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Both Chicago newspapers are heading for the auction block page 5

Guild loses passionate voice

By Scott Stephens
TNG Region 3 VP

When he marched with colleagues at The Plain Dealer to protest the jailing of journalists, Dick Peery wore a bright red gag on his mouth. It was probably the first time he was at a loss for words.

Peery, long-time president of the Northeast Ohio Newspaper Guild and former member of The Newspaper Guild's Executive Council, retired from the Cleveland daily in October after 35 years. His departure means that TNG has lost one of its most passionate and articulate leaders.

"Dick Peery is one of my Newspaper Guild heroes," said TNG President Linda Foley. "He is honest, smart and committed, and he has never stopped working toward the goals of equality and fairness for everyone. He has been our conscience and our role model."

A native of Minnesota, Peery joined The Plain Dealer in January of 1971 after reporting for the Call and Post, a newspaper serving the African-American community. At The Plain Dealer he covered the county courts, education, police and general assignment beats before settling into writing obituaries more than a dozen years ago.

Peery said the change allowed him to become more involved in the local AFL-CIO Federation of Labor. He is currently chairman of the organization's executive board.

"I didn't feel it was a conflict of interest," he said. "As a journalist, I've been able to explain to labor people a journalist's point of view on issues. Journalists have a very specific job to do. They have an obligation to tell the truth as they see it to be."

Foley recalled that when Peery served on the TNG Executive Council (then called the Executive Board), he always made it a point to visit his congressional representatives to make sure they were representing

the Guild's interests. "He's the kind of union leader we can all hope to emulate," she said.

Peery said he always viewed the Guild as an important force in society that went well beyond the usual union role of negotiating contracts and filing grievances. "The Guild has certainly been a real defender of freedom of speech," he said. "Because we had a union, we've been able to report things without fear of retaliation from the subjects we write about or from advertisers."

Peery said he really fell in love with the Guild at his first convention, in Boston in 1979. Delegates ate on bare wooden tables because the linen supplier, the J.P. Stevens Co. in North Carolina, was having a labor dispute.

"I just thought that was the best thing I'd ever seen," he said. "It's always felt good to be around people whose primary concern was the welfare of others rather than profits and personal gain."

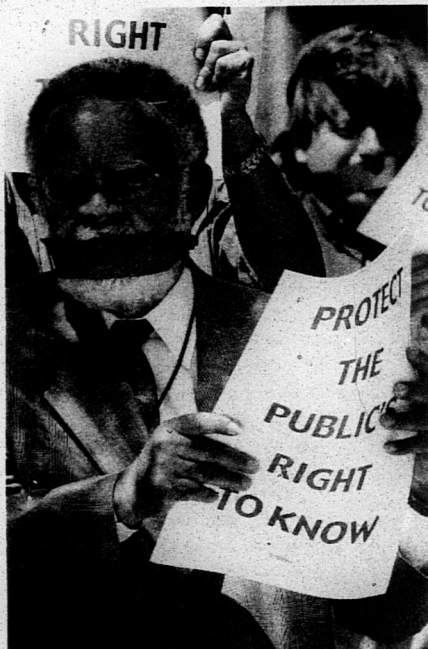
It was fitting that Peery ended his Guild career as a charter member of the newly formed Human Rights/Equity Committee. For decades, he's been one of the union's most outspoken advocates of diversity, both in the Guild and in

the workplace.

This month, Guild leaders in Northeast Ohio introduced a resolution to create the Richard Peery Service Award, which is to be given each year to a member of the local who best exemplifies Peery's selfless devotion to unionism.

For his part, Peery has no plans to fade away. In addition to spending time with his grandchildren, he was active this fall with Black Labor for Strickland, a group working for gubernatorial candidate Ted Strickland.

"I'm now free to do and say things I think need to be done to influence the direction this country is headed," he said.



The quintessential Dick Peery, in 2005 protest.

Amber takes reins full time

Arnold Amber, who for many years has filled numerous union leadership positions, has retired as a producer for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation to become TNG Canada's first full-time paid director. Amber assumed the newly funded office, budgeted at \$77,500 a year, Nov. 1.

In stepping up to give full-time

attention to a position he has filled part-time as a volunteer, Amber also stepped down as president of the CBC branch of the Canadian Media Guild. His vice president, Pierre Claveau, served as interim president while nominations were being accepted to fill the balance of Amber's term, which runs through December, 2007.

Amber's career change follows acceptance by CWA of an agreement granting TNG Canada virtual autonomy as a separate region within the parent union. A Canada-wide referendum to approve the move is to be held at the end of this month, with each local to conduct its own vote and ready passage anticipated.

Canadian autonomy, Amber told the semi-annual gathering of the National Representative Council on Sept. 30, means "all accounting, budgeting and membership numbers will be done here... *maître chez nous* (masters in our own house)."

Correction

A front-page article in last month's Guild Reporter erroneously stated that the York Daily Record and the York Dispatch Sunday News had been charged by the National Labor Relations Board with bad-faith bargaining.

The complaint was leveled against the York Daily Record and the York Sunday News.

Guild-represented employees of the York Dispatch ratified a new three-year contract several months ago by unanimous vote.

Guild briefs . . .

Dealt out by Plain Dealer

Approximately 65 of the Cleveland Plain Dealer's 372 newsroom employees have accepted a voluntary buyout, including numerous veterans (see related story at left); the Advance-owned company would not disclose how many of its other 1,100 employees also took the offer. Those who are at least 50 years old with at least 20 years of service are receiving 30 months' pay and health-care coverage; others qualify for two weeks' pay and health care for every year of service.

Beacon Journal priced too high

Employees of the Akron Beacon Journal almost got a reprieve earlier this year, when the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation—which has a \$2.2 billion endowment built on the Knight family's investments in newspapers, and which has invested about \$100 million in the Akron area—joined the bidding for their paper. But the winning bid of \$165 million, by David Black of Canada, was too high, according to foundation President Alberto Ibarguen. "Ultimately it was our decision that it would have been unwise to go that high," Ibarguen said. Black subsequently slashed a quarter of the newsroom staff.

Pittsburgh paper rebuffs overture

Trying to expedite contract bargaining with the Pittsburgh Gazette, the Pittsburgh Guild's negotiating team offered Oct. 26 to consider a number of work-rule changes sought by the company—provided the company withdrew the onerous management rights and jurisdiction language it submitted to all of its unions earlier this year. "Unfortunately, the company repeatedly told the Guild it was not willing to take the language off the table," said a Guild spokesman, ending the meeting. No new negotiations have been scheduled; the existing contract expires Dec. 31.

Jail decision set for March hearing

The Ninth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco has scheduled a March hearing to determine whether two San Francisco Chronicle reporters can be jailed for refusing to identify their sources of grand jury testimony. Written arguments in the case, in which Mark Fainaru-Wada and Lance Williams reported on alleged steroid abuse by Giants outfielder Barry Bonds and other athletes, are due by Jan. 12. The two reporters face up to 18 months in jail.

Portland to get lowered premiums

Here's a surprise: the Portland (Maine) Newspaper Guild has informed its members they will see a decrease of a little less than 1% in their health insurance premiums for 2007. The welcome development grows out of an agreement last year in which the Portland Herald, seeking to switch insurance plans, pledged to the union that it would not pay any less in premiums in future years than it spent in 2006—in effect, promising to pass any savings on to employees. The net result, thanks to a better claims record in the past year and the increased competition from switching plans: Guild members next year will pay less than 20% of the premium cost.

Canadian icon Sinclair dies, 85

Lister Sinclair, a Canadian broadcasting icon and a founding member of ACTRA, the media performers union, died Oct. 16 at the age of 85. A committed member of the Canadian Media Guild, he made a pivotal speech at the union's first-ever strike vote meeting in 1996, as recalled by CMG President Lise Lareau: "The mood in the room was divided until Lister got up to the mic. The room went silent and Lister reminded his colleagues that he had worked in senior management and explained that, no matter what you think, the interests of management are not the same as the interests of employees. The message took a moment to sink in, and then applause overtook the room."

