

INDUSTRIAL WORKER

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UE Workers in Chicago Facing Another Plant Closure

By UE Local 1174

The victory at Republic Windows and Doors Factory in Chicago would not have been possible without the support of thousands of people from around the world. We stood together in the face of threats from bailed-out banks through foreclosures, evictions and layoffs. A key piece of support was when international unionists called the Bank of America CEO and took action against local bank branches.

The United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers (UE) began a movement exemplifying that with bold action and support from around the country we can win. Now, another group of workers need the power of global solidarity.

Workers at the Quad City Die Casting plant in Moline, IL, which is slated to close on July 12, are facing the same threat that the Republic workers faced: being thrown out on the streets with nothing after years of hard work. This plant closure could lead to a loss of 100 jobs.

To fight this, the workers—who are members of UE Local 1174—are calling for local and international solidarity, with action against Quad City Die Casting's financier, Wells Fargo Bank.

Wells Fargo received \$25 billion in taxpayer money and immediately planned a lavish retreat to Las Vegas in the midst of the economic recession.

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Photo: flickr.com/photos/ueunion

QC Die Casting worker Deb Johann rallies at Wells Fargo's offices on June 11.

Starbucks Settles Sixth Labor Complaint Labor Violations Fan the Flames of Escalating Public Outcry

By the IWW Starbucks Workers Union

MINNEAPOLIS, MN — The Starbucks Coffee Co. settled a complaint on June 1 from the National Labor Relations Board over charges of violating workers' rights—the sixth such settlement in three years for the ailing coffee giant. The case comes as a new website, StopStarbucks.com and viral video calling on CEO Howard Schultz to respect workers' right to join a labor union spread like wildfire across the internet. The new media initiative, from Robert Greenwald's "Brave New Films," was viewed more than 60,000 times with a related petition garnering almost 15,000 signatures.

"This settlement proves that Starbucks executives are not above the law and cannot block hardworking baristas from making positive change," said Angel Gardner, a barista and member of the Starbucks Workers Union (SWU) in the Twin Cities. "How can Starbucks claim that it maintains a positive work

environment when one labor case after another exposes its lack of respect for employees?"

Pursuant to the settlement, which stems from charges filed by the SWU, the corporation must cease engaging in a slew of illegal measures, including threatening to call security to interfere with protected activity, prohibiting workers from discussing the union and expelling union sympathizers from company stores.

The settlement is the first since a Labor Board judge found Starbucks guilty of similar rights violations in the first ever trial between baristas and the coffee chain in December 2008.

"Howard Schultz needs to create quality jobs for hardworking families, not just line the pockets of the fat cats at corporate headquarters," said Erik Forman, a barista and member of the Starbucks Workers Union. "Our campaign for secure work hours, fair pay, and a voice at work gains momentum every day."

No Contract, No Cookies: The Stella D'Oro Strike Continues

By Thomas Good

BRONX, NY — Workers at the Stella D'Oro bakery have been on strike for more than nine months. Brynwood Partners, the Wall Street equity firm that owns the factory, is using strike-breakers to operate the plant. The strikers, represented by Local 50 of the Bakery, Confectionary, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers International Union (BCTGM), argue that Brynwood is intent on busting the union by slashing wages, pensions, holidays and sick pay.

On May 30, more than 700 strikers and their supporters rallied outside the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) Marble Hill Houses, in the South Bronx, and then marched to the Stella D'Oro plant—located at West 237 Street and Broadway—where a second rally was held. The strikers were joined by members of several unions: New York State United Teachers (NYSUT), Transportation Workers Union (TWU) Local 100, City University's Professional Staff Congress (PSC-CUNY), the Coalition of

Black Trade Unionists (CBT) and the NY Metro Postal Union (APWU).

As the protesters proceeded north on Broadway the orderly march was briefly disrupted when someone threw a bottle from an apartment building. Marchers took to the street and the procession continued.

At the end of the march, members of BCTGM Local 50 came face-to-face with officers from the 50th Precinct outside the factory gates. Warnings were issued by police—whose actions appeared uncoordinated at the end of the march—after strikers advanced beyond the police barriers and stood outside the main entrance to the plant. Despite some tension and a few standoffs between protesters and police, there were no arrests. The National Lawyers Guild had observers present, which may have helped defuse the situation.

Strikers are on the picket line in front of the Stella D'Oro plant every day. For more information visit <http://www.stelladorostrike2008.com>.

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California CWA Locals Preparing to Strike

By Freedom Socialist

Instead of punching time clocks at the University of California (UC) Berkeley on May 6, members of University Professional and Technical Employees-Communications Workers of America (UPTE-CWA) Local 1 mounted spirited picket lines on the campus. They are fed up with the university's management, which has obstructed bargaining a new contract for more than a year. The UC administration has imposed increased healthcare and parking costs without negotiating—and have also harassed and laid off a union bargainer.

The one-day Unfair Labor Practice strike brought out impressive support—both on- and off-campus—including endorsements and donations from the faculty union at City College, the Office

and Professional Employees International Union (OPEIU) Local 3, as well as the San Francisco Labor Council. The campus American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) union also backs UPTE, as they were on strike one year ago and won contract protections for immigrant workers. UPTE solidarity pickets closed down a construction site during that action, reported Nancy Kato, a UC worker and activist with Bay Area Radical Women. "AFSCME's strike was our strike too," she said. "Same boss, same struggle, same fight."

Meanwhile, CWA workers at AT&T have been working without a contract since April 4. The company is demanding concessions that would destroy gains

Continued on 7



Letters welcome!

Send your letters to: iw@iww.org with "Letter" in the subject.

Mailing address:

IW, PO Box 7430, JAF Station, New York, NY 10116, United States

Get the Word Out!

IWW members, branches, job shops and other affiliated bodies can get the word out about their project, event, campaign or protest each month in the *Industrial Worker*. Send announcements to iw@iww.org. Much appreciated donations for the following sizes should be sent to IWW GHQ, PO Box 23085, Cincinnati OH 45223 USA.

\$12 for 1" tall, 1 column wide

\$40 for 4" by 2 columns

\$90 for a quarter page

Corrections and Gratitude

Huw Jones' article, "First IWW Event in Wales Celebrates Past & Present" on page 5 of the June 2009 *Industrial Worker*, incorrectly states that the May Day walking tour was the first IWW event in Wales. A previous issue of the *IW* carried a photo of the IWW Centenary Stone that was unveiled in 2005 in a public access forest in Pembrey, Wales. At this event, Coast Redwoods were also planted in memory of Judi Bari, and the Unofficial Reform Committee of the South Wales Miners' Federation were saluted. According to a letter submitted to the *IW* by Ilyan Thomas, approaching the story as "...bringing the IWW to Wales" is insulting. Thomas suggests that IWW was highly influenced by ideas that came from Wales.

According to Ph.D. student at Greenwich University, Ken John, infamous anarchist and labor organizer Emma Goldman said that Sam Mainwaring, Sr., from Wales, coined the phrase "anarcho-sindicalism" as she was spreading his ideas to the United States in 1870s. Additionally, a London poster announcing a commemorative mass meeting about the murder of the Chicago Haymarket anarchists, listed Sam Mainwaring as the opening speaker, followed by Peter Kropotkin, Errico Malatesta, Frank Kitz, Louise Michel, Lothrop Withington, Temma Kaplan and others. Each spoke their own language; Mainwaring spoke in Welsh.

Additionally, IWW member Sam Mainwaring, Jr., ran training events around Neath at the time of the Spanish Civil War. The IWW is not new in Wales.

The column, "Industrial Worker Mailing Issues Resolved" on page 2 of the June 2009 *Industrial Worker* failed to thank FWs Walt Weber, Peter Moore and Chris Lytle for their hard work in helping to resolve the mailing issues. Thanks FWs!

The editor thanks the *IW* Final Edit Committee for their hard work and dedication in helping to proofread and revise the newspaper each month. The Committee members include: Maria Rodriguez Gil, Tom Levy, Slava Osowska, Nickelias Jusino (X365373) and Mathieu Dube from the Pittsburgh GMB. Additional thanks to Dek Keenan, Mike Pesa and Peter Moore for their work in proofreading the paper.



Graphic: depts.washington.edu

Dear Editors,

I think the *Industrial Worker* should have a column devoted entirely to unemployed workers. The *IW* hardly ever speaks to this problem that is plaguing society, but when the newspaper does cover the issue, it is great!

Sincerely,
Joe Randall

Industrial Worker

The Voice of Revolutionary
Industrial Unionism

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PIDC Hunger Strike Leader Assaulted, Threatened with Deportation

By Greg Rodriguez

June 3, 2009 was a day of anger and sadness for people in the Rio Grande Valley, Texas—a region known for its vast rural landscapes and primarily immigrant community. At around 6:15 a.m., Southwest Workers' Union (SWU) member Nadezhda Garza received a phone call from a detainee inside the Port Isabel Detention Center (PIDC). The worried voice on the other end of the phone line informed Garza that fellow detainee Rama Carty had been assaulted by four private guards and one federal Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agent at around 5:45 a.m. The ICE agent allegedly involved was identified as Lieutenant Sandoval. When Carty demanded to speak with representatives of Amnesty International-USA, the guards proceeded to drag him away.

Sarnata Reynolds, Policy Director of Refugee and Migrant Rights for Amnesty International-USA, and a representative named Daryl Grisgraber, were at PIDC since June 2. They were writing up a report on conditions inside the facility and met with Carty on the day before the assault.

At around 8:00 a.m. after the assault, Carty called Garza to corroborate his friend's phone call, but also to inform her of his situation: "He said they were transferring him to a detention center in Louisiana, and from there he will be deported to Haiti," Carty said. Carty then requested to speak with Amnesty International in order to stop the transfer.

Carty then told Garza that his friend needed to remain in the PIDC in order to show his documentation regarding the abuses. According to Garza, Carty wanted to assert that he was a U.S. citizen and had the documentation to prove it. He wanted to make it clear that justice was being obstructed. He was sent to Texas, and did not have the legal resources to fight his way out of detention.

No Time Wasted

As soon as the initial phone call came from Carty's fellow detainee, organizers on the outside took action.

"We began to make phone calls to our community activists and friends. We sent out a press release to both local and international media in order to make this as public as possible," said Hector Guzman, a student organizer in McAllen, Texas.

Garza also called the ICE office, which oversees the PIDC, and spoke to Assistant Field Director James Bentsen. When she informed him of the incident, he simply said, "I don't believe you" and shrugged it off.

The SWU staged a zero hour protest circa 1:30 p.m., outside the PIDC, denouncing what happened and demanding a freeze on Carty's deportation. Still, protesters felt that their biggest chance of stopping the illegal removal of Carty was for Amnesty International to take action. They were, after all, on the inside. Organizers made several phone calls to Reynolds, informing her of what was happening with Carty and requesting they meet with him and stop the transfer.

