broader than specific "labor issues." The labor movement should return to its roots as a movement for social justice. Only putting the "movement" back in the labor movement will restore it, regardless of restructuring.

4. Re-organization at the international level is not enough, so the revitalization process shouldn't end with this summer's AFL-CIO convention. Restructuring a school board doesn't, by itself, change classroom instruction; reorganizing a hospital board doesn't

change patient care. As the discussion continues, we need to look not just at how we're structured at the top, but at how we work at the bottom. In particular, there hasn't been enough dialogue so far on locals (size, staffing models, rank-and-file involvement) and about how we function in the workplace (steward and mobilizing structures). This is where the real power is gained or lost during organizing drives, contract campaigns, and grievance handling. And the discussion not only needs to consider the local and shop level, it needs to involve the local and shop level.

5. Merging isn't an action, but a process. We know. The Newspaper Guild and CWA were willing, even eager, partners, with compatible cultures and history; but nearly a decade after merger activity began, we're still integrating. Mergers are good—at least, ours has been—but they shouldn't be viewed as a quick fix.

6. The movement needs better strategic planning at all levels. Ideally, as locals consider their tactics and their needs, this would help guide the affiliates and, ultimately, the federation. That's union democracy. And the process must be an ongoing one of adapting to changes in our environment, not occasional bursts of reform.

7. The labor movement needs to harness its economic power. We are intrigued by the proposal by the Laborers' International Union to create a consolidated union financial services organization, with the potential to manage hundreds of billions of dollars in pension and other assets. Beyond that, there's more economic power we haven't fully tapped. We own stock—in our own employers and other companies—through 401(k), employee stock purchase and other plans. And we haven't wielded the full consumer power of unions and of working families.

8. Locals need better access—some sort of "one-stop shopping"—to the resources of different units of organized labor. As a local, we deal with an international (CWA) and a sort of subsidiary international called a sector (The Newspaper Guild). CWA has districts; TNG has district councils. We're members of three CLCs and three state feds. We interact from time to time with a variety of constituency groups and other organizations friendly to the labor movement. All of these units were created for good reasons, but accessing them isn't simple. We need to consider how the tangle of structures can best be coordinated.

9. We need more focus on the global as well as the local. In a globalized economy, we need to strengthen our ties to the international labor movement, and find ways to work together more effectively to organize and bargain with cross-national businesses.

AFL-CIO leaders rebuff proposal for forced mergers

Continued from page 1

(The federation also gets money from sources other than dues that gets spent on various programs, including research.)

Both sides also agreed that a drastic restructuring of the AFL-CIO is in the cards—even if they can't agree yet on what that entails. Those particulars will have to be thrashed out in meetings between now and the federation's quadrennial convention in Chicago this July.

The Hoffa/Stern camp maintains that the federation should concentrate on just a few "core functions," leaving everything else to national and local unions. Defining those core functions, however, is only one source of contention. Another is the difficulty of

finding a balance between organizing and politics, which all sides agree are inseparable but with different degrees of emphasis.

"What passed is that half of per capita dues payments goes to politics. We don't disagree, but we believe there needs to be a balance for organizing," explained Laborers' President Terry O'Sullivan.

"You can have the best political program in the world, but without the numbers of members—we'll not win another election if we can't grow," O'Sullivan said. He added that the Hoffa-led group did not object to \$45 million for politics but wanted an equal amount for organizing.

"I think the difference is that their view was about how much money should be

directed to the rebates" for organizing, added Fire Fighters President Harold Schaitberger, co-chair of the AFL-CIO Political Committee. He backed Sweeney's plan.

"But the discussion is very consistent" on both sides, Schaitberger added. Both sides want some form of dues rebate for organizing, although they disagree on a specific figure, and both are willing to put money into politics, he added.

Although most of the discussion was characterized as being about the rebate, Hoffa also advocated distributing more duties and accountability to state federations and central labor councils.

Some of those reform proposals were adopted and others will be discussed

between now and July, according to federation Secretary-Treasurer Richard Trumka. One was to reduce the number of CLCs, creating cases where, as he put it, "instead of three organizations we have one organization with three layers." Details have yet to worked out, he added.