Warsmith takes Akron unit reins

Stephanie Warsmith, former secretary-treasurer of the Akron Beacon Journal unit of the Northeast Ohio Guild, has been elected president following the departure of Andale Gross, who has taken a job with the Associated Press in Kansas City. Succeeding Warsmith as secretary-treasurer is Katie Byard. Other unit officers, serving until the annual election in January, are Bob DeMay, first vice chairperson, and John Higgins, second vice chairperson.

Really briefly . . .

Members of the Buffalo Newspaper Guild have voted 77-42 to increase weekly membership dues from 1.5625% of pay to 1.7811%, effective Jan. 1. . . . Providence-Guild officials are in talks with Belo Corp. about its plans to freeze its defined benefit retirement plan next year. . . . Hammered by a Guild-led boycott, the Toledo Blade is planning to give away 90,000 copies each week to maintain its circulation figures.

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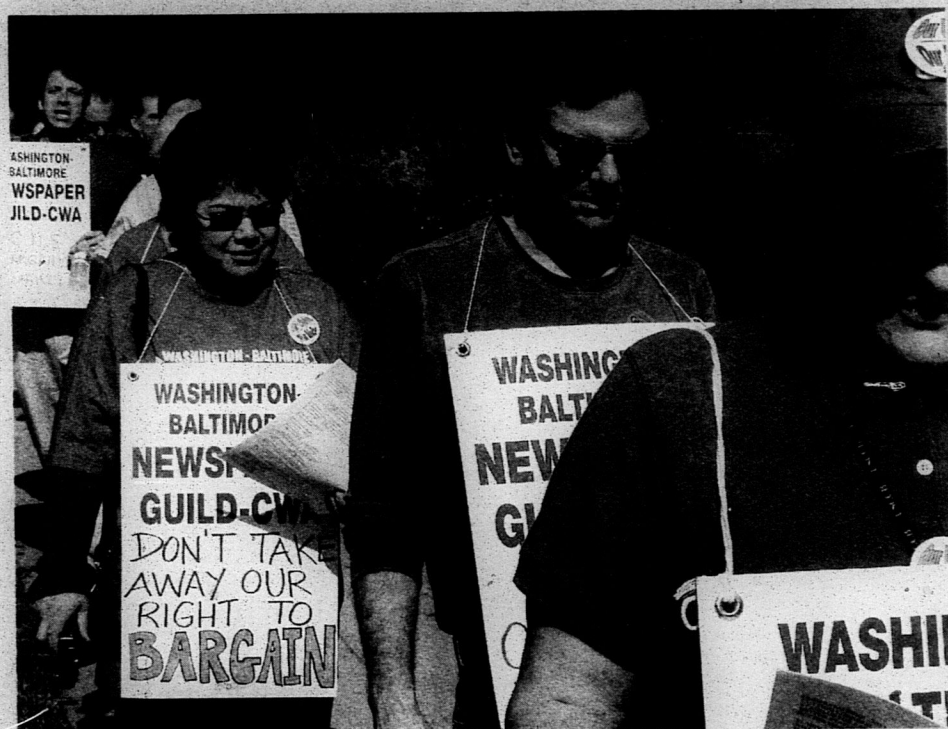
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The Newspaper Guild International



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

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



CHRIS GARLOCK/C. METRO LABOR COUNCIL

Catholic clash

Employees of Catholic News Service and their supporters protest a lack of progress in contract talks with the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops that have dragged on for more than a year. At press time, a month of once-a-week public rallies and other mobilization activities seem to have had their desired effect, with the Washington-Baltimore Guild reporting that the conference had dropped the only demand that had blocked an agreement: its insistence on being allowed to unilaterally reduce or terminate pension benefits. (Details of the new con-

tract will be reported in the December issue.) This was the first time since 1972 that the unit's contract has lapsed by more than a few days—the last contract expired Dec. 31—prompting union members in recent weeks to wear red protest shirts every Wednesday and to start reaching out to conference employees not covered by a collective bargaining agreement. The unit also had launched an e-mail campaign targeting key bishops that stressed both labor law and church doctrine, noting that the conference's refusal to bargain over the pension issue "is a violation of basic Catholic teachings, which guarantee 'old age security.'"

Boston takes a 2nd shot at revenue-tied contract

Days after members of the Boston Newspaper Guild voted 307-223 to reject a proposed contract with the Boston Globe, a new four-year agreement was reached that local leaders believe addresses their major objections. A vote on the tentative agreement has been scheduled for Dec. 13.

Both the rejected proposal and its replacement contain a controversial proposal tying wage raises to the company's year-over-year revenue increases. But while Guild members appeared reluctantly willing to accept the formula, what they couldn't accept was its exclusion of revenues from the newspaper's website, Boston.com, when calculating the overall revenue flow. Making the exclusion even more egregious was new contract language integrating Boston.com and Globe operations, bringing 39 Boston.com workers into the Guild.

The new contract proposal retains the integration language and rolls Boston.com revenue into the overall calculation, but in exchange drops any possibility of a 2006 bonus. "Given the decline in revenue to date," said Guild President Dan Totten, "it is highly unlikely those bonuses would have been paid anyway."

The new proposal also boosts the company's contributions to a jointly administered health fund by nearly 20%, including an additional \$50,000 in 2008 and again in 2009, followed by ongoing payments of \$50,000 from 2010 into perpetuity. The two additional \$50,000 payments will raise the company's total contribution over the life of the contract to nearly \$600,000. In exchange for the increases, the Guild agreed to extend the period over which it cannot seek representation for Boston.com workers not covered under the agreement to the start of 2009.

Membership meetings to discuss the new package, which in other respects remains unchanged from the earlier proposal, are to be held Dec. 6.

If an agreement on a new proposal came surprisingly quickly, that may have been due in part to an Oct. 19 letter—the day after the failed ratification

vote—to Arthur Sulzberger Jr., chairman of the New York Times Co., which owns the Globe. Signed by more than two-dozen Boston-area politicians and labor leaders, including Senator Ted Kennedy, the letter urged the Times "to consider carefully the future of the Boston Globe newspaper, and to resist pressures to cut staff and other resources from this precious community asset."

While acknowledging "the difficulties the entire newspaper industry is encountering," the letter also observed that ever since the Times bought the Globe "a troubling pattern of disinvestment, downsizing, outsourcing and cost cutting has emerged." The result, it asserted, has been "a shrinking news hole and the elimination of bureaus [that] have stung the morale of employees facing increased health costs and wage freezes."

That same day, the Times Co. released its third-quarter financial results, showing a 39% drop in profits compared to the same period a year earlier. Revenue of the New England Media Group, which is dominated by the Globe, was off 9%, due in large part to the loss of advertising from the consolidation of area department store chains.

Understanding that their employer is in a financial squeeze has tempered Guild resistance to a contract that all but guarantees a wage freeze. On the other hand, some analysts claim that the advertising downturn is about to reverse, and with deep-pocketed potential investors like Jack Welch nosing around (see related story, page 5), there's reason to think the clouds may be receding.

Meanwhile, the Globe's possible resurgence may rest on its internet savvy. Boston has the third-highest broadband penetration of any U.S. city, with three in every four households having high-speed internet connections. Boston.com attracted more than 3 million unique visitors in September. The trick now will be for it to become more of a revenue generator—last year it pulled in only \$10 million—but as it does, Guild members will both contribute to and profit from its success.

Agreement reached on three contracts

The remaining members of the TNG-Canada local at the St. Catharine's Standard—the Osprey-owned newspaper hit hardest by the company's outsourcing of jobs—reluctantly voted 17-3 to ratify a new contract. The three-year agreement, retroactive to May 1, provides annual salary increases of 2.25%, 2% and 2.25%.