Although Amnesty International was notified, it refused to move on the situation. Instead, they implied that they had a schedule to meet and that Carty would not be deported right away. Garza said that "Amnesty International



IWW rallies in solidarity outside the PIDC in April.

Photo: Anselmo Garza

proved themselves impotent ... they let it happen. That is why we want community organizations in the (PIDC)—people who have a connection with the people in there, not out-of-towners who are just here to compile a report, and too worried about their schedule to pay attention to a crisis that went on right under their nose."

Towards the end of the demonstration, Amnesty representatives drove out of the facility and admitted to protesters that Carty had been rushed out of PIDC. They did not bother to join the community action or step out of their vehicle.

Since April 2009, local organizers with the SWU and members of Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) have been working for justice at PIDC. They

have had weekly visits with the detainees, but have not been allowed to monitor conditions on the inside or the state of those still fasting.

The hunger strikers are spearheading a movement to put an end to the inhumane detention of immigrant workers, and we should view this struggle as part of the broader class war. The Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) actions against Carty are viewed as retaliation and have had a definite effect on all the immigrants at PIDC.

Hunger Strike Organizer

Who is Rama Carty? Rama Carty is a known leader and participant in a hunger strike that has been going on at the PIDC since late April. He was born in the Democratic Republic of Congo to Haitian parents, but has lived in the United States for more than 38 years.

After he and other detainees read a report documenting the deplorable conditions that exist throughout the entire immigrant detention system, they felt compelled to do something about it, and decided to stage a hunger strike. Soon after, the hunger strike spread to include up to 200 detainees at the PIDC. They demanded (and continue to demand) the right to due process, medical attention for all detainees, access to legal resources and an end to physical and verbal abuses by guards at the facility.

At the time of his transfer, Carty had been detained by DHS/ICE for over 13 months, after serving a two-year sentence for a drug conviction he had already served time for. He also said that his drug conviction was wrongful.

Carty has been interviewed by several news sources, including a recorded telephone interview with the *Texas Observer* that was aired on the popular independent radio/television news program "Democracy Now."

At the writing of this story, it was known that Carty was at the LaSalle Detention Facility in Jena, Louisiana. The Consulate General of Haiti is refusing to issue DHS a travel permit in the name of Rama Carty because they have no Haitian birth record for him.

Rama Carty has the strong language of a revolutionary, with a calm and concentrated delivery comparable to that of Mumia Abu-Jamal. Our hearts and solidarity are with him.



Graphic: radicalgraphics.org

IWW Constitution Preamble

The working class and the employing class have nothing in common. There can be no peace so long as hunger and want are found among millions of working people and the few, who make up the employing class, have all the good things of life. Between these two classes a struggle must go on until the workers of the world organize as a class, take possession of the means of production, abolish the wage system, and live in harmony with the earth.

We find that the centering of the management of industries into fewer and fewer hands makes the trade unions unable to cope with the ever-growing power of the employing class. The trade unions foster a state of affairs which allows one set of workers to be pitted against another set of workers in the same industry, thereby helping defeat one another in wage wars. Moreover, the trade unions aid the employing class to mislead the workers into the belief that the working class have interests in common with their employers.

These conditions can be changed and the interest of the working class upheld only by an organization formed in such a way that all its members in any one industry, or all industries if necessary, cease work whenever a strike or lockout is on in any department thereof, thus making an injury to one an injury to all.

Instead of the conservative motto, "A fair day's wage for a fair day's work," we must inscribe on our banner the revolutionary watchword, "Abolition of the wage system."

It is the historic mission of the working class to do away with capitalism. The army of production must be organized, not only for the everyday struggle with capitalists, but also to carry on production when capitalism shall have been overthrown. By organizing industrially we are forming the structure of the new society within the shell of the old.

Join the IWW Today

The IWW is a union for all workers, a union dedicated to organizing on the job, in our industries and in our communities both to win better conditions today and to build a world without bosses, a world in which production and distribution are organized by workers ourselves to meet the needs of the entire population, not merely a handful of exploiters.

We are the Industrial Workers of the World because we organize industrially—that is to say, we organize all workers on the job into one union, rather than dividing workers by trade, so that we can pool our strength to fight the bosses together.

Since the IWW was founded in 1905, we have recognized the need to build a truly international union movement in order to confront the global power of the bosses and in order to strengthen workers' ability to stand in solidarity with our fellow workers no matter what part of the globe they happen to live on.

We are a union open to all workers, whether or not the IWW happens to have representation rights in your workplace. We organize the worker, not the job, recognizing that unionism is not about government certification or employer recognition but about workers coming together to address our common concerns. Sometimes this means striking or signing a contract. Sometimes it means refusing to work with an unsafe machine or following the bosses' orders so literally that nothing gets done. Sometimes it means agitating around particular issues or grievances in a specific workplace, or across an industry.

Because the IWW is a democratic, member-run union, decisions about what issues to address and what tactics to pursue are made by the workers directly involved.

TO JOIN: Mail this form with a check or money order for initiation and your first month's dues to: IWW, Post Office Box 23085, Cincinnati OH 45223, USA.

Initiation is the same as one month's dues. Our dues are calculated according to your income. If your monthly income is under \$2000, dues are \$9 a month. If your monthly income is between \$2000 and \$3500, dues are \$18 a month. If your monthly income is over \$3500 a month, dues are \$27 a month. Dues may vary outside of North America and in Regional Organizing Committees (Australia, British Isles, German Language Area).

I affirm that I am a worker, and that I am not an employer.

I agree to abide by the IWW constitution.

I will study its principles and acquaint myself with its purposes.



Name: _____

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Membership includes a subscription to the **Industrial Worker**.

Building a Ship

By Nate Holdren

I recently stepped down from an international officer position in the IWW. In thinking about this, I remembered something I wanted to share.

I feel lucky to have had the privilege to meet Fellow Worker Utah Phillips before he died. FW Phillips sang a song with the refrain, "building a ship/ may never sail on it/ gonna build it anyway." That's an important idea.

"Building a ship."

The IWW is a sort of ecosystem where several elements depend on each other, and move at different paces. Trainings and administrative work are the main things I do in the IWW now. This is important, but it's hard because the payoffs don't come quickly and often happen elsewhere, out of my direct sight/experience. This is different from helping organize a picket or a job action or moving a coworker in a one-on-one.

On a personal note, I'm happy to report that my wife is pregnant and that our daughter is due to be born at the end of August. I am very excited to meet my daughter and to raise her. At the same time, I know parenting will involve being stressed, missing sleep, being afraid, and a lot of hard work. Along the same lines, I used to think that revolutionary activity should always be joyful or make us feel good. I no longer feel that way. Obviously, this stuff should have enjoyable and/or joyful elements, at least sometimes, but that's a different matter. The work we need to do is often hard, trying, tiring and involves sacrifices. Many things worth doing are hard and are not

immediately rewarding. But it is unjustifiable not to do them because they are a challenge—and this applies to parenting too. It's both rewarding and really hard at the same time.

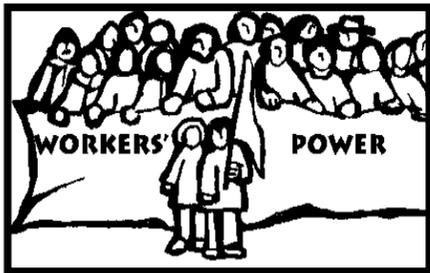
"May never sail on it."

I told FW Phillips that his music and stories were a big part of my introduction to the IWW, and that I had really enjoyed talking with him and hearing his stories. He said thank you. He said something like, "I was your age when

I met the people who got me into all this, and they were about the age I am now. Someday you'll be my age and will be getting new people into all this." It was a sobering thing to say, and definitely felt like shoes I can't fill. It's also an important reminder to think long term: Utah was, I think, 73 when I met him. I had just turned 30.

All this ties in to the reasons I decided to step down. In short, I was—and am—feeling burnt out. On the one hand, I need to make sure I do not burn out entirely, so that I can continue to play a somewhat positive role for the long term. On the other hand, what the song says is important. This stuff is not about immediate returns—or, at least, not about being able to see our really big goals accomplished. I find that to be a useful reminder. This work matters. We have to keep doing it. Right now, hanging in for the long term means stepping back for the short term, taking on less in order to be able to accomplish the things I am doing in the IWW.

"Gonna build it anyway."



NLRB Is No Friend In Portland

By Chris Agenda

During a two-month period I met with representatives from the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) on three different issues. All of the issues were related to grievances of workers who were represented by the IWW and employed by Janus Youth Programs in Portland, Oregon. The NLRB was not helpful in any of the situations.

The common line in each of these cases was that the NLRB had to defer to arbitration, since that was provided for in the contracts between the IWW and Janus. Once we charged the company with bargaining in bad faith, and despite a slew of evidence proving management's malfeasance, the NLRB still sat on their hands. The NLRB representatives were all friendly to our union, but as an institution they could not provide any support. One agent candidly explained that even if there were grounds to become involved in the dispute, "there's really nothing we can do."

We shouldn't be surprised at this turnout, but we should be paying better attention. The NLRB is a monolithic government agency that is detached from working people. To expect them to help is irrational. We shouldn't rely on the NLRB's help in resolving our disputes, at least not in most cases.

A government agency could intervene and possibly provide workers with a good resolution in a dispute, but this is problematic as the workers should be creating the resolution themselves. Rely-

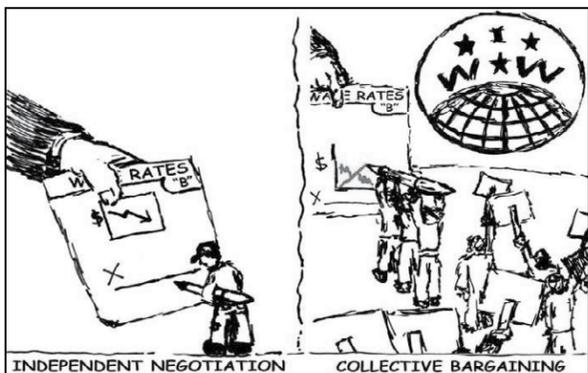
ing on the government to resolve labor disputes extends the apparatus of the state and negates the concept of workers demanding things on their own. The workers do not receive any new skills or tools, they just get a handout from the government until the next time a problem arises, and the cycle continues.

This brings us to the issue we need to discuss throughout our union as we continue to grow—that is the IWW's growing reliance on contracts. Historically in the IWW,

representation at a workplace has not always equated with having a contract. We often wind up with contracts that are mediocre at best. Grievance procedures are often a joke, and additions such as "management rights" clauses add insult to injury.

Contracts rarely omit the "no strike, no lockout" clause, which cuts off one of our few effective weapons in disputes. The history of this union has always been one of militant action, not pleading for help from an ineffective government institution. We should take the next logical step and question what place, if any, contracts ought to have in the IWW.