The issue of forced union mergers arose when Stern reiterated his support for them, despite an emerging consensus to encourage voluntary mergers. Although Stern's proposal ended up taking a back seat to Hoffa's kinder, gentler version, machinists' President Thomas Buffenbarger is still fuming about it. "The real issue is a battle between autocrats and democrats," Buffenbarger told Press Associates.

LOOKING AHEAD

What will it take for you to join in?



By Bernie Lunzer, Secretary-Treasurer

Been standing around the office debating the future structure of the AFL-CIO? Probably not. But unless we find a real way to bring you and other union members into the dialogue, not much will be accomplished.

So what's going on? Numerous news articles will do a better job of explaining this than I can, but basically a group of reformers has come after the current leadership. It's pushing for dues rebates to do more organizing, and it's proposed some heavy-duty, top-down restructuring. The current leadership has pushed back with more modest reforms.

Why the debate? Because, as you already know, the labor movement is shrinking. Right-wing economists and politicians say it's because unions aren't necessary and workers don't choose them. Progressive types like myself know that it's because labor law in America either doesn't exist or isn't enforced. Surveys show that 42 million U.S. workers would choose unions if they could, but don't out of fear. Twenty-five percent of businesses fire pro-union workers during organizing drives, and 75% of them hire union busters to combat organizing. Business types have developed an entire industry around union-busting, and the basic morality is do whatever you can get away with—in other words, no morality.

Why does it matter? If you're reading this as a Guild member, you certainly know the answer. Unions bring fairness to the workplace. We create a democratic structure that businesses are legally obligated to bargain with. When things work correctly, we ensure that workers can't be fired arbitrarily; management has to make a good case for ending someone's employment. We work to get a larger share of the profits in wages and benefits, and all surveys show that we're still providing a substantial margin in benefits and wages (often 20% more than non-union workers).

Why are we such a threat? For years, we weren't. We worked with employers in building better workplaces full of satisfied employees who were more productive. It's nice not having to say "yes" when you mean "no," and a union gives you that right. But because we were successful in redistributing the economic pie, corporate types decided we had to go. And as the political spectrum has tilted firmly to the right, U.S. labor laws have been gutted. When Ronald Reagan fired the air traffic controllers, life changed throughout the American workplace.

So now, as our numbers have shrunk substantially, union activists are making a real effort at asking why. But I see two fundamental problems with what's going on.

The first I mentioned at the outset of this column: if real members are not involved in the discussion, it will be a waste of time. If reform efforts are limited to tinkering with the prevailing business model that describes most of organized labor, we'll have proven we don't understand what makes unions work. We are a movement, and our only real strength comes from our members. That's not just a cliché: it's reality, folks. In fairness to the AFL-CIO, I should add that it is trying to reach out to its members: you can go online to www.aflcio.org/aboutaflcio/ourfuture to see what's being discussed, including several proposals from Guild and CWA members. But our own unions have to find a way to have this discussion internally and take that information back to the AFL-CIO.

The other problem with the current discussion is that it's founded on the myth that we only need to make some internal changes and everything will be fine. All the guns are pointed inward, and we're shooting at ourselves. That must look great to those who would destroy us, but the problem is in the larger culture. Why have unions been so marginalized? Why does it take a scandal to land a union on the front page of a newspaper? Why do our own members insist on using loaded terms, like "union boss," when those terms have been coined for propaganda purposes by the labor movement's enemies?

The debate that the AFL-CIO is having must take place in the larger culture, too. Why have we let rampant, unchecked capitalism destroy the social contract in America? Why are more productive workers getting less and less from their work? Why are we talking about raising the age of retirement, when we should be talking about lowering it? There is something fundamentally wrong with the current culture in America. Call me a conservative, because I want to hold on to the better, earlier values that built our country—the belief that our children's lives would be better, not worse than ours.

Ask yourself: why are you being asked to accept less, when all those at the top in America keep expecting more? I'm not opposed to capitalism—I think it works when the right, democratic values guide it. But that's not what we're doing right now, so there needs to be a real debate about the implicit choices we are making. We need to care more about the future of the labor movement, and that means talking to others about it—not just in the union but with those outside it, too.

members, and its first priority will be current news affecting the locals. The members of this union expect The Guild Reporter to inform, motivate and challenge its readers.