Although the agreement was sweetened a bit with minor improvements in vision care, vacations and shift differentials, local members were frustrated by their inability to win stronger job protection language. Osprey axed 22 Guild members at the paper while moving their jobs to its classified advertising and circulation call centers in other cities, despite contract provisions barring outside contracting of unit work. A grievance over the cuts was settled when the company agreed to increase maximum severance payments to 36 weeks from 26.

Osprey's attention has now shifted to the Sault Star, where negotiations started this month, and to the Sudbury Star, which was scheduled for mediation in mid-November.

Elsewhere, the Philadelphia Guild has negotiated one-year contract extensions with two Journal Register-owned newspapers in Pennsylvania, in each case winning raises with unprecedented retroactivity. Guild-represented employees of the Pottstown Mercury voted overwhelmingly Nov. 1 to ratify

their deal, which expires next Sept. 11. The extension grants a 1.5% wage increase retroactive to Sept. 12 and an additional 0.5% raise March 12.

The Norristown unit has a tentative agreement with Times Herald management for a one-year extension that runs through Oct. 10. In addition to the same wage increases as in Pottstown, the extension has a 3-cent mileage increase and relief in health insurance premiums.

In other bargaining developments, the Guild's two locals with the longest history of working without a new contract both made news. TNG-CWA President Linda Foley joined officers of the Dayton Newspaper Guild and other local labor leaders in delivering a letter to management at the Cox-owned Dayton Daily News calling for a start to contract negotiations. The last time the local negotiated a new contract was 20 years ago.

In Rochester, N.Y., meanwhile, management at the Gannett-owned Democrat and Chronicle unexpectedly issued a "firm, final and best" contract proposal that local leaders suspect is a prelude to declaring impasse. The local has been without a new contract for 14 years, but for the past six months has been working with a federal mediator and had believed progress was being made. "It's a mystery" why Gannett would "pull the plug," said Guild Secretary Gary Craig.

At press time, the local was planning a vote on the offer.

MEDIA COORDINATOR

Int'l Labor Communications Association

The ILCA, the North American organization for labor media professionals and volunteers, needs a new Media Coordinator to staff its Washington, D.C. office. This is a full-time, unionized position paying \$48,000 a year and full benefits.

Ideal candidates should see themselves as journalists and activists, and have a background in both union and media activism. At a minimum, applicants should be print and web savvy and have experience using both media for communication and organizing. Experience in additional media is a plus.

The ILCA has only two staff—the coordinator and an office administrator—so the work of the Media Coordinator is necessarily varied. He or she must be able to write and edit, speak publicly and manage communications with the ILCA membership and Executive Council.

The Media Coordinator:

Σ Is responsible for the website (www.ilcaonline.org), updating news stories, announcements and links on a regular basis. He or she must also solicit stories for the website, be able to edit and format them, and, as time allows, generate original stories on labor issues of national significance.

Σ Is partially responsible for the ILCA's print publication, The Reporter, writing several articles per issue; assigning and coordinating stories; and being involved in the editing process.

Σ Must work with the office administrator to maintain email lists of members and to produce email communication with members on a regular basis. In addition, the coordinator must assist with membership recruitment and retention, the annual Labor Media Awards contest and the biennial convention.

Σ Must answer inquiries from the membership, other labor groups and the general public.

The ideal candidate will be ready to step into the job January 2, 2007.

Email cover letter and resume to:
steve.stallone@ilwu.org and mkuchta@mncarpenter.org
Mail clips to:

Media Coordinator application
ILCA
815 Sixteenth St. NW
Washington, D.C. 20006

Getting squeezed in Silicon Valley

Continued from page 1

MediaNews also has conceded that its outsourcing plan is subject to collective bargaining, since the current contract bars assigning unit work to non-Guild members. So there, too, the company has covered its iron fist with a velvet glove, offering to retain 71 of the 116 jobs in San Jose if the union agrees to its contract proposals.

All such commitments to save jobs in exchange for contract concessions are not only soft—good only until the next round of layoffs, which could come just months later—but come with other costs. It wasn't until Nov. 6, for example, that management finally unveiled its wage proposal—and its hopes for slashing pay for new Mercury News employees by tens of thousands of dollars a year. For example, new hires at Level 1, the unit's highest pay scale, would reach a top minimum of just \$43,509 after three years, compared with \$63,941 at the highest minimum for current employees.

With some layoffs assured regardless of how contract bargaining proceeds, Guild leaders have met with local and state employment specialists to line up workshops and counseling sessions for their members. But given current trends, they fret that some of their co-workers aren't going to wait around that long.

As in Philadelphia (see related story, page 1), the layoff notices in San Jose are a sharp contrast to the assurances given when the papers were bought from McClatchy, just two months earlier. MediaNews chief executive Dean Singleton,

acknowledging his reputation as a budget cutter, told staffers at both the Mercury News and the Contra Costa Times that he had no "immediate" plans for layoffs and that he intended to strengthen both newspapers. And, as in Philadelphia, Singleton and his lieutenants have blamed the current round of layoffs on weak advertising and declining circulation.

Meanwhile, the imminent layoffs continue a trend that has seen Guild membership in San Jose drop from 820 in 2000 to fewer than 500 today. According to the local, if the latest proposed cuts were to go through the newsroom will have dropped in one year from about 350 to approximately 240. "We are disappointed that MediaNews is falling into the same trap as Knight Ridder," said the local's administrative officer, Luther Jackson, lamenting each owner's "precipitous" responses to quarterly financial results.

Looking ahead, however, the local can expect more of the same, as MediaNews continues consolidating its northern California operations. The company plans ultimately to move all of its business and most of its advertising staff from its East Bay and South Bay newspapers to San Ramon, at an untold cost in jobs. In addition, the Oakland Tribune is to vacate the Tribune Tower within a few months, according to the East Bay Express, marking the second time the newspaper has moved out of the 20-story landmark in downtown Oakland; the first came after the tower was severely damaged in the 1989 Loma Prieta Earthquake.

City of Brotherly Love put to test

Continued from page 1

hard. On Oct. 17, even as negotiations were afloat—Guild negotiators have complained repeatedly that the new management team seems to have no idea how to conduct bargaining—the company declared abruptly that it was "considering layoffs."

Coming on top of company demands that the pension fund be frozen, that some newsroom functions of the two newspapers be merged and that seniority be eliminated as a consideration in layoffs, Guild members heard the announcement as a repudiation of all the early promises of a "new era" in Philadelphia journalism. "I've been besieged by members who feel outraged and betrayed," Guild president Henry Holcomb told a local weekly newspaper.

Three days later, the company's new chief executive, Brian Tierney, issued a memo to all employees to update them "on the serious business issues we are facing." Because cash flow has dropped from \$100 million in 2004 to \$76 million last year and is expected to dip below \$50 million this year—with October and November revenue projected to

be "the largest two month drop in our history," Tierney wrote—the decline "will prevent us from meeting our bank obligations if we don't take absolutely critical actions on the cost side of our business."

Translation: "If we are going to survive and grow, we need to significantly restructure our labor contracts and our workforce." Moreover, even with the changes the company has been seeking "some layoffs are unavoidable."

While attributing much of the saber-rattling to negotiations posturing, the Guild on Oct. 23 asked for a federal mediator to intervene. At the same time it launched a radio ad campaign warning that Tierney is courting disaster by "boasting of the importance of local ownership" even as he "tries to take money out of the paychecks of his own local workers." Recalling Tierney's history as a publicist with a reputation for brow-beating editors, the ad concludes that as a spin-doctor, Tierney "tried to control what the Inquirer and Daily News should write. But now, as publisher, he's trying write our obituary."

Three days later, the Guild took its strike vote.