My introduction to the IWW was through a workplace that had an outdated contract which we renegotiated over the course of eight months. There were some good things that came out of the contract as well as some bad. I had no historical perspective, however, until the last year, when I began to read more

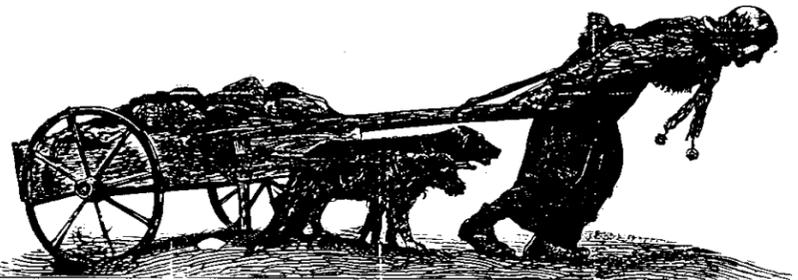


Graphic: Ted Morée

WOMEN WORKERS' HISTORY

Chapter 25 The Long Depression

In September 1873, the banking house of Jay Cooke and Company closed its doors, setting off a chain reaction of bank failures that brought about the longest and most severe depression the nation had yet experienced. Not until mid-1878 would the economy revive. In the meantime, one out of every five workers was unemployed; those with jobs worked part-time, or faced pay cuts. There was widespread hunger and misery; employers took advantage of workers' fear for their jobs to smash unions.



Working women were hard-hit. Maids were dismissed, sales clerks let go "factory girls" faced pay cuts; sewing women were destitute. These garment workers, working at home, saw sewing machines repossessed; unable to pay the rent, they were evicted. According to one historian, it was no exaggeration to say that working women in New York faced a choice between starvation and prostitution. "There never was a period at which working women were in more need of help than now," the *New York Times* said on December 1873.



Twenty thousand unemployed men and women marched in Chicago on Dec. 22, 1873 to demand "bread for the needy, clothing for the naked, and houses for the homeless." On Jan. 13, 1874, thousands of unemployed workers demonstrated on New York's Tompkins Square, unaware that the authorities had revoked their permit only hours before. Mounted police savagely charged into the crowd, clubbing women, children and men, in what one worker described as "an orgy of brutality."

Graphic: Mike Konopacki

of our history and realized that, again, our history is one of struggle and direct action, not contracts.

My experience in Portland so far has been educational and inspiring, but I believe we are approaching an important crossroads. We are in the midst of an economic recession and have a great need for a strong, militant vehicle for the working class. If we are going to continue to grow from the local branch level to the international level, we have to be able to provide something that truly stands out from the business unions.

We have the theory and ideas to distinguish ourselves, but I think we are following their models in certain aspects of our actions. As IWW history has taught us, direct action and solidarity are the best weapons of the working class. These are what will build the One Big Union, not ineffectual contracts.

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Michigan Autoworkers Rally Against Shutdowns, Layoffs

By Dianne Feeley, UAW Local 235

There were four “Manufacture American” rallies on Monday, May 11, in Dearborn, Hamtramck, Sterling Heights and Pontiac, Michigan. The United Steelworkers union (USW) organized a bus tour to visit more than 30 cities, in order to drive home the point that manufacturing and the U.S. auto industry are vital to keeping America alive, and to speak out against current U.S. trade policies. I attended the Hamtramck and Sterling Heights rallies. Steelworkers President Leo Gerard said that we are not against workers in countries where U.S. corporations have set up plants, but instead we oppose the corporations that have chosen to whipsaw workers in one country against another while destroying the U.S. manufacturing base.

I think there are some problems with the campaign as it is formulated, but I respect the fact that the USW workers are trying to differentiate themselves and their campaign from the chauvinistic “Buy American” slogan. Clearly many of the politicians don’t understand the difference. I also think that if the Steelworkers raised ideas like heavily taxing capital when companies make foreign investments, this would reinforce their point that they are focusing on the corporations. However, the USW workers are involved in an alliance with some manufacturers, and this makes it difficult to drive their rhetoric home.

As for the rallies, there were approximately 300-400 people who attended the Hamtramck rally, including a number of workers and retirees from the Alliance for American Manufacturing (AAM). Other attendees included USW workers, longtime labor activists and a number of United Auto Workers (UAW) regional and local staff.

From what I understand, the Hamtramck rally was nearly as large as the earlier one in Dearborn. The Ham-



Photo: Gerard Jackson, USW

Autoworkers rally on their first day of the Bus Tour in St. Louis on May 11, 2009.

tramck rally featured speakers such as Leo Gerard, Jessie Jackson, Danny Glover, John Conyers and Virg Bernero, the feisty mayor of Lansing who is attempting to get other mayors to work together and oppose plant closings. They gave militant speeches about the need for single-payer health care and the necessity for a strong manufacturing base and decent jobs. Speakers such as state Senators Debby Stabenow and Sander Levin gave less militant, but still populist, talks. For example, Stabenow talked about “universal health care” and when some in the crowd (like me) shouted out “single payer health care” she stopped and added, “and maybe single payer.” Levin interestingly began his speech by

mentioning that as a young man he’d worked at Dodge Main.

There was no call to action, but the fact that the USW workers were holding rallies in areas threatened with plant closures was an important initiative. In fact, the UAW was forced to support the rallies, organizing a retiree bus and turning out staffers. Region 1 Director Joe Peters was on the platform in both Hamtramck and Sterling Heights, and I understand that UAW Vice President Bob King was in the crowd at all three rallies. It was great to see rank-and-file autoworkers and steelworkers uniting at these events!

The Sterling Heights rally had approximately 600 participants. I’d

estimate that two-thirds of those in attendance were from Chrysler’s Sterling Heights Assembly Plant, or were their family members. UAW Local 1700 members are on layoff and the plant is slated to shut down next year. The local leadership had mobilized the membership through text messages and email.

The platform featured politicians who delivered more conservative speeches than in Hamtramck. For example, Senator Levin talked about how we ought to be able to build all the vehicles needed for war, where as I thought I’d remembered an anti-war comment by one of the speakers in Hamtramck.

The USW representative who organized the rallies was standing next to me, and groaned while Levin was giving his jingoistic and militarist rap.

The last speaker at the Sterling Heights rally was UAW Local 1700 President Bill Parker, who spoke about the need to reverse the decision to close the Sterling Heights Auto Plant, and discussed what that would mean for the workers at the plant and for working-class communities. He pointed out that of the four Chrysler assembly plants slated to close, all had a “mirror” plant making similar products in another country. He said that we should not begrudge workers in Canada and Mexico for taking our work, but instead aim our criticism at Chrysler’s decision.

A number of us from the autoworker caravan made our own signs, focusing on such issues as jobs and single-payer health care. Certainly no one in the caravan demanded we carry only “official” signs.

After these rallies, a number of the union workers and officials held various meetings and rallies throughout the Detroit area.

For more information, please visit <http://www.autoworkercaravan.org> or <http://www.peoplesummit.org>.

Are Mexican Workers ‘Stealing Our Jobs’?

The crisis in the Mexican auto sector of new GM plants in Mexico

By the Maquila Solidarity Network

When the last truck rolled off the assembly line at the General Motors (GM) plant in Oshawa, Ontario, on May 14, some workers arrived at the “closure ceremony” wearing sombreros to protest the loss of 1,500 jobs.

Canadian jobs and the announcement of the opening

“It’s not right. They just put the plants in places where people are willing to work for slave wages,” one worker was quoted as saying in the *Globe and Mail*.

Clearly, Canadian autoworkers are being unfairly victimized by an economic crisis that they had no role in creating, but the perception that Mexican workers are gaining because of the crisis would appear to be mistaken. The devastation of the North American auto industry is also being felt in Mexico, a country heavily dependent on exports to the United States, and where the auto sector employs some 600,000 workers.

Mexican job losses

While Mexico’s share of the total North American auto production rose between 3-4 percent in 2008, exports from Mexico’s auto sector actually dropped by almost 57 percent between January 2008 and January 2009. This has meant dramatic job losses in many communities in states that are highly dependent on the auto sector, such as Puebla, Coahuila and the State of Mexico.

Temporary closures or production slowdowns—called *paros técnicos*—have

become the norm. For example, GM’s Guanajuato plant recently began an eight-week *paro técnico* which will affect some 10,000 workers. *Paros técnicos* are also underway at GM’s three other Mexico plants, affecting over 6,600 workers. The crisis is, of course, not restricted to production for the big three U.S. auto makers.

In January, Volkswagen laid off 900 temporary workers at its Puebla production facility, a factory with a strong independent union.

Mexican auto parts companies that supply the large manufacturers are also feeling the impact of the crisis. For example, last month Delphi, one of GM’s main parts providers, announced the closure of its Matamoros factory, leaving 1,700 workers unemployed.

And, like their North American counterparts, Mexican workers are being pushed to give up hard-won gains.

Impact on workers’ rights

According to Blanca Velazquez of the Worker Support Centre (CAT) in Puebla, employers in the auto sector and the state and federal governments are using the uncertainty caused by the economic crisis to undermine Mexican workers’ rights.

“Companies and governments are using the threat of job loss to legalize so-called flexible employment in order to weaken job security and labor protections,” says Velazquez. She points to proposed regressive changes in the Federal Labor Law as well as recent reforms to the Social Security Law.



Graphic: Maquila Solidarity Update

She also notes that the terms and conditions of *paros técnicos* being negotiated by unelected leaders of “official unions” linked to the Puebla State Government are undercutting workers’ legal entitlements, and in some cases are being used to undermine worker organizing.

For example, at the Johnson Controls Finsa plant in Puebla, where the CAT has been supporting a coalition of workers, the company has been disproportionately targeting members of the coalition in layoffs and then replacing

them with temporary, casual workers contracted through an employment agency.

While announcements of new investments in auto production facilities in Mexico could offset some of the job losses, it is not yet clear whether there will be an overall employment gain for Mexican autoworkers, or whether Mexican workers will continue to be discarded by the industry as readily as their Canadian counterparts.