"To maintain its journalistic integrity and traditions, The Guild Reporter must never become a personal political platform or be misused for internal political purposes by the elected leadership of TNG-CWA."

The mission of The Guild Reporter, approved May, 2004 by the TNG-CWA Executive Council, is as follows: "As stated in the TNG-CWA Constitution, 'It shall be the duty of The Guild Reporter to promote in every legitimate way the policies of TNG-CWA.' The Guild Reporter belongs to the rank-and-file membership of TNG-CWA.

"Guild Reporter content will be of interest to the



Why working people vote against their economic interests

By Thomas Frank

Democratic political strategy simply assumes that people know where their economic interest lies and that they will act on it by instinct. There is no need for any business-bumming class-war rhetoric on the part of candidates or party spokesmen, and there is certainly no need for a liberal to actually get his hands dirty fraternizing with the disgruntled. Let them look at the record and see for themselves: Democrats are slightly more generous with Social Security benefits, slightly stricter on environmental regulations, and do less union-busting than Republicans.

The gigantic error in all this is that people don't spontaneously understand their situation in the great sweep of things. They don't just automatically know the courses of action that are open to them, the organizations they might sign up with, or the measures they should be calling for. Liberalism isn't a force of karmic nature that pushes back when the corporate world goes too far; it is a man-made contrivance as subject to setbacks and defeats as any other. Consider our own social welfare apparatus, the system of taxes, regulations, and social insurance that is under attack. Social Security, the FDA, and all the rest of it didn't spring out of the ground fully formed in response to the excesses of a laissez-faire system; they were the result of decades of movement building, of bloody fights between strikers and state militias, of agitating, educating, and thankless organizing. More than forty years passed between the first glimmerings of a left-wing reform movement in the 1890s and the actual enactment of its reforms in the 1930s. In the meantime scores of the most rapacious species of robber baron went to their reward untaxed, unregulated, and unquestioned.

An even more telling demonstration of the importance of movements in framing people's perspectives can be found in the voting practices of union members. Take your average white male voter: in the 2000

election they chose George W. Bush by a considerable margin. Find white males who were union members, however, and they voted for Al Gore by a similar margin. The same difference is repeated whatever the demographic category: women, gun owners, retirees, and so on—when they are union members, their politics shift to the left. This is true even when the union members in question had little contact with union leaders. Just being in a union evidently changes the way a person looks at politics, inoculates them against the derangement of the backlash. Here values matter almost least of all, while the economy, health care, and education are of paramount concern. Union voters are, in other words, the reverse image of the Brownback conservative who cares nothing for economics but torments himself night and day with vague fears about "cultural decline."

Labor unions are on the wane today, as everyone knows, down to 9 percent of the private-sector workforce from a high-water mark of 38 percent in the fifties. Their decline goes largely unchecked by a Democratic Party anxious to demonstrate its fealty to corporate America, and unmourned by a therapeutic left that never liked those Archie Bunker types in the first place. Among the broader population, accustomed to thinking of organizations as though they were consumer products, it is simply assumed that unions are declining because nobody wants to join them anymore, the same the public has lost its taste for the music of the Bay City Rollers. And in the offices of the union-busting specialists and the Wall Street brokers and the retail executives, the news is understood the same way the aristocrats across Europe greeted the defeat of Napoleon in 1815: as a monumental victory in a war to the death.

—from *What's the Matter with Kansas: How Conservatives Won the Heart of America*, pp 245-247, by Thomas Frank; Metropolitan Books, Henry Holt & Co., New York, N.Y. 306 pages, 2004, \$24 cloth

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: April 8.)

Contract updates

Point Park loses but files appeal

The National Labor Relations Board ruled Feb. 17 that Point Park University had violated federal labor law by refusing to bargain with the Pittsburgh Newspaper Guild and ordered the administration to return to the table. Instead, the college and its hired gun, Arnold Perl of Memphis, filed an appeal with the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals. Point Park's 67 full-time faculty members voted overwhelmingly for Guild representation last June.

Worcester okays retro pay raise

Worcester, Mass. Guild members have approved a 2.25% wage increase at the Telegram & Gazette, retroactive to Sept. 1, by a vote of 55-14. A previously rejected proposal would have increased only the wage scales, resulting in workers who are paid above top scale receiving a smaller percentage.