Not just for Halloween

A shrouded Italian, holding a sign that declares freelancers are "ghost journalists," joins a demonstration over the lack of progress in contract negotiations. Although the previous agreement expired March, 2005, the country's newspaper publishers have refused to bargain if the Federazione Nazionale della Stampa Italiana (FNSI) persists in trying to discuss freelancers, workplace "flexibility" and unemployment

issues—as it is. The publishers also insist that the union modify its demands in response to technological convergence, declining ad revenue and falling circulation, but FNSI says the publishers' proposals would reduce salaries by 30% and seriously weaken the previous collective agreement. The union has stepped up its pressure in recent weeks with a series of two-day strikes that claimed up to 90% participation.

Guild rallies on behalf of profession, photog

With thousands of news industry employees looking at possible job losses, TNG-CWA is calling for a day of protests tentatively titled "Stand Up for Journalism!" Plans for the event were still being formulated at press time, but it has been scheduled for Dec. 11, the day after International Human Rights Day (which this year is on a Sunday).

Stickers and wristbands are to be distributed.

"Guild members must take the lead in the fight to preserve journalism and news industry jobs," said Guild President Linda Foley and Secretary-Treasurer Bernie Lunzer in a joint statement. "But we're calling on news industry employees everywhere to stand up for journalism and to stand with their colleagues who have had their jobs and livelihoods slashed by corporate media barons."

The Guild also is pushing for member support for Bilal Hussein, an Associated Press photographer who has been detained for approximately seven months by U.S. forces in Iraq. Although Hussein's imprisonment has been justified by claims that he is a security threat, no charges have been lodged against him and his

supervisors at AP claim the allegations are unsubstantiated.

A sample letter to Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, online at (www.unionvoice.org/campaign/justiceforAPphotographer/ike8n2q7xjm8b?), urges him "to either quickly produce evidence that Mr. Hussein is a security threat and send him to trial or to end his detention immediately." As the letter further notes, "Holding him in limbo is unfair to him personally and sends a threatening message to Iraqi journalists that they may be subject to incarceration simply for doing their jobs."

Hussein's offense apparently was that of doing his job too well: his pictures of insurgent operations were so good they prompted military officials to suspect too cozy a relationship. But the Defense Department won't explain why it hasn't brought charges, and as pointed out by Aidan White, General Secretary of the International Federation of Journalists, "journalists routinely interact with adversarial sides in a conflict."

Protests on behalf of Hussein have been filed by AP and several other journalistic organizations.

York yields on ULP charges

Marking a notable turnaround from its prevailing bargaining posture, management at the York Daily Record/Sunday News has agreed to settle a slew of unfair labor practice charges brought by the National Labor Relations Board. The 18-point settlement, copies of which were posted at the newspapers' offices, leads off with a promise it "will not fail or refuse to bargain in good faith" with the York Newspaper Guild.

"It's tantamount to one big sweeping *mea culpa* on their part," wrote a jubilant Tom Joyce, the local's mobilization director, in an e-mail to his members. "In the immortal words of Homer Simpson: WhooHOOO!"

The York papers agreed to reinstate bylines; to rescind policies that prohibited employees from discussing union business or from wearing messages of

union support; and to stop refusing to arbitrate grievances that occurred before the last contract expired. The company also agreed to restore vacation days and personal leave taken by members of the Guild's bargaining team, who were denied unpaid leave to attend negotiations, and to respond to information requests it had been stonewalling.

Local officials credited the more conciliatory approach to a change in management's bargaining team. The MediaNews-owned newspapers' lead negotiator had been Jim Thompson, a pugnacious associate of the Tennessee-based law firm of King and Ballou. He has been replaced by Marshall Anstandig, a former in-house attorney for Knight Ridder who is also leading the MediaNews team in contract talks at the San Jose Mercury News.

Tribune's turn to walk the plank

Less than a month after firing its Los Angeles Times publisher in a move Tribune Co. hoped would end speculation that the newspaper was for sale, both the company and its various properties—including the Times—are up for grabs.

Following the trajectory set by Knight Ridder at this time last year, Tribune finally yielded to impatient shareholders by soliciting nonbinding "indications of interest" from potential buyers of the whole conglomerate. But then someone switched scripts. Instead of attracting a bevy of potential suitors, Tribune drew attention from just three groups of private equity firms, with nary a newspaper company in the bunch. And while the preliminary bids were not publicly disclosed, it soon became clear none were high enough to satisfy the insurgents—so now Tribune is assessing how much interest there is in the company's various bits and pieces.

The shift to a piecemeal divestiture may well vindicate those Tribune shareholders—notably the Chandler family, which has been the most public in its discontent—who have insisted the company's components are worth more than the whole. Indeed, at least five of Tribune's 11 daily newspapers have drawn interest already. High on the list are three local billionaires vying for the Los

Angeles Times, including TNG-CWA ally Ron Burkle, whose Yucaipa Cos. worked with the Guild in an unsuccessful effort to buy the Knight Ridder newspapers spun off by McClatchy Co. earlier this year.

In Maryland, the Baltimore Media Group, led by publisher Theodore G. Ventooulis, has expressed interest in buying the Baltimore Sun and has met with representatives of each of the newspaper's six unions to enlist their support. "We're not used to a potential employer reaching out to us, but we think it's a smart thing to do in returning the paper back to the community," Cet Parks, administrative officer of the Washington-Baltimore Guild, told a Sun reporter.

The Sun has been sought for years by the Baltimore-based Abell Foundation, and David S. Cordish, president and chairman of a Baltimore development company, also has been cited as a potential bidder. MediaNews Group, still digesting its recent Knight Ridder acquisitions, reportedly is interested in the Morning Call in Allentown, Pa. and the Hartford (Conn.) Courant. Long Island's Newsday also has stirred interest among a local group of businessmen. So at first blush, at least, it might appear that Tribune's fate could mirror Knight Ridder's, but without a middle-man to parcel out the pieces.

There are, however, at least three significant differences between Tribune and Knight Ridder that suggest the outcome this time will be messier. First, the intervening 12 months have seen a further deterioration of newspaper fundamentals, which is hurting valuations. Indeed, Tribune reportedly is planning a series of presentations for potential buyers to convince them that the industry is suffering merely from a cyclical downturn, not a structural one.

Second, while Knight Ridder was largely a "pure" newspaper play, Tribune has a much more diversified portfolio—including radio stations, 25 television stations and the Chicago Cubs—that makes a package sale more difficult. The television stations are a problem because federal rules prohibit cross-ownership of television stations and newspapers in the same markets. Moreover, some of Tribune's newspapers and television stations already share markets, either because Tribune owned them before the rule was promulgated or because it bought one or the other in the expectation that the rule was about to be repealed. Although Tribune has waivers for some of the cross-owned properties, the waivers can't be conveyed as part of a sale.

Third, McClatchy avoided a lot of tax headaches by buying Knight Ridder in one

piece. But if Tribune tries to maximize its sales price by selling individual assets, each sale will be taxed on its appreciated value—which in some cases will be significant. And while analysts have suggested various ploys Tribune could undertake to avoid a tax bite, such maneuvers not only complicate any sale but recall the company's last such misadventure, when it ended up with a billion-dollar tax liability it acquired with its purchase of Times-Mirror.

Such uncertainties have left their mark, with Tribune share prices stubbornly unresponsive to all the recent activity.

Ironically, while businessmen in one city after another have expressed a sudden interest in owning one of Tribune's local dailies, not one has stepped forward to vie for the Tribune itself. The Windy City yawn is all the more remarkable because shareholders of the Tribune's competitor, the much weakened Sun-Times Media Group, also have started agitating for a sale, raising the possibility that both Chicago dailies will change hands in the next few months.

Sun Times, however, has more than \$500 million in potential tax liabilities dating back to Conrad Black's heyday as chief executive and exacerbated by the ongoing legal quagmire over his stewardship.