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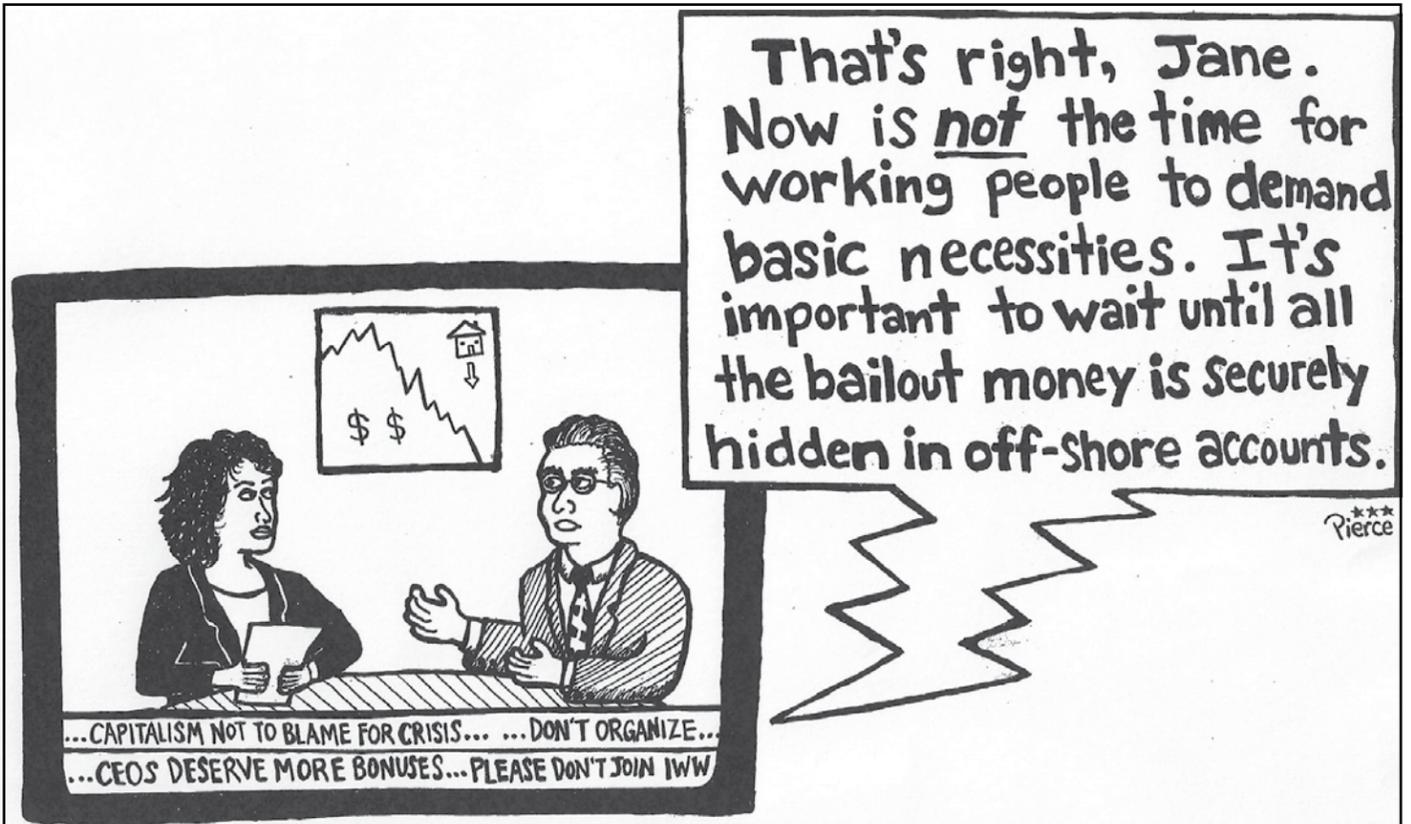
Recession: Time to Organize

By Mykke Holcomb & Adam Welch

We started this year in the middle of the hardest economic times we have seen in decades. The real estate bubble popped, followed by the dissolution of longstanding financial institutions, the subsequent doling out of taxpayer money to bail them out and the gouging of a weakened U.S. workforce. Tens of thousands of workers are now jobless, and thousands more are lining up behind them every week. All industries are feeling the pinch with this crisis.

In our precarious workforce, we now find ourselves on even shakier ground than before. With no net to fall back on, many are laying low to hold onto what they've got. Many workers who've been laid off have justified their bosses' cutting them loose, naively assuming that their employers simply couldn't afford to keep paying them. Most truckers know better. We know better than most how much money we generate for our bosses and the corporations and how little we see of it. For example, as Citigroup sacked 30,000 of its workers, it would come as no surprise to us that, just the year before, its CEO raked in \$15,105,376. As Sotheby's so desperately sought to save \$7 million to stay afloat by cutting a quarter of its U.S. workforce, we might have guessed that its CEO pocketed \$10,341,357 in that same year. And, of course, we're not shocked to find that Richard K. McClelland, director and chairman of the board of courier industry giant Dynamex, took home \$1,222,513. Dynamex workers in New York City, many of whom are recent immigrants, are among the lowest paid in the industry.

There is no good reason these layoffs should be occurring. There is no good reason we should catch the brunt of a recession we did not create. We created the profits the bosses and companies are protecting when they fire us. Or when they cut our pay and benefits. Or when they give us less work. And then,



Graphic: J. Pierce

of course, we're expected to understand. The figures above should suffice to explain why our hardship usually is not necessary. But, nonetheless, you may wonder what we can do about it. Working people have an inspiring history of struggles and victories, even in times of recession. In fact, in these tougher times it is all the more vital for us to be organized. To accept defeat now will only hurt us more later. In this historic time, we may find history has valuable lessons for us.

Our current recession has been compared to the onset of the Great Depression that began in the late 1920s. The Great Depression was a time of increased union activity and worker militance.

When unemployment soared, rather than hunkering down and hoping for the best, workers stood their ground and fought back.

During this time, teamsters in Minneapolis had organized an industrial union of truckers where there had been almost no union presence before. What union did exist was very small, divided by craft and hindered by a dead-weight bureaucracy. This situation allowed the power to stay in the hands of the employers, and the prospect of making gains didn't look good. But the rank and file organized and fought for representation of all workers in the industry.

In 1934, when the bosses refused to recognize the union, they went on strike, and many of the Minneapolis' workers followed.

For weeks the city was at a

standstill, and what did function was at the strikers' call. They allied with farmers, the unemployed and the local public to strengthen support and so that the bosses couldn't break the strike with scab labor. Decisions were made democratically, putting the rank and file in control of their own fight.

After a pitched battle that lasted weeks, the truckers won. The victory was a turning point, not only for the truckers, but for the city's workers in general. From then on, labor had a strong voice, where before it had nearly none.

Around the same time in Detroit, IWW autoworkers at the Hudson Motor Car Company were successfully using the sit-down strike to push their wages up.

According to the IWW website: "Sit down and watch your pay go up" was the message that rolled down the assembly line on strikers that had been fastened to pieces of work. The steady practice of the sitdown raised wages 100% (from \$.75 an hour to \$1.50) in the middle of a depression."

Today—as the economy recesses and bosses respond by threatening wages and jobs—many are taking the hint and standing their ground. The airline industry has been especially hit throughout the world recently, with more and more job actions fighting layoffs and other grievances. IWW truckers are fighting back. Even Starbucks baristas are making gains!

Just last December, UE workers at the Republic Windows and Doors factory in Chicago stood up and made history. The owners of the factory had been secretly moving operations out of state, where they could employ cheaper, non-union workers. The factory's 260 workers were given three days' notice that it was closing. And the company's primary lender, Bank of America, had just gotten

\$25 billion in bailout money, but refused to lend any longer, thus denying the workers what they were legally owed. Not only would they be out of a job right before Christmas, but they would not get the vacation pay they had earned, and would not receive the severance they were due.

So the workers stood together and sat down in the first factory occupation in the U.S. since the 1930s. They demanded their vacation pay and their severance, and that the bank fork over the money they owed. "You got bailed out, we got sold out" was the cry of the strikers as they took on a behemoth, and it resonated far and wide. Support poured in from all over the world. It electrified labor and inspired millions. Even the mainstream press could not ignore it, and politicians lined up for their photos and speeches of support. After only six days, they won their demands.

Many workers are in a much stronger position to win than many of us think. We know that without us the economy would not function. Goods would not be moved, students would not be educated, food would not be served. And we've seen how when folks in other industries got together and flexed their collective muscles, even in times of cutbacks and job scarcity, they've gotten results. Even our bosses, who compete with one another, are organized to protect their interests. Why aren't we?

If we don't do something now, it may soon be too late. Stand up for yourself and your fellow workers everywhere. Now is the time to organize. And now is the time that we need a democratic fighting union movement. Isn't it time you joined the One Big Union?

With files from iww.org, the AFL-CIO and Subterranean Fire by Sharon Smith.



Graphic: radicalgraphics.org

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JOIN THE ONE BIG COURIER UNION

The Cure for Layoffs: Fire the Boss!

By Naomi Klein & Avi Lewis,
CommonDreams.org

In 2004, we made a documentary called "The Take," about Argentina's movement of worker-run businesses. In the wake of the country's dramatic economic collapse in 2001, thousands of workers walked into their shuttered factories and put them back into production as worker cooperatives. Abandoned by bosses and politicians, they regained unpaid wages and severance while reclaiming their jobs in the process.

As we toured Europe and North America with the film, every Q&A ended up with the question, "That's all very well in Argentina, but could that ever happen here?"

Well, with the world economy now looking remarkably like Argentina's in 2001 (and for many of the same reasons) there is a new wave of direct action among workers in rich countries. Co-ops are once again emerging as a practical alternative to more layoffs. Workers in the U.S. and Europe are beginning to ask the same questions as their Latin American counterparts: Why do we have to get fired? Why can't we fire the boss? Why is the bank allowed to drive our company under while getting billions of dollars of our money?

On May 15 at Cooper Union in New York City, we took part in a panel looking at this phenomenon called "Fire the Boss: The Worker Control Solution from Buenos Aires to Chicago."

We were joined by people from the movement in Argentina as well as workers from the famous Republic Window and Doors struggle in Chicago.

It was a great way to hear directly from those who are trying to rebuild the economy from the ground up, and who need meaningful support from the public, as well as policy makers at all levels of government. For those who could not make it out to Cooper Union, here's a quick roundup of recent developments in the world of worker control.

Argentina

In Argentina—the direct inspiration for many current worker actions—there have been more takeovers in the last four

months than the previous four years.

For example, Arrufat, a chocolate maker with a 50-year history, was abruptly closed late last year. Thirty employees occupied the plant, and despite a huge utility debt left by the former owners, have been producing chocolates by the light of day, using generators.

With a loan of less than \$5,000 from the Working World, a capital fund/NGO started by a fan of "The Take," they were able to produce 17,000 Easter eggs for their biggest weekend of the year. They made a profit of \$75,000, taking home \$1,000 each and saving the rest for future production.

United Kingdom

Visteon is an auto parts manufacturer that was spun off from Ford in 2000. Hundreds of workers were given six minutes' notice that their workplaces were closing. Two-hundred workers in Belfast staged a sit-in on the roof of their factory, and another 200 in Enfield followed suit the next day.

Over the next few weeks, Visteon increased the severance package to up to 10 times their initial offer, but the company is refusing to put the money in the workers' bank accounts until they leave the plants, and they are refusing to leave until they see the money.

Ireland

A factory where workers make the legendary Waterford Crystal was occupied for seven weeks earlier this year when parent company Waterford Wedgwood went into receivership after being taken over by a U.S. private equity firm.