Pueblo tentative pact has 3% raise

The Pueblo Newspaper Guild has reached a tentative agreement on a one-year contract extension at the Pueblo Chieftain, Colorado. Improvements include a 3% raise, longevity pay of 32 cents an hour for 15-year part-timers and three days of bereavement leave for part-timers.

Colorado printers follow GCIU lead

Dow Jones production plant employees in Englewood, Col., represented by IAPE, TNG-CWA Local 1096, have ratified a new six-year contract by a vote of 13-4. The wage package mirrors one negotiated by GCIU-represented employees at eight

other Dow Jones printing plants, including a \$1,300 signing bonus, a 2% increase this September, 2.5% increases in each of the three subsequent years and a 2.75% increase in 2009. Other improvements include an approximately 8% increase in minimums now, with an additional two 2% increases over the life of the contract; a first-ever agreement that shift selection will be based on seniority; and an increase in maximum sick days per year to 10, from 6.

Halifax Herald signals job threat

Management at the Halifax Herald, where a 10-year contract with a dozen Guild-represented compositors expired Dec. 31, is proposing to eliminate job security provisions, an early retirement package and company contributions to the pension plan. The package worries local leaders that their jobs are on the chopping block—just months after the company was named by Maclean's magazine as one of Canada's top 100 employers. Contract bargaining was scheduled at press time.

Schneider, union face strike/lockout

TNG Canada has filed a complaint with the Ontario Labor Relations Board, claiming that Schneider Foods Corp. is breaking provincial law by refusing to negotiate a new contract with its office employees in Kitchener. The Schneider employees are represented by the Schneider Officer Employees' Association, TNG Canada Local 30009. The company has brought no concrete proposals to the bargaining table since its collective agreement expired Oct. 31; the two sides were in a strike/lockout position as of March 7.

Harry S. Culver dies at 82, was Guild's 10th int'l chair

When Harry S. Culver stepped down as TNG International Chairperson in late 1987, he took with him the record for the longest tenure in that office—10 years—since the Guild's founding, 54 years earlier. This past Feb. 13 he cashed in the rest of his chips, dying in his native Oklahoma at the age of 82.

Culver's was a storied life, replete with journalistic achievements and years of service to The Newspaper Guild. Born in Chickasha, he and his three sisters were raised by his aunt and uncle after his mother died. After graduating valedictorian from his high school in Homestead, Culver went on to serve the military as a B-17 pilot with the Eighth Air Force, flying 35 combat missions over Germany, then completed his master's in journalism at the University of Oklahoma, where he was awarded the Sigma Delta Chi Outstanding Senior in Journalism award.

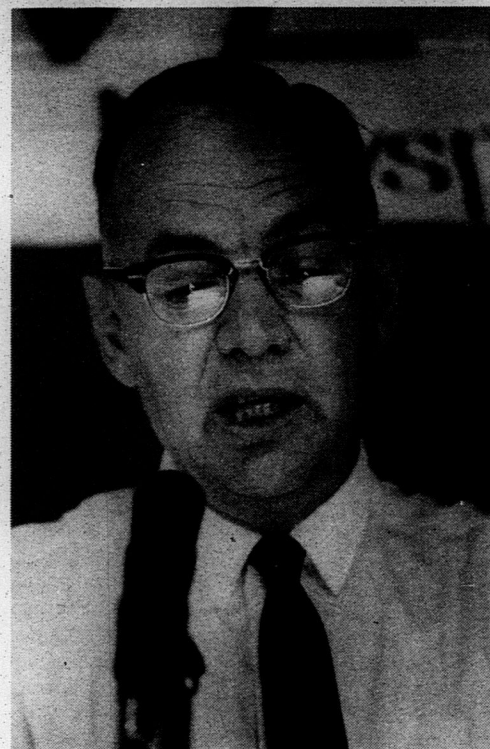
For the next 35 years Culver worked as a reporter for United Press International, mostly as a legislative and political reporter at the Oklahoma State Capitol. His work there earned him numerous journalistic prizes and election to the Oklahoma Journalism Hall of Fame, in 1979. It also brought him to the attention of other Wire Service Guild members, who started electing him to a variety of local offices in 1955, including president, secretary-treasurer and convention delegate.