Singin' in the rain

When a contingent of top E.W. Scripps brass—including chief executive Ken Lowe—swung by the Knoxville News Sentinel Oct. 31 and Nov. 1 as part of a chain-wide road show, they got an earful they may not have expected. At a meeting with employees, a veteran reporter and Guild member sharply questioned chief executive Ken Lowe about the company's priorities in spending money on union-busting lawyers like Michael Zinser and the firm of King and Ballow instead of using it to buttress a threatened pension plan. Meanwhile, at least 20 Guild members and supporters stood in a driving rainstorm to deliver their demand that Scripps resume meaningful contract negotiations. The company has refused to negotiate any changes in the contract it offered last May.



Joining the Guild and CWA demonstrators were Harold Woods, president of the Knoxville Labor Council, and his wife, Sylvia.

News Sentinel pressmen Elmer Weaver, left, and Tom Mikels, both represented by CWA, parade their sentiments in the rain.

For every seller, there's got to be a buyer

By Andy Zipser
Editor, The Guild Reporter

It's easy to lose sight, amid all the anxiety induced by the rat-a-tat headlines about yet another newspaper chain on the auction block, that there are two sides to every market. For every seller there has to be a buyer—or no sale. And so for every newspaper owner who decides to throw in the towel, for whatever reason, there's a would-be owner who sees something worth buying.

Most recent reporting on the newspaper industry has focused on the sell side, often explained as driven by investors who want to jump a sinking ship, à la Tribune Co. and Sun-Times Media. Even as venerable an institution as the New York Times Co. is not immune to this kind of brow-beating, with some institutional shareholders recently complaining that it should abandon the two-tiered stock structure that protects it from the

latest Wall Street hissy fit.

But assets often are sold for positive strategic purposes, not out of despair. Dow Jones found ready buyers for six of its Ottaway chain dailies, saying it needed the cash to invest in its media. Gatehouse Media, which didn't even exist a few months ago, in October did the inconceivable by going public in the middle of a supposedly bearish newspaper market and raised almost \$250 million for itself. The company's initial public offering, described as "explosive" by newspaper industry blogger Alan Mutter, shot up 17.6% its first trading day.

On the buy side of the equation, meanwhile, speculation is rampant that Jack Welch, who used to run General Electric, is angling to buy the Boston Globe, which isn't even on the market. Or at least not yet. Nobody ever accused Welch of being an idiot, so it's reasonable to ask what he sees in an asthmatic newspaper. Maybe the stock

market investors who flocked to Gateway were just naive, but can we say as much about someone like Hollywood impresario David Geffen, whose recent sale of a Jackson Pollock painting for \$140 million sparked frenzied speculation that he's priming a bid for the Los Angeles Times?

What do these buyers and potential buyers see?

For one thing, they recognize that despite all of Wall Street's moaning about shrinking margins, newspapers are still among the most profitable businesses around. Yes, they were more fun to own when they had 25% operating margins instead of 15%, but 15% is still a very pretty return. The only real question is whether the trend will continue inexorably downward or level off—if not rebound.

A second reward, at least for individual investors, is the sort of intangible return that has marginal value for a publicly-held corporation: it's all about vanity and bragging

rights. Newspapers, suddenly, have the cachet of professional sports teams. In fact, given all the talk about how important newspapers are to the democratic lifeblood of a community, don't be surprised if at some point these new owners start asking for the taxpayers to foot the bill for new presses—or, by gum, they'll move their newspapers to another town.

But the most troubling impetus behind many of these acquisitions is a belief that the acquired business can be run more efficiently, which is business school-speak for cutting payroll. Indeed, many of the acquisitions are so heavily leveraged that it would be impossible to finance their debt without such cuts. That's what seems to be happening in Philadelphia and Akron and San Jose, and if some of the deals ostensibly in the works today go through, we are almost certain to see the same in Guild shops in Baltimore or Chicago or Massillon, Ohio, where Copley Press is selling several newspapers.

News round-up

File this under 'man bites dog'

A Mexican union federation, the Authentic Labor Front, announced it is filing a complaint under the North American Free Trade Agreement against North Carolina's ban on collective bargaining for public employees. The complaint, prompted in part by a request from the United Electrical Workers, marks the first time the Authentic Labor Front has logged an official complaint against a U.S. state, although it has used the NAFTA labor provisions in the past to target alleged violations by private U.S. companies.

AFL-CIO seeks UN assistance

Saying the National Labor Relations Board's "Kentucky River" decisions "destroy workers' collective power by denying their right to form and join trade unions and to bargain collectively," the AFL-CIO has filed a complaint with the International Labor Organization of the United Nations. The complaint alleges that the decision, which expands the definition of "supervisor" in U.S. labor law, threatens to strip millions of workers of their union rights. Although the ILO does not have enforcement power to change national labor laws, the AFL-CIO is asking it to add its "authoritative voice and moral weight in the international community" on the issue.

Bulls threaten rampage in China shop

China is planning to adopt a new law that would crack down on sweatshops and protect workers' rights by giving labor unions real power for the first time since it introduced market forces in the 1980's, according to a recent report in the New York Times. The move, which underscores the government's growing concern about a widening income gap and threats of social unrest, is setting off a battle with bullish American and other foreign corporations that have lobbied against it by hinting they might build fewer factories in China—as if!

Want to know who owns your media?

As the FCC again tinkers with media ownership rules in a review process likely to benefit corporate giants (see story at right), it's more important than ever to know who owns your local newspapers and TV and radio stations, as well as which companies control the data you get via cable and telecommunications wires. One way to find out is through the the Center for Public Integrity, a non-profit, non-partisan organization that has re-launched its "Media Tracker" database. Go to www.publicintegrity.org/telecom and enter a zip code, city or state for a dossier of information about the media outlets in that area.

Advertiser flak targets Air America

There is a media conspiracy afoot, all right—just not the one the radical right natters about. As disclosed recently by watchdog group Media Matters for America, nearly 100 advertisers have forbidden their ads from running on Air America radio programs. The order was conveyed in an internal memo from ABC Radio Networks to Air America affiliates, listing such deep-pocketed advertisers as Bank of America, Exxon-Mobil, Federal Express, General Electric, McDonald's, Microsoft, Wal-Mart, and the U.S. Navy as insisting that "NONE of their commercials air during AIR AMERICA programming."

Economy still slowing down

More evidence of a slowing economy came just one week ahead of the interim elections, as the Institute for Supply Management reported that October growth in the manufacturing sector had eased to the slowest pace since June 2003 and the Commerce Department said construction declined for the third-consecutive month in September, to the lowest level since January. Merrill Lynch, meanwhile, warned clients Nov. 1 that its "recession-risk indicator" is now pointing to a 51% chance of a recession in the next year, the highest such odds since the last recession, in 2001.

Union busting in Santa Barbara, too

The Santa Barbara News-Press, which has lost more than two-dozen editors and reporters since July over management heavy-handedness, has unlawfully fired a 21-year employee in retaliation for her role in union organizing. The incident is only the latest in a series of management efforts to negate its employees' September vote to join the Teamsters' Graphic Communications Conference; an unfair labor practice charge has been filed.

Guide to corporate villains now out

Who are the corporate "good guys"—relatively speaking—and who are the real bad guys? Find out in the brand new "Blue Pages: A Directory Of Companies By Their Politics And Practices," one of 125 titles in this year's catalog put out by Union Communication Services. The book rates 1,000 firms and 4,000 brands by a variety of factors, including labor relations and politics. For example, Domino's Pizza's execs gave all their campaign contributions to Republicans, while Newman's Own donated its profits to charities. UCS is a totally union shop, and its catalog is available free from www.unionist.com. —Press Associates, Inc.

Media consolidation: another call to arms

By Mark Gruenberg
Editor, Press Associates Inc.