The U.S. company has now put 10 million Euros in a severance fund, and negotiations are ongoing to keep some of the jobs.

Canada

As the Big Three automakers collapse, there have been four occupations by Canadian Auto Workers so far this year. In each case, factories were closing and workers were not getting compensation that was owed to them. They occupied the factories to stop the machines

from being removed, using that as leverage to force the companies back to the table—precisely the same dynamic that worker takeovers in Argentina have followed.

France

In France, there has been a new wave of "bossnappings" this year, in which angry employees have detained their bosses in factories that are facing closure. Companies targeted so far include Caterpillar, 3M, Sony and Hewlett Packard.

The 3M executive was brought a meal of *moules et frites* during his overnight ordeal.

A comedy hit in France this spring was a movie called "Louise-Michel," in which a group of women workers hires a hit-man to kill their boss after he shuts down their factory with no warning.

A French union official said in March, "Those who sow misery reap fury. The violence is done by those who cut jobs, not by those who try to defend them."

Belgium

In May, 1,000 steelworkers disrupted the annual shareholders meeting of ArcelorMittal, the world's largest steel company. They stormed the company's headquarters in Luxembourg, smashing gates, breaking windows and fighting with police.

Poland

In Southern Poland, at the largest coal coking producer in Europe, thousands of workers bricked up the entrance to the company's headquarters, protesting wage cuts.

United States

And then there's the famous Re-

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Graphic: naomiklein.org

public Windows and Doors story: 260 workers occupied their plant for six world-shaking days in Chicago last December. With a savvy campaign against the company's biggest creditor, Bank of America, and massive international solidarity, they won the severance they were owed. And moreover, the plant is re-opening under new ownership, making energy-efficient windows with all the workers hired back at their old wages.

Chicago is making factory occupation a trend. Hartmarx is a 122-year-old company that makes business suits, including the navy blue number that President Barack Obama wore on election night, and his inaugural tuxedo and topcoat. The business is in bankruptcy. Its biggest creditor is Wells Fargo, recipient of \$25 billion in bailout money. While there are two offers on the table to buy the company and keep it operating, Wells Fargo wants to liquidate it. 650 workers voted to occupy their Chicago factory if the bank goes ahead with liquidation.

California CWA Locals Preparing to Strike

won through struggles that go back to the 1940s. Muffy Sunde, a Local 9000 CWA member and Los Angeles Freedom Socialist Party organizer said "A victory for labor in this battle could change the power relations between unions and management across the country."

AT&T, the largest unionized company in the private-sector, wants to dump its retiree healthcare obligations, triple healthcare costs for current employees, implement a two-tier wage scheme, deprive new hires of pension benefits and more.

That is why 88 percent of CWA voting members have authorized a strike. The union website boldly announces "Strike Standby" and a nationwide work-to-rule campaign is in full swing. This means workers carefully obey safety rules and make sure that every equip-

Continued from 1
ment inspection fully complies with company protocol.

"Work to rule is fun. Customers love it because we are thorough, respectful, and take time to do it right," said Sunde.

The company's bogus claim to hard times has contributed to CWA members' intransigence. AT&T cleared a cool \$12.9 billion in profit last year alone, and gave CEO Randall Stephenson a 22 percent salary increase.

Withdrawing labor power is the strongest weapon that working people have. It looks like CWA workers are getting ready for just that.

For more information, visit <http://www.socialism.com>.

This story originally appeared in *Freedom Socialist newspaper*, Vol. 30, No. 3, June-July 2009.

WELLS FARGO
YOU GOT BAILED OUT,
WE GOT SOLD OUT!

AMERICA UNITED ELECTRICAL, RADIO AND MACHINE WORKERS OF AMERICA
UE
union.org

Graphic: flickr.com/photos/ueunion

UE Workers in Chicago Facing Another Plant Closure

Now they are breaking their promise to the American taxpayer—they are refusing to extend credit to QC Die Casting, a 60-year-old family-owned business. Wells Fargo has so far refused to speak to the workers about the situation.

Friday, June 5, marked the six-month anniversary since the first day of our occupation at the Republic Window and Door Factory. The banks got bailouts while the country got sold out. When we occupied the Republic plant, many of us knew we were only taking

one step in a long road towards justice.

Continued from 1

We must keep walking. Building solidarity around QC Die Casting is the next step.

Call Wells Fargo CEO John Stumpf at 866-249-3302 or email John.G.Stumpf@wellsfargo.com. Ask to be transferred to the office of Mr. Stumpf, and tell him to save the jobs at Quad City. For the latest updates, please visit <http://www.ueunion.org/>.

With files from *UE Local 1110*.

Buy a prisoner subscription to the Industrial Worker.

Send a cheque for \$18 to IW Prisoner Subscription, c/o IWW, PO Box 23085, Cincinnati OH 45223 USA with a note on the cheque: 'prisoner subscription.'



Book Review

“Sisters in the Brotherhoods: Working Women Organizing for Equality”

LaTour, Jane. “Sisters in the Brotherhoods: Working Women Organizing for Equality in New York City.” *Palgrave MacMillan, 2008. 308 pages, paperback, \$25.*

By **Andy Piascik**

If we're lucky, the next upsurge of the working class will be led by women. If we're really lucky, some of those leading that upsurge will be the women in Jane LaTour's new book, “Sisters in the Brotherhoods: Working Women Organizing for Equality.” LaTour is an award-winning labor journalist who also has a long history as a rank-and-file union activist. That last is significant, for “Sisters” reads very much like it was written by someone who's spent a long time in the trenches.

“Sisters” is the story of two dozen or so women who were the first to work as firefighters, carpenters, pipefitters, telephone technicians, and other jobs in New York City. Most entered their respective fields in the 1970s and early 1980s—a time when two clashing forces met in workplaces throughout the country. On the one hand, there was the women's movement, which broke down doors to jobs that were historically seen as off-limits to women. On the other hand was a wall of male privilege and entrenched power that refused to willingly give the least bit of ground: unions, contractors, government bureaucracies and the occasional mafioso.

One result of the clash was hiring halls and job sites that were cesspools of hostility and obstruction. As the women in “Sisters” relate, women were taunted, threatened, and harassed in as many ways as one can imagine. Working in jobs where danger and the need for cooperation are great, some of the women were placed in life-threatening situations. Harassment anywhere is a serious issue; when it takes place amidst heavy machinery or high up on the skeleton of a skyscraper, it's as real as it gets.

In “Sisters,” electrician Brunilda Hernandez describes an incident with a drunk coworker who, from the time she was hired, did everything he could to make her life difficult. “[H]e threatened me,” Hernandez recalled. “All the guys circled us. He was cursing me: ‘You son-of-a-bitch. Who the hell you think you are? You don't belong here.’ I was so scared ... I was what? 19 maybe? I was skinny, five-foot-five, and I'm like, ‘Oh my God. I'm going to be killed.’ I was so scared.” Like the other women in “Sisters,” however, Hernandez persevered

and ultimately triumphed, and that is the real story of the book.

Day after day, year after year, they went to work, often without a female coworker in sight, and did their jobs. Their move up the ladder of their chosen fields was made more difficult and took longer because of those who resented their presence. Some were sent to the least desirable workplaces to do the worst jobs; others worked with men who refused to teach them the necessary skills of their trades. Despite that, virtually all eventually got to do work at a level that brought them a great deal of satisfaction. In addition, they made it possible for more women to follow them into those jobs.

None of the women in “Sisters” made it on their own, and every one of them connects their advancement to the solidarity of others. Given the eventual class bifurcation of the women's movement, the degree of support that professional women provided their blue-collar sisters in the 1970s is especially striking. Much has been written about the ultimate schism in the movement, but LaTour adds immensely to that discussion with a somewhat different take. For example, the fateful choice some made to emphasize the advancement of professional, mostly white women is neither the whole story nor was it inevitable. Instead, it has much to do with the decision of professional women's organizations to cultivate funding sources, often at the expense of cross-class alliances.

To be sure, the bulk of the work in these alliances was always done by the blue-collar women themselves. As related in “Sisters,” they built groups like Non-Traditional Employment for Women and organized at multiple levels for change. LaTour's view is a bottom-up one; the entrenched changed only unwillingly and only because of the tenacity of the women involved.

The women of color in “Sisters” were trailblazers in numerous jobs, and LaTour does an excellent job of explaining the additional obstacles they encountered. Women of color were especially creative in coping with these obstacles. Sometimes an aggressive response was the best tactic; on other occasions it proved more beneficial to wait and fight another day.

Relationships between women of color and white women in the coalitions were not always smooth either, and both LaTour and those she interviewed address this fact quite candidly.

Tensions inevitably arose, and they were not always worked out amicably.

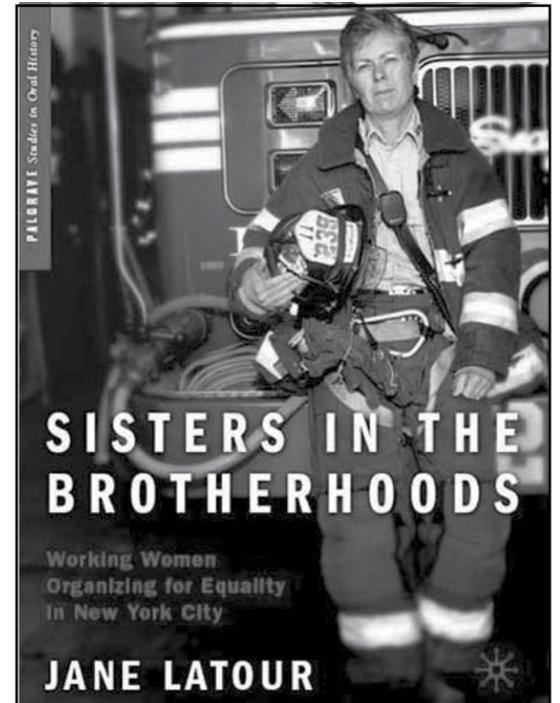
Still, the best testament that these were more frequently manageable disagreements than irreconcilable ones is provided by the reflections of those involved. Thirty years later, the women of color in “Sisters” look back quite fondly at the bonds of solidarity that were forged, and that is true for the bonds with whites, as well as those with other women of color.

On work sites, the women sometimes received support from male coworkers. Some were willing teachers and others stood up to the harassment other men were dishing out. In some of the stories, this was especially true in the case of African-American men, who also had to traverse many obstacles. At the conclusion of the incident related above, for example, Brunilda Hernandez recalled the words of a Jamaican male coworker. “He said, ‘Don't worry, Bruni. I had your back.’ He had pulled a knife and had it down by his leg. And he said, ‘If that son-of-a-bitch touched you, I was going to get him.’”