In 1969 Culver coordinated a strike against Associated Press, earning him the Guild Service award the following year. Then he did it all over again, coordinating a strike against UPI in 1974.

At about the same time, Culver moved into TNG's national leadership, initially by chairing a committee to support Charles Perlik Jr. and Robert M. Crocker the first two times they were elected president and secretary-treasurer, respectively, in 1969 and 1971. In 1973 he ran successfully for a vice presidency and was reelected in 1975, then succeeded Barney Peterson as international chairperson in 1977.

(The position now known as international chairperson has had various names in Guild history. Starting with the Guild's founding in 1933 it carried the title of president, which is how Heywood Brown was known, but in 1969 the title was changed to the gender-specific international chairman or chairwoman. In 1973 the title was changed for the last time, to international chairperson. By whatever name it has been known, the position is one of the "three principal" officers defined by the TNG Constitution and is the only one that's not salaried. Duties of the position include presiding over the Guild's annual conventions and meetings of its executive board, and serving as a delegate to "conventions of any organization with which TNG is affiliated.")

As chairperson, Culver served on a special Guild



Harry Strader Culver

committee that for six years tried to create a merger with the International Typographical Union. He also coordinated a TNG voter registration drive among U.S. members in advance of the 1984 elections, when Reagan won a second term, and for much of his tenure also served on the executive committee of the International Federation of Journalists.

In 1998 he received the Society of Professional Journalists Lifetime Achievement Award.

Culver is survived by his wife, Mattie Lee, a retired school teacher; and by two daughters and a son, 10 grandchildren, two sisters and a brother. Funeral services were held Feb. 16 in Tulsa.

Eugene Miller dead at 76

Eugene Miller, a lawyer who for 50 years represented labor unions in California, died Feb. 12 of bladder cancer at his Carmel home. He was 76.

Among Miller's clients for the past several decades was the San Jose Newspaper Guild, as well as locals representing restaurant and electrical workers, the building trades and the Monterey County Central Labor Council. He also gave numerous seminars and forums on labor and union law, was a former treasurer of his local Democratic party and taught labor law at the Monterey College of Law.

DAYBOOK

Freedom Award Banquet,
March 30, Washington, DC

CWA Nat'l Women's Conference
April 14-17, Seattle

Western District Council,
May 5, Victoria, BC

TNG Sector Conference,
May 5-8, Victoria, BC

TNG Canada/CWA Council
May 8-9, Victoria, BC

Nat'l Customer Service Conf.
May 11-14, Cranford, NJ

CWA Safety-Health Conference,
June 1-3, Baltimore

AFL-CIO Convention
July 25-28, Chicago

CWA Minority Caucus Conf.
Aug. 25-28, Chicago

CWA Annual Convention,
Aug. 29-31, Chicago

CLUW 13th Biennial Convention,
Sept. 14-17, Detroit

FROM THE MORGUE

Seventy years ago this month:

John S. Knight signals that he's willing to sign a first contract with the Guild unit at the Akron Beacon Journal. . . . The Reading Times in Pennsylvania adds the Guild logo to its masthead. . . . The Newark Ledger obtains a sweeping injunction against Guild members in the fourth month of a strike, banning all picketing, distribution of handbills and use of "insults" and "annoying language" in any broadcasting device. . . . Jonathan Eddy, the Guild's executive secretary, argues on behalf of AFL affiliation—provided the Guild is chartered as an international.

Fifty years ago this month:

Pointing out that 6,000 free riders are covered by Guild contracts, Ralph Novak, the Guild's executive secretary, urges locals to address the problem before they "find themselves out of existence." . . . S.I. Newhouse acquires the 103-year-old St. Louis Globe Democrat for \$6.25 million. . . . Robert Stafford, former chairman of the Guild's human rights committee, tells a church group that the greatest current danger to freedom of the press comes from the right rather than the left.

Twenty-five years ago this month:

Federal health investigators announce a major study at the Baltimore Sunpapers on the possibility of adverse effects on vision from working full-time on video display terminals. . . . The Guild gets behind "Big Business Day," promoted by a broad coalition of labor and human rights groups to increase public awareness of corporate abuse. . . . The Guild's pension fund, now three years old, covers more than a thousand employees.

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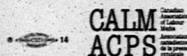
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