The Newspaper Guild and its parent union, the Communications Workers of America, are back in the trenches in the battle against media concentration.

At public hearings nationwide and in a 71-page analysis filed Oct. 23, the unions told the Federal Communications Commission it should maintain existing limits on cross-ownership of newspapers, broadcast stations and other media, including the internet.

Citing profit margins of 20% for newspapers and 40%-50% for local broadcasters, the unions said there is no compelling reason for the commission to help conglomerates create more local monopolies. Instead, they argued, "Structural rules limiting concentrated ownership of the media are necessary to protect and promote the free and vibrant press so vital to our democracy."

Indeed, the unions added, "It is imperative the commission adopt strong structural rules to protect and promote against further consolidation of the media into fewer hands, an outcome that would do serious harm to the free flow of ideas so essential to civic participation."

The last time the FCC tried to loosen the media ownership rules, it was blocked by the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Philadelphia, which ruled that the commission had not held sufficient public hearings. The FCC's efforts also were opposed by a grassroots campaign that eventually swamped the commission with approximately 3 million dissenting letters and e-mails.

But the FCC's new chairman, Kevin Martin, suggested Oct. 26 at an American Bar Association luncheon that neither the courts nor public opinion will have the last word on the subject. A recent Supreme Court decision "said an agency's interpretation" of the law "can even trump judicial interpretation," he observed, while "sheer volume (of letters and e-mails)

isn't as important as the arguments that are made" regarding an issue.

In its brief, the CWA, TNG and the National Association of Broadcast Employees and Technicians acknowledged that the federal appeals court had given the FCC strict guidelines on what is must do if it revisits the issue. But the unions prefer that the FCC not relax cross-ownership limits at all, citing many examples where limited cross-ownership, even under current rules, restricts the news that gets to readers and viewers.

"Publishers and broadcasters argued that relaxing (cross-)ownership rules would allow media owners to realize 'synergies' that would provide greater resources to expand local news and information reporting. While these so-called synergies may increase efficiencies, efficiency is not the policy goal—diversity is," the unions argued.

"Evidence demonstrates combined television stations or cross-owned newspaper/broadcast combinations reduce the number of independent voices in a local media market."

The unions also argued that media concentration through cross-ownership leads to censorship, citing 11 examples in which CWA ads were refused for fear of antagonizing advertisers, because of the owners' anti-union views or because of a conflict of interest.

The examples included one from May, when Washington Post-owned radio stations refused to let CWA buy spots "educating the public about a labor dispute involving CWA-represented mailers at the Post" that has lasted for several years. "The local cable provider, Comcast, has also refused to air ads," the unions added.

Another example involved two large-audience Boston radio stations that refused to run ads about a dispute between the Boston Guild and the Boston Globe. "And in 2005, virtually every radio station in York, Pa. refused to air ads critical of the local newspaper monopoly, which is a big advertiser," the unions averred. The ads informed listeners of the York papers' refusal to negotiate a new Guild contract.

Canada inches toward federal ban on scabs

Canadian unions are closer than they've ever been in attaining one of their most sought-after legislative goals, a federal law banning the use of replacement workers during strikes and lockouts in workplaces covered by the Canada Labour Code.

The anti-strikebreaker bill, which Bloc Québécois has introduced unsuccessfully 10 times since 1990, this time passed a second House of Commons reading, Oct. 25, on a vote of 167-101, all but assuring eventual adoption in that chamber. But the bill still must be debated in committee before it is returned for a third and final reading, then be passed by the Senate and receive royal assent before enactment.

Passage of the law has been a major priority for the Canadian Media Guild, a majority of whose members work for federally regulated employers who would be bound by its provisions. "Imagine how angry we would have been last year during the CBC lockout if, while we were marching around outside, scabs were brought in to do our work," said Arnold Amber, director of TNG Canada. "CBC management did not do that, but the law is necessary to prevent it from happening to any group of workers."

Although the Canada Labor Code covers only 10% or so of the country's jobs, union officials note that those jobs play a critical role in the national economy. Moreover, reform of federal labour laws sets the stage for progressive changes at the provincial level. To date, only Quebec and British Columbia have outlawed the use of replacement workers, in 1977 and 1993, respectively.

Moreover, while 97% of Canadian labor negotiations end successfully without a strike or lockout, use of scabs in those that don't has resulted in some of the country's most prolonged and violent labor disputes,

as at the Ekati Mine in the Northwest Territories, Lakeside Packers in Alberta and Seimens in Ontario. British Columbia and Quebec, by contrast, "have realized smoother labor relations and substantially fewer days of work lost to strikes and lockouts," according to the Canadian Labor Congress, with which TNG Canada is affiliated. "In fact, the year after B.C. passed its anti-scab law, the amount of work time lost to labour disputes was cut in half."

Carole Lavallée, a Bloc Québécois MP representing Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert, pointed out that since provincial passage of similar legislation nearly 30 years ago, Quebec's labor disputes have grown shorter even as those under federal jurisdiction last longer. "For example," she noted, "even though Quebec workers under federal jurisdiction account for only 8% of the workforce in Quebec, labor disputes in that sector were responsible for 18% of the person-days lost in 2004."

Court vindicates O'Neill

An Ontario court has struck down a law used to obtain search warrants for controversial raids on the home and office of Juliet O'Neill, an Ottawa Citizen reporter who wrote about the U.S. arrest of Canadian citizen Maher Arar.

Superior Court Justice Lynn Ratushny ruled Oct. 19 that provisions of Section 4 of the country's Security of Information Act violate the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and therefore are unconstitutional. She also concluded that the Royal Canadian Mounted Police abused proper process by threatening O'Neill with criminal prosecution unless she revealed her source of leaked information about the case.

The government has said it won't appeal.



LOOKING AHEAD

Esprit de corps? It's history, now

By Linda Foley, President

Like a giant house of cards collapsing, you can almost hear the jobs tumbling out of the newspaper industry.

In the last month, MediaNews has announced 101 layoffs in San Jose and 200 more throughout the chain, including nearly 190 in Denver. The Akron Beacon Journal is slated to cut 60 jobs. The owners of the Philadelphia Inquirer have threatened 75 job cuts and another 25 or so at the Daily News. The New York Times recently eliminated 130 positions in New York and another 160 at the Boston Globe. Eighty buyouts recently were offered at the Washington Post. Workforce reductions also were announced in the last month in Cleveland, Dallas, Hartford and Los Angeles.

Copley Newspapers is selling off its smaller holdings in Illinois and Ohio while cutting costs in San Diego in order to hold on to its Union Tribune. The Tribune Co. is contemplating selling off all its assets, and the Chicago Sun-Times is considering putting itself up for sale (again). The Block family, currently engaged in a fool's errand lockout of several unions at the Toledo Blade, has threatened to sell the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette if the unions there don't agree to major economic concessions. And on, and on, and on.

To say this is an industry in transition is too obvious to waste the words.

Years of consolidation and profit-gouging, coupled with arrogance and neglect of its customer base and a sluggish response to internet technology, have taken their toll on the newspaper industry. And our members are the ones paying the price for their bosses' greed and lack of foresight.

But there's more to this upheaval than just the economics of a challenged industry. The root of this current mayhem is a broken deal that began unraveling decades ago.

Long before web pages and the internet; long before Gannett, Knight Ridder and Tribune Co. became billion-dollar corporations; back when Frank Gannett, John S.

Knight and Bernie Ridder actually knew who worked for them, there was an unspoken, but sacred, pact that turned newspapers into one of the most enduring and profitable manufacturing industries in North America.

Employees—from the newsroom to the phone room to the mailroom—and their bosses—from the editor to the publisher to the owner—shared a common sense of mission and vision. We somehow understood that whatever our economic needs, whatever other motivations we had, we all were charged with a special responsibility to our readers and our society. Yes, we—employees and bosses alike—needed to make money, but we also needed to produce a newspaper that would inform, provoke and even inspire our communities to become more engaged in their government and their lives.