If the courage of the trailblazing women and the support they got from a broad spectrum is the most inspirational theme of LaTour's book, then perhaps the most shameful piece of the story is where they apparently got none: New York's unions. The deplorable conduct of so many from the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers and the other unions specifically discussed in “Sisters” speaks for itself, but their villainy is by no means the whole story.

Where, after all, were the left-led unions like District Council 65 that many in New York's labor movement so proudly pat themselves on the back about? Where were the leaders of female-majority unions like 1199? Were there no local presidents willing to pressure the obdurate in their fraternity, no officers willing to join a demonstration at a recalcitrant hiring hall? Reading between the lines of LaTour's book, the answers are clearly “No.” That is a disgrace, and it supports the view postulated by Bob Fitch and others that many unions, at least at the top, function as little more than fiefdoms where rule number one is never ever do anything about how the other guy runs his ship (and in the 1970s, they were most definitely all guys).

The stirring manner in which working class women and coalition-type organizations stepped into this breach evokes



Graphic: us.macmillan.com

what Elizabeth Faue and other historians have called “community-based unionism.” Union bureaucrats appear in “Sisters” as either hostile or negligent, their organizations as ossified perhaps beyond repair. The extra-union activity LaTour describes so compellingly, on the other hand, served the women in her book well, and workers in any number of circumstances would do well to heed it.

In addition to the important gender issues it raises, “Sisters” is rich with general issues of relevance to all workers. Here, for example, is how New York Telephone technician Ilene Winkler describes the zest with which she and coworkers tackled new assignments necessitated by technological change: “There was a lot of responsibility and autonomy,” Winkler recalled. “You got to figure out really interesting things and people were really into the job ... it was like you were running the place yourself and people were conscientious.” No bosses leading the way here, nor supervisors riding workers who don't want to work.

“Sisters in the Brotherhoods” is a gem of a book. With it, LaTour has given us important documentation of an inspiring piece of history that is too little known. Some of the women profiled in her book are still pushing forward, either in their fields or in vital movement organizations. Wherever they are, newer generations of activists can stand securely on their shoulders as we reach for higher ground.

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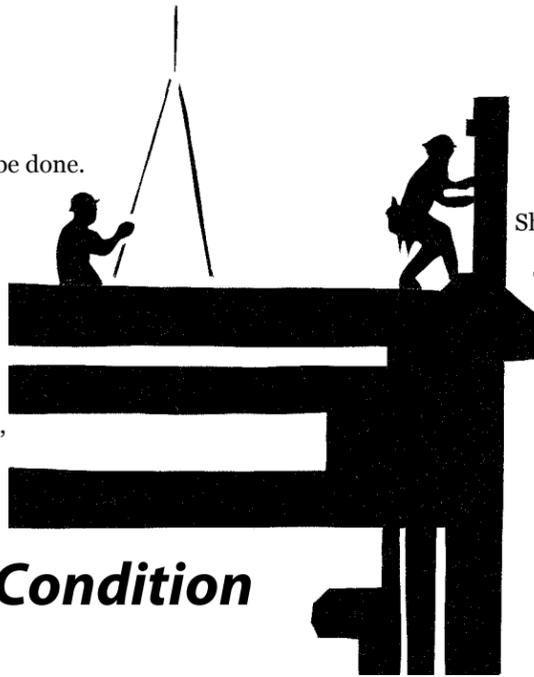
Art & Poetry The Wobbly Prayer

By Adam W.

Hail the spirit of Joe Hill, Lucy Parsons and Big Bill too,
Hallowed be the cause of labor.
The General Strike will come, the will of the workers will be done.

Across the earth as it is on our jobs.

Let us together make our daily bread.
And forgive us when our fellow workers let us down,
as they support us when we do likewise.
Save us from not knowing our A-E-I-U-Os,
and deliver us from being fired by the evil boss.
For our future society is being built in the ashes of the old,
We struggle for worker freedom the world over,
now and forever.
Amen!



Graphic: Ned Powell

Enhancing The Human Condition

By Ken Lawless

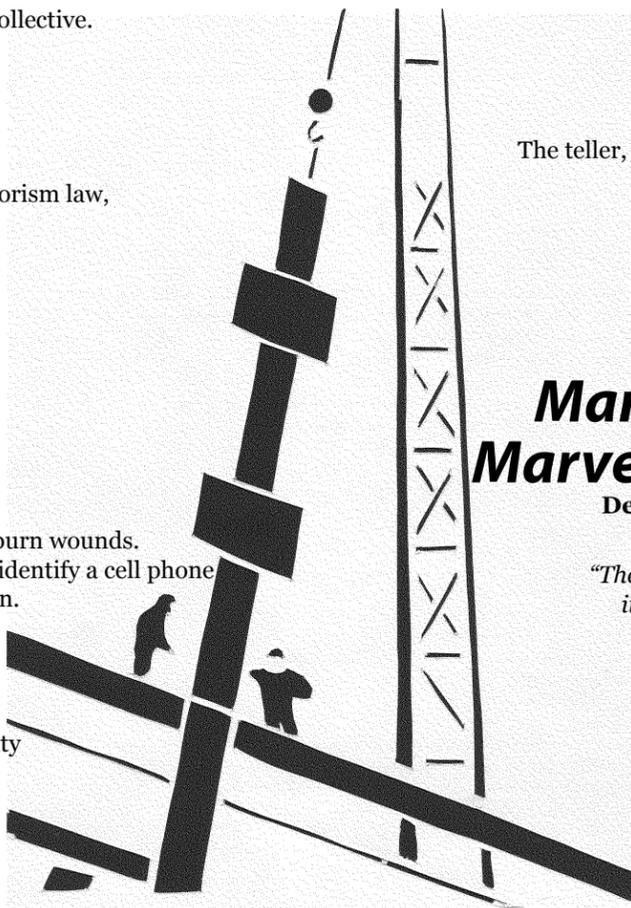
Rock-a-bye, rock-a-bye, rock-a-bye all the little babies,
sweet newborn mammals,
mother's milk is their nutrition,
world peace would enhance their condition.

Marie Mason is a 46-year-old mother of two,
a poet, a musician, and a volunteer at a free herbal healthcare collective.
She helped set fire to the office of a Michigan State researcher
funded by Monsanto and USAID,
genetic engineering capable of altering life for eternity.
Marie Mason was sentenced to 21 years ten months
though the average federal sentence for arson is seven years.
Judge Paul L. Mahoney sentenced her under an Enhanced Terrorism law,
a new concept in this climate of fears.

The Red Scare is turning neon green
while greenback dollars keep track of the score.
What sentence is appropriate for those whose attack
on the Afghan village of Garani killed up to 140 civilians,
severely wounding up to two dozen more?

American F-18s, a B1 bomber, and drones
destroyed a dozen homes in mud-walled compounds.
"The Taliban had already left," said 13-year-old Naeem,
whose mother was killed and three sisters also suffered severe burn wounds.
Mohedin, a 55-year-old farmer, asked why Americans who can identify a cell phone
from afar couldn't distinguish women and children from Taliban.
Provincial Council member Belquis Roshan said she believed
only the Taliban benefited because the people of Farah City
saw their lives being destroyed.
Most reports say white phosphorus weapons were deployed.
If true, the banned weapons are a war crime as well as an atrocity
apt to inspire Taliban reciprocity.
As the cycle of violence whirls beyond comprehension,
peace is a dream only visionaries dare mention.

Rock-a-bye, rock-a-bye, rock-a-bye all the little babies,
sweet newborn mammals,
mother's milk is their nutrition,
world peace would enhance their condition.



Graphic: Ned Powell

Picket The Mechanized

By Mark Wolff

Workers standing in line, waiting for the rest of a wage held
Redundancy, layoff, they've walked the picket line
from the day management locked the door,
Locked the door to conceal the machines that automated tasks.
Shopping others wait in queue, at the grocery to check out items to
swipe the barcode,
They get out of their cars to pump the gas, insert the plastic card.
Getting on the transport the employed listen to a special voice
Announcing each stop, in sequence, at each corner,
to the workplace time clock.
That special voice that answers the emergency calls
and asks that humans respond "yes" or "no,"
Directs them and tells them how to ask for help, where to go.
There in emergency, they sit down and wait in the
mechanical chair that clamps one's arm to measure
blood pressure,
Takes the pulse of the worker.
That special voice that will guide the machine,
will signal the heartbeat, and count the breath.
The computer voice that will tell how to purchase
the ticket to the number on the special seat, or
hospital bed
Code the name tag on the luggage, code the body on the toenail,
to be picked up where, standing in
line, one's things await,
Await in storage, on file.
Workers on file the
nurse, the baggage carrier,
the bus driver, the worker at the gas pump,
the grocery clerk, the phone
operator;
The teller, the food server, the library clerk, the grave digger,
the farm laborers, the miners.
And workers standing in line Waiting
for the remainder of their wage held by the state.
And workers walking the picket
To stop financing the machines,
to shutdown them down, to restore the jobs.

Marvelous was the man. Marvelous was in the man.

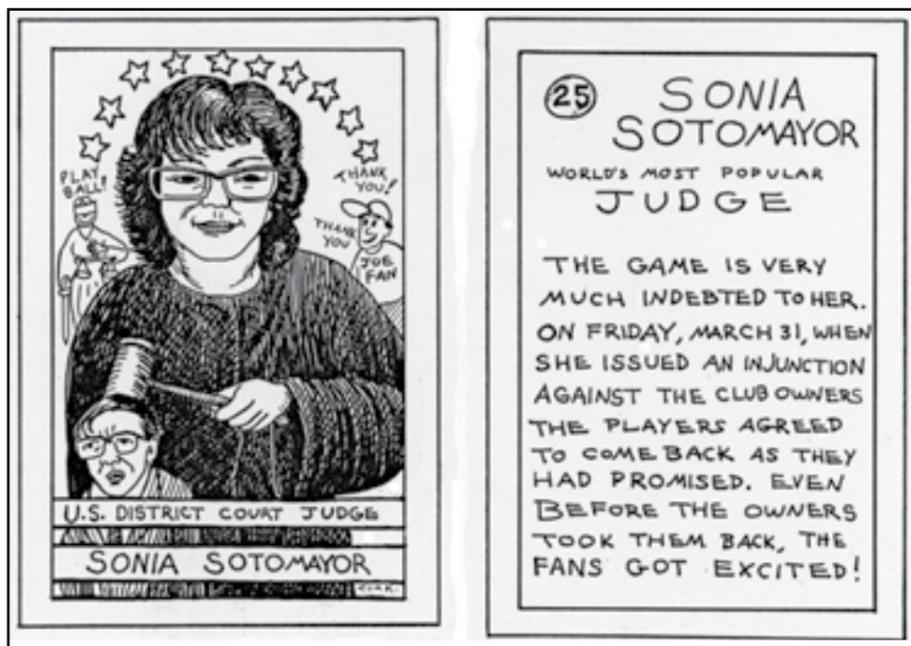
Dedicated to Franklin Rosemont (1943-2009)

By Len Wallace

*"The power of Spirit is only as great as its expression,
its depth only as deep as it dares to spread out and
lose itself in its exposition."*
- G.F. Hegel, preface to "Phenomenology of Spirit"

My Accordion is a receptacle,
NOT a spittoon for the army of dead potatoes
who call themselves RICH men.
There is power, there is power
in a band of working folk!
There IS power!
I called him friend/comrade
and LIFE words from his fingertips
flew to my lips -
Mad Love!