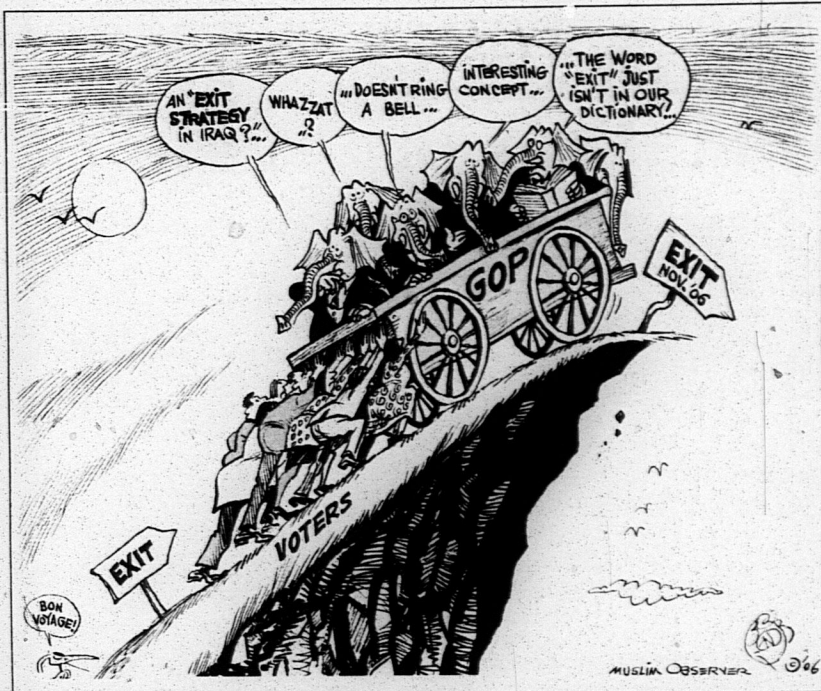
That shared sense that we were on an important mission ensured certain lines wouldn't be crossed, certain actions were off-limits, even if it meant the owners' profits wouldn't rise as quickly or as generously.

For their part, newspaper employees put in more than their eight hours. They strove to make the paper successful, finding that additional source for a story or checking back with a customer to make sure the paper actually got delivered (sometimes, to the Guild's dismay, working "off the clock").

That's all gone now. The last vestiges of any *esprit de corps* evaporated with this latest round of draconian and, in some cases, devastating job slashing.

At a recent Guild meeting involving several West Coast locals, the participants went around the room describing web operations at their newspapers. In each case, it was a rank-and-file employee or a group of them who, on their own, launched their paper's web site or initiated its most popular feature.

I have to wonder how many of those innovative employees still work for those newspapers. I have to wonder how many will be left after this latest round of cuts takes its toll.



Double standard reigns

October 22, 2006

Letters To The Editor
The Boston Globe

As a union representative who's also a journalist, I think the "media specialists" quoted by reporter Robert Gavin in his Oct. 21 article ("Letter Backing Globe Union Spurs Ethics Questions") are applying a blatant double standard to organizational behavior in the newspaper industry.

Gavin—and his experts—failed to note that Globe journalists who cover local politics represent only a small fraction of the 1,000 union members on whose behalf a letter was solicited from 20 public officials. Nevertheless, securing such a letter is "ethically questionable" and "not a good precedent," according to several local journalism professors. Since the signatories are either subjects of or sources for some Globe reporting, any attempt by the Boston Newspaper Guild to enlist them as allies in a labor-management dispute is deemed a troubling form of political favor-seeking.

I doubt that Gavin's sources would ever

describe The Globe's much-prized editorials backing candidates for federal office as "conflicts of interest that compromise the credibility" of The New York Times Co., which owns the paper. Yet these same public officials—in Congress and the White House—enact laws or make appointments to the Federal Communications Commission that directly affect the financial interests of big multi-media conglomerates.

If it's widely accepted that wealthy owners of the press can influence public policy in a self-interested way (via their candidate-endorsements or publishers' association lobbying), why is it "un-professional" for newspaper employees—acting as workers and citizens—to urge politicians to take an occasional stand on their behalf?

Sincerely,

Steve Early, CWA District 1

[Early's letter to the editor, protesting criticism of the Boston Guild for asking community leaders for their support, never made it into the Globe; see related story, p. 3.]

Union democracy the antidote for apathy

By Herman Benson

Editor, Union Democracy Review

It is becoming fashionable, even among some activists and labor-oriented intellectuals, to derogue internal union democracy as an impediment to the great cause of reorienting and rebuilding the labor movement. The "crusade for union democracy," writes one eminent advocate of a labor-intellectual alliance, "seems interminable and interminably futile."

Andy Stern, philosophical mainspring for the Change to Win coalition, writes: "Workers want their lives to be changed. They want strength and a voice, not some purist, intellectual, historical, mythical democracy." And so the Change to Win coalition proposes to reorganize the labor movement on a new basis, without concern for the rights of workers within their unions.

One relentless critic of the modern labor movement dismisses the whole idea of

"union democracy" as a delusion and ridicules reformers who would raise it as a demand in their unions. Apathy, he writes, "reigns too widely and a connected stratum of workers simply delivers their votes in exchange for jobs and job security." In support of that notion he quotes C. Wright Mills: "Democracy within the unions, as within the nation as a whole, is usually a democracy of machine politics imposed upon a mass of apathetic members."

Those who minimize the importance of democracy because members are apathetic have matters upside down. Democracy is especially important precisely where there is apathy. In any institution involving millions of people, and the labor movement is one such institution, the vast majority is preoccupied with the tough tasks of daily life: finding a way to earn a living, having a good place to live, getting and keeping a marriage, raising and educating children and keeping them off drugs, starting the car on a cold

winter day, the rent and mortgage, those aching teeth and sprained ankles.

Overwhelmed by what deep thinkers might consider trivial pursuits, most people are forced to neglect other important but less pressing matters, like union affairs. That is, they tend to become "apathetic." But where there is a robust democracy, an activist, vociferous, gadfly minority can be available to shake up that majority and force them to face up to the critical issues of the moment. That is, democracy is an indispensable means to overcome apathy.

Union officials, even those who are contemptuous of others who speak of "union democracy," are fully aware of all this. When they see fit to move an "apathetic" membership they will use the standard tools of democracy. They orate at length to induce members to come out and vote on election day, to raise their dues, to vote to strike or not, to adopt a contract. They fill the pages of their captive union newspapers with

exhortation on the selected subjects of the day. Come out on Labor Day, with me at the head of the parade!

These union leaders are not exactly inveterate enemies of the idea of democracy. They simply feel more secure when they, themselves, enjoy a monopoly of those democratic rights. They get nervous when those rights are available independently to other union members not under their control.

In our labor movement, there are thousands of active, loyal unionists, and potentially many thousands more who are independent-minded, conscious of their rights as Americans and insistent on dignified treatment in their union and on the job. Union democracy is one means of releasing that spirit as an energizing force to help overcome "apathy" in the labor movement.

Adapted from a column in the July/August issue; the Review is published by the Association for Union Democracy.

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 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."

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 for letters and articles: Friday before publication. (Next deadline: December 1.)

HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH

Fixating on even tiniest differences

By Debbie Thomas
TNG-CWA Human Rights Director

First things first, so let me preface this column by saying what should be obvious, that these are my opinions. It's the way I see it. These thoughts aren't set in stone, and perhaps you can offer more information to change my opinion.

The problem with which I'm wrestling is 'isms.' You know, those little attitudes we harbor toward others and toward those in our own groups, whether real or preconceived. Let's look, for example, at Gallaudet University, the country's premier institution of higher learning for the hearing-impaired. Gallaudet's board of directors earlier this year chose Jane K. Fernandez as the school's next president. Unfortunately for Fernandez, although she is deaf, she grew up being taught to speak and lip-read and did not learn sign language until in her 20's—and so ended up on the wrong side of an issue for many Gallaudet students and faculty, who perceive a substantial difference between the speaking deaf vs. the signing deaf.

I attended a picnic this summer, and at the end all the "light-skinned" blacks decided to take a group picture. This was presented as a joke, but how do you know what effect your behavior has on younger people, or those not in this "group" who are watching? Apparently, this light-skinned/dark-skin separation is something a nationally syndicated radio talk-show host does on his cruises. Somehow, the joke falls flat on land—assuming it had any buoyancy at sea in the first place.

We all know about the "superiority" attributed to reporters on newspaper staffs: without them, the paper wouldn't exist. But without the people in advertising, circulation and

other departments the newspaper also wouldn't exist, so who's to say one group is better than another? We all have to work together to put out the product, and we all should be supportive of one another during a labor dispute. So if your mailers are out on a picket line, for example, we should all be there, too.

Real blonds discriminate against those who dye their hair. Did you know that? How, pray tell, can we expect others to respect us when we can't even respect the differences among ourselves? The list is endless, and as arbitrary as we are fickle. Meat-eaters vs. vegans, short vs. tall, whether you live in a mansion or in a trailer park. We are all one people, and our similarities outweigh our differences.

The key word here is diversity. Now to switch gears.

The Coalition of Labor Union Women, one of six AFL-CIO constituency groups, is reaching out to union women to educate them on cervical cancer prevention. Among other initiatives, CLUW has a television "tell someone" campaign explaining that cervical cancer is caused by a virus and stressing the importance of regular screening to prevent the disease. There have always been disparities in provision of health care and prevention of diseases among minorities and women, and in this case we can do something to lessen that gap. More than 85% of union women have health insurance, and most plans cover the pap test and HPV (human papilloma virus) screening for cancer.

So tell someone. Tell your friends, tell your mother. Union men, tell your wives and daughters.

CLUW has prepared a two-page, ready-to-use article that locals can use in their publications or post on their web sites. To get a copy, go to cluwc.org/cervcancer-article.html.

Newspaper profits wane as circulation plummets

Within the span of just a few days in late October, the nation's publicly traded newspapers reported consistently depressed third-quarter earnings growth and the Audit Bureau of Circulations explained why: plummeting six-month circulation figures.

The New York Times Co., which also owns the Boston Globe and other media properties, said it earned only \$14 million on a 4.2% decline in revenues, down from \$23.1 million a year earlier. Dow Jones had higher net income, but that was due entirely—and then some—to a tax gain, while a modest revenue increase fell short of analysts' expectations. Belo's third-quarter profit was down 13%, Tribune's profit was up but also below expectations, and Washington Post Co. said that half of its 10% increase in profits was due to sales of property and marketable securities.

Earnings at McClatchy, meanwhile, soared to \$51.8 million from \$38.6 million a year earlier, but only because of its acquisition of Knight Ridder. And since that purchase was financed in part with new stock, earnings on a per-share basis swooned to 64 cents a share

from 82 cents. On a pro forma basis—assuming McClatchy had owned the 20 Knight Ridder papers a year earlier—revenues were off 1.4%.

ABC circulation figures, meanwhile, supplied the rest of the story. While some decline was expected because of an industry-wide effort to prune so-called "junk" circulation—third-party, bulk sales and promotional discounting—an overall loss of 2.8% daily and 3.4% Sundays was deeper than anticipated.

Leading the slide among the 25 largest dailies was the Los Angeles Times, which in six months saw an 8% erosion—exceeded only by the 9.4% drop at the significantly smaller San Jose Mercury News. Circulation declines at other Guild-represented newspapers among the top 25 included (in decreasing order of circulation size) 1.9% at the Wall Street Journal; 3.5%, New York Times; 3.3%, Washington Post; 6.7%, Boston Globe; 5.3%, San Francisco Chronicle; 4.1%, Minneapolis Star Tribune; 0.6%, Plain Dealer; 7.5%, Philadelphia Inquirer; 3.6%, Detroit Free Press; and 5.4% at the Sacramento Bee.

The St. Louis Post-Dispatch was one of only two newspapers in the top 25 to post a gain, of 0.6%; the other was the New York Post.

NEWSDOKU

Newsdoku has been too easy, so we've tweaked the rules. As in the past, Newsdoku is played like Sudoku: just fill in the grid at right so that every horizontal row, every vertical column and every 3x3 box contains nine different letters.

However, in addition to filling in the squares, the nine letters you use can spell out one or more words that answer or describe a clue. Some letters may be used more than once. For example, if the Newsdoku letters are A-C-E-F-H-L-R-T-Y and the clue is "Watered down the NLRA," the answer is TAFT-HARTLEY ACT.

The clue for this month's puzzle: A reporter for the New York Times, he resigned after nine years to become the Guild's first executive secretary.

There is only one solution to Newsdoku, based on reasoning and logic, but you've also got to answer the clue to win a prize.

Entries postmarked no later than Dec. 12 may be mailed to: The Guild Reporter, 501 Third Street, NW, Washington, DC 20001. If there's more than one correct set of answers, the winner

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MIDDLING DIFFICULTY

will be chosen at random from the correct entries. The answer to this puzzle will be published in the December issue; the winner will be named in the January issue.

The winner of the Sept. Newsdoku was Mark Myers of Latham, NY, who has been sent a copy of "Friendly Fire" by Italian journalist Giuliana Sgrena.

THE GUILD Reporter

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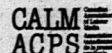
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DAYBOOK

Midwest District Council,
Nov. 11-12, Denver, CO

New England District Council,
Nov. 18-19, Portland, Maine

Southern District Council,
Dec. 2 conference call

Media Reform Conference,
Jan. 12-14, Memphis, TN

Deadline for Broun, Barr entries,
Jan. 26 (postmark)

B	N	R	I	U	E	S	T	O
U	S	T	O	R	N	E	I	B
I	E	O	B	T	S	N	R	U
T	O	E	N	I	U	B	S	R
N	B	I	E	S	R	U	O	T
S	R	U	T	B	O	I	E	N
O	T	N	U	E	I	R	B	S
E	U	S	R	O	B	T	N	I
R	I	B	S	N	T	O	U	E

OCTOBER NEWSDOKU SOLVED

October's clue was "Michael Zinser and Jim Thompson." The answer: UNIONBUSTERS (plural).

FROM THE MORGUE

Seventy years ago this month:

The Guild and Hearst's Seattle Post-Intelligencer sign an agreement Nov. 25 that recognizes the union, improves pay significantly and institutes a 5-day, 40-hour workweek, ending a strike that had closed the paper since Aug. 13. The Guild Reporter observes that the agreement marks "the first time that a powerful paper had been obliged by the united action of organized labor to remain shut . . . until management was ready to grant the right of its editorial employees to bargain collectively." . . . The Memphis Newspaper Guild is established. . . . Guilds in Maryland, Virginia and the District of Columbia unite under the umbrella of the Potomac District Council.

Fifty years ago this month:

A complete shutdown of Cleveland's three newspapers—with the Guild striking the Press and the News and Plain Dealer locking their doors in management sympathy—idles 3,000 workers. . . . The Guild's 1,800 wire service members vote on whether to become a single, all-inclusive local within the union. . . . The Guild begins operating in the black for the first time in three years.

Twenty-five years ago this month:

TNG announces its first residential seminar for new local officers, to be held in February . . . The Pacific Northwest Guild arbitrates a Seattle Times ban on newsroom employees running for public office, which the union claims is a violation of its outside activities clause. . . . An APME survey finds that editors at unionized newspapers are paid 30% more.

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