Joe Hill!
Thelonious Monk!
Abolish whiteness, miserabilism!
Fourier!
He wove the thread
of the Marvelous,
red thread through red
and black and red.
New Bastilles WILL fall,
Pandora will sing as she
unbinds Prometheus,
And we will dance with
the wolves in the streets.
Government palaces
will be museums
of the absurd.
No more governments.
No more death machines.
No more Second Comings.
No more vanguards.
No more!
No more!
No more!
All because this Bugs Bunny
dared to pull the old mole
out of his hat.

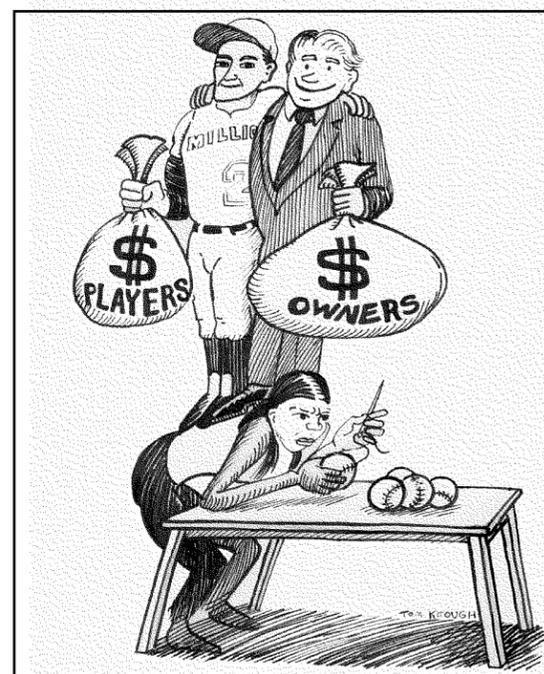


Graphic: Tom Keough

Baseball Card graphics

Tom Keough designed the top and right graphics during the baseball players strike of 1995. Top left is Supreme Court nominee Sonia Sotomayor, who ended the baseball strike of 1995, briskly ruling against the owners in favor of the players." According to the *New York Times*, the owners were trying to subvert the labor system, she said, and the strike had "placed the entire concept of collective bargaining on trial."

After play resumed, the *Philadelphia Inquirer* wrote that by saving the season, Judge Sotomayor joined forever the ranks of Joe DiMaggio, Willie Mays, Jackie Robinson and Ted Williams. The *Chicago Sun-Times* said she "delivered a wickedfastball" to baseball owners and emerged as one of the most inspiring figures in the history of the sport."



Baseball: a multi-billion dollar industry !
The game can't be played without the hand-stitched ball.
Why are the balls made only in third world sweatshops?

Graphic: Tom Keough



OFFERINGS FROM THE
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Studs Terkel's Working: A Graphic Adaptation

BY HARVEY PEKAR (AUTHOR)
 PAUL BUHLE (EDITOR)

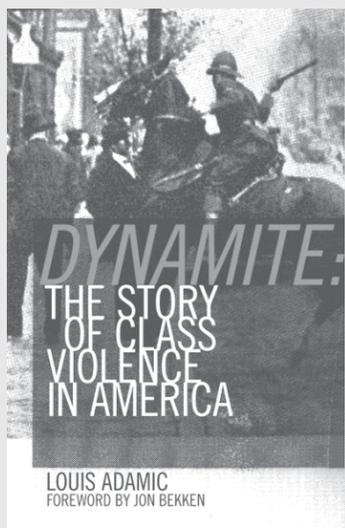
"Working has been a book, a radio drama, a Broadway musical, and now a gripping graphic novel. I can't speak for Studs, but I suspect he would have been tickled to see it adapted by a former government file clerk and wage slave, who knows all about working." —Roger Ebert

In the thirty-five years since Pulitzer Prize-winner Studs Terkel's *Working* was first published, it has captivated millions of readers with lyrical and heartbreaking accounts of how their

fellow citizens earn a living. Widely regarded as a masterpiece of words, it is now adapted into comic book form by comics legend Harvey Pekar, the blue-collar anti-hero of his American Book Award-winning comics series *American Splendor*.

In Studs Terkel's *Working*, Pekar offers a brilliant visual adaptation of Terkel's verbatim interviews, collaborating with both established comics veterans and some of the comic underground's brightest new talent including Dylan Miner, Pablo Callejo, Peter Kuper, and Sharon Rudahl. Here are riveting accounts of the lives of ordinary Americans—farmers, miners, barbers, hookers, box boys, stockbrokers—depicted with unsurpassed dignity and frankness. A visual treat with a visceral impact, Studs Terkel's *Working* will delight Terkel fans everywhere, and introduce his most powerful work to a new generation.

208 pages, \$22.95



Dynamite: The Story of Class Violence In America

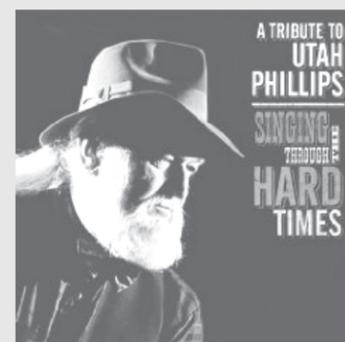
BY LOUIS ADAMIC
 WITH A FORWARD BY JON BEKKEN

The history of labor in the United States is a story of almost continuous violence. In *Dynamite*, Louis Adamic recounts one century of that history in vivid, carefully researched detail. Covering both well- and lesser-known events—from the riots of immigrant workers in the second quarter of the nineteenth century to the formation of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO)—he gives precise, and often brutal, meaning to the term "class war." This new edition of Adamic's revised 1934 version of *Dynamite*, includes a new foreword by Wobbly Jon Bekken, who offers a

critical overview of the work that underlines its contemporary relevance.

"A young immigrant with a vivid interest in labor—and the calluses to prove his knowledge was more than academic—Louis Adamic provided a unique, eyes-open-wide view of American labor history and indeed of American society. *Dynamite* was the first history of American labor ever written for a popular audience. While delineating the book's limitations, Jon Bekken's foreword also makes clear for today's readers its continuing significance." —Jeremy Brecher, historian and author of *Strike!*

380 pages, \$19.95

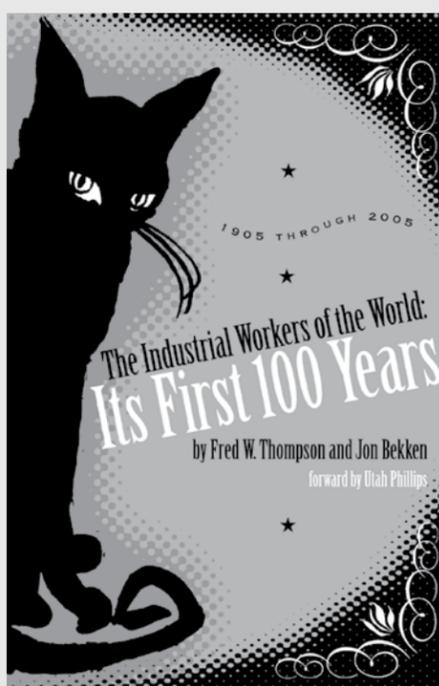


Singing Through the Hard Times: A Tribute to Utah Phillips

In his life, Utah Phillips was many things - soldier, hobo, activist, pacifist, union organizer, storyteller, songwriter. He was an oral historian who documented the events of the working class and turned them into stories and songs. And in the folk tradition, he passed them on to others. Righteous Babe Records continues that tradition with *Singing Through The Hard Times*, a 2CD set that celebrates the music that Utah sang and loved. Included are performances from Emmylou Harris and Mary Black, Pete Seeger, Tom Paxton, John McCutcheon, Rosalie Sorrels, Gordon Bok, Ani DiFranco, Magpie, Jean Ritchie and many others - folksingers whose music springs from the same rich vein of the people's history that Phillips chronicled throughout his life.

39 tracks on 2 CDs, \$15.98

dition with *Singing Through The Hard Times*, a 2CD set that celebrates the music that Utah sang and loved. Included are performances from Emmylou Harris and Mary Black, Pete Seeger, Tom Paxton, John McCutcheon, Rosalie Sorrels, Gordon Bok, Ani DiFranco, Magpie, Jean Ritchie and many others - folksingers whose music springs from the same rich vein of the people's history that Phillips chronicled throughout his life.



The Industrial Workers of the World: Its First 100 Years by Fred W. Thompson & Jon Bekken forward by Utah Phillips

The IWW: Its First 100 Years is the most comprehensive history of the union ever published. Written by two Wobblies who lived through many of the struggles they chronicle, it documents the famous struggles such as the Lawrence and Paterson strikes, the fight for decent conditions in the Pacific Northwest timber fields, the IWW's pioneering organizing among harvest hands in the 1910s and 1920s, and the war-time repression that sent thousands of IWW members to jail. But it is the only general history to give substantive attention to the IWW's successful organizing of African-American and immigrant dock workers on the Philadelphia waterfront, the international union of seamen the IWW built from 1913 through the 1930s, smaller job actions through which the IWW transformed working conditions, Wobbly successes organizing in manufacturing in the 1930s and 1940s, and the union's recent resurgence. Extensive source notes provide guidance to readers wishing to explore particular campaigns in more depth. There is no better history for the reader looking for an overview of the history of the IWW, and for an understanding of its ideas and tactics.

255 pages, \$19.95

Static Cling Decal



3.5" black and red IWW logo, suitable for car windows, \$2.50 each

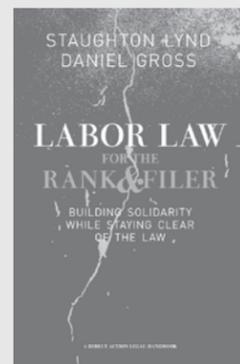


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Labor Law for the Rank and Filer: Building Solidarity While Staying Clear of the Law

BY STAUGHTON LYND AND DANIEL GROSS

Have you ever felt your blood boil at work but lacked the tools to fight back and win? Or have you acted together with your co-workers, made progress, but wondered what to do next? *Labor Law for the Rank and Filer* is a guerrilla legal handbook for workers in a precarious global economy. Blending cutting-edge legal strategies for winning justice at work with a theory of dramatic social change from below, Staughton Lynd and Daniel Gross deliver a practical guide for making work better while re-invigorating the labor movement.

This new revised and expanded edition includes new cases governing fundamental labor rights as well as an added section on Practicing Solidarity Unionism. This new section includes chapters discussing the hard-hitting tactic of working to rule; organizing under the principle that no one is illegal, and building grassroots solidarity across borders to challenge neoliberalism, among several other new topics. Illustrative stories of workers' struggles make the legal principles come alive.

110 pages, \$10.00

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Breaking Oaths, Breaking Barriers

By David Patrick

It's an occurrence all over the globe in one of the worst economic collapses in modern history. Temporary employment agencies operate not just in the United States, but all over the world, exploiting workers by offering grueling jobs in highly competitive markets for poor wages and no benefits. Some workers in these despairing times simply don't mind, for it's a paycheck to cover their daily living expenses—but what happens when even the agreements provided and guaranteed by law are broken? Unfortunately, a small group of people coming from one of the most repressed areas on the face of the Earth had to find out the hard way.

In 2008, the Israeli Antiquities Authority (IAA) contracted an employment agency known as Brick to hire workers in various archaeological sites. This had been done for quite some time, some employees having years of experience with Brick and the IAA, but in late 2008 that all changed faster than Donald Trump could say "You're fired." Twenty-one Palestinian workers who had been toiling for the IAA and Brick under the hot Middle Eastern sun were summoned by a Brick representative at the Ras al-Amud site. They were told that anyone having a total of nine months of experience working for Brick and the IAA were to be terminated immediately. No written forms of termination, no severance packages given to those with multiple years' experience, just a verbal notification and a demand to leave at once!

The workers joined up with the Workers' Advice Center (WAC) in East Jerusalem, where they secured employment. In working together, they have

been trying to overturn the collective termination, citing it as illegal under Article A12 of the Amendment to the Law on Manpower Companies of the Employment of Workers by Personnel Contractors Law, which indicates that anyone working through a temporary employment agency after nine months automatically becomes an effective full-time employee under the host company (the IAA). Thus, the Palestinian laborers would have been entitled to the numerous benefits which they have now been denied and robbed of. These benefits, which have become sacrosanct in white collar Western employment spheres, include sick and holiday pay, worker's compensation and severance packages for long-term members. The 21 laborers left Brick with nothing.

The WAC has been providing these workers with financial aid and legal support in their attempt to overturn the wrongful terminations. Several well-known artists in Israel, such as Kobi Oz, front man for the Israeli rock group The Teapacks, Boaz Burni, and Israeli folk singer Rona Kerne, staged a benefit concert earlier this year for the laborers in a display of ethnic unity between Israel and Palestine—a common sentiment between the citizens of both countries, which isn't always correctly displayed in the Western media outlets. This was especially true of Oz, who showed



Photo: Erez Wagner and Goni Riskin / WAC

solidarity with the Palestinian laborers despite the fact that Palestinian militants had consistently attacked his hometown of Sderot with rockets and mortars. Oz displayed the courage to stand up to the bigoted, stereotypical notions that have kept the two factions fighting for so long.

All of their legal struggles were not in vain, thankfully, as a final decision was expected on April 26 by Judge Daniel

Goldberg. Brick coincidentally has had quite a number of similar cases such as this.

One occurred in October 2008, when 15 Palestinian laborers approaching the Benchmark, or the period after which they would receive benefits were inexplicably terminated. Director-General of the IAA, Shuka Dorfmann, along with Minister of Industry, Labour, and Trade Binyamin Ben-Elizer, and Deputy Orit Noked did not respond to any questions sent to them regarding this matter, most likely due to the continuation of the proceedings. However, further investigation revealed a disturbing system within local levels of the Israeli government. Early in 2009, Tobias Buck of the *Financial Times* investigated a striking correlation—an increase in the demolition of Palestinian homes, and the refusal of permits being issued growing in number over the years. Nir Barkat is an Jewish Mayor of Jerusalem, although currently presiding over East Jerusalem. Internationally, Israeli sovereignty over

East Jerusalem is not recognized. Nearly 50 homes in the area have been demolished. In an interview with Buck, Barkat claimed that the homes were unsafe and built illegally without the correct building permits. Palestinian residents counter that the Israeli housing offices are not issuing the same number of building permits as they used to, forcing residents to construct homes illegally or be homeless.

Many people in the Palestinian community say this is an attempt by the Israeli government to drive them out of the West Bank and out of East Jerusalem. This is an allegation that the mayor flatly denies, although he has stated that one of his responsibilities was to "maintain a Jewish majority." Barkat also maintains a strong position of support for Jewish settlement expansion into the West Bank and East Jerusalem. Such settlements have drawn fire from human rights groups around the world for decades.

With this kind of temporary agency system placed all over the world, the fate of workers everywhere hangs in the balance. The success of the laborers could mean a continued fight to strengthen communities, despite the divisive attempts by corporations and the government. A judgment against them could reverberate throughout the globe, turning workers against each other as they fight for jobs. What can be said is that no matter what, the spirit of what has already been displayed here will not be broken and the fight will go on. The solidarity of workers, regardless of race, creed, class or ethnicity, will strengthen as they keep fighting and soldiering on for the right to build a better life.

Post-Fordism in Belfast, Northern Ireland

By Michael Reinsborough

The Ford motor company has had a parts factory on the Finaghy Road in West Belfast for years. In 1980, there were 1,400 employees working there. By the year 2000, that had been reduced to about 550 or 600. At least some of that decline in the labor force is attributable to machinery improvements creating greater efficiency, but also a planned rundown was begun. In 2000, Ford created a subcompany which was initially called Neuco then renamed Visteon, and treated it in some ways as if it was an independent company. Visteon never existed outside of Ford.

So if anyone was wondering when post-Fordism started in Belfast, the Ford motor company would claim it began in 2000. However, the Ford flag still flew over the Visteon factory until recently, when workers seized control of their factory after being told that Visteon had been put into administration for bankruptcy. They were given six minutes' notice that they were losing their job. So they simply stayed in the cafeteria, to which they'd been summoned, and wouldn't leave the building. When the accountants and management eventually left the premises, the workers didn't let them back in. Now there is a union flag flying over the plant. But for the workers at the Ford/Visteon plant the real issue is still with Ford.

In the last seven or eight years, Ford has deliberately run down its Visteon plant, encouraging workers to take full pensions, early retirement or a severance deal. From almost 600 workers in 2000, there were 210 people employed in Belfast at the time of the attempted plant closure on Financial Fools day (April 1, 2009). Now that Visteon has been put into administration, neither Ford nor Visteon will have to pay those pensions. According to legislation, the government (tax-payer money) is expected to fill the pension gap. Even so, some of the pensioners (4,000 total in the U.K.) would

have a pension reduction of 10 percent. Many of the workers are asking each other whether or not it was a deliberate Ford strategy since 2000 to offer full pensions because they knew they would never have to pay, and that pension costs would be off-loaded to the public taxpayer. During the Ford/Visteon name exchange, the union had negotiated a separation agreement that included a promise that the amount of work Ford gave to its new Visteon plants would be equal to or better—but the parts contracts always seemed to be less.

The most important negotiation during the name change was that by European Works Council, who got a guarantee of the same pension, pay raises, holidays and a mirror contract (the Ford book was orange and said "Ford" and the Visteon book was yellow, but otherwise merely a reprint). However, anyone with a company dumped into administration can escape all these commitments. Even though many workers that I met had been working in the Belfast plant for 30 or more years, statutory redundancy pay is capped. Because all the parts contracts that Visteon receives come from Ford, the Visteon company is really no more than an internal accounting unit that has been allowed to go bust. For Ford, the "credit crunch" may simply be a useful cover for an accounting and legal names hatchet job that was planned years before the bust.

Since 2000, the negotiation has been an ongoing process. The "520 Agreement" said that workers at one of Ford's Visteon plants had the right to work in another Ford plant as Ford employees. At one point when a Visteon plant in England was shedding jobs, many of the employees flowed to a nearby Ford plant and replaced outsourced workers with temporary contracts. The workers at Visteon plants in England have nearby Ford plants in which they are potentially eligible for work—for example, the Ford plant in Bridgend was 11 miles from the

Swansea Visteon plant. However, in Belfast, there is no such nearby plant. The 520 Agreement only applies if the workers go to a Ford plant, so, obviously, the Belfast workers in Finaghy feel this plant closure is ripping the heart out of their community, the majority of whom are from the greater Belfast area and a significant minority of whom are directly from the immediate Finaghy/West Belfast area.

This is perhaps why the focus of the campaign is not on redundancy pay, but rather on keeping the factory open. "I don't want a redundancy package," one worker told me. It was Belfast workers' refusal to leave that inspired similar direct action resistance at the two other closing Visteon plants in Basildon and Enfield (England). On April 8, a supporters' march with a couple hundred people started at a local shopping centre and walked out to the occupied plant. The Northern Ireland Parades Commission normally requires 28 days' notice before any kind of march can happen (because sectarian marches have resulted in violence). However, the police were down to the plant the day before to fast-track the permission process so that the march could go forward legally. Support for the Belfast workers' occupation has so far been very strong from all quarters.

Although the account books for Visteon in England put the company in administration, the Visteon plant in Port Elizabeth, South Africa, has been financially stable making the same car parts for Ford. One of the reasons for this is that Ford was purchasing the same car parts from the South African plant for \$12-14 more per part than they were from the Belfast plant. For example, plastic fuel rails are made in Belfast (or Port Elizabeth) and shipped to the Ford plant in Bridgend (Wales) where engines are assembled and shipped to Germany, where the Ford Fiesta is then put together.

Apparently, there is now a 12-week

waiting list for new Fiestas in Germany because of a government scheme by which anyone with a car more than nine years old who wants to trade up for a new car will be subsidized a couple of thousand Euros by the German government. The workers at the Belfast plant were quick to point out that there had recently been seven critical failures on parts from the Port Elizabeth plant, possibly because helium leak tests (one of the stages of production) were not done there. Such a spate of failures would normally cause a plant to lose its Q1 standard rating—a rating which is awarded internally by the Ford Company. Since I talked to the Belfast workers, a support agreement has been signed with other workers at some U.K. Ford plants. As far as I am aware, U.K. Ford plants include Dagenham, Southampton and Bridgend. The Hillrich plant was sold to Jaguar and is now making the new Tata. The Visteon plant in Swansea was given to Linamor, a Canadian firm with only two unionized plants (Swansea is one). The other three Visteon plants are, of course, the subject of this dispute. I believe the workers were meeting with the Bridgend Convenor (Wales). At that time they were hoping the agreement to include not handling parts from South Africa, but I haven't heard what was actually signed. Writers from Libcom.org are trying to confirm that workers from Southampton are blacking other Visteon parts.

While direct action seems to be ending in Enfield and Basildon, the plant is still occupied in Belfast, and the stated aim is to reopen the factory. People want their jobs back, and they want to close the hole in the heart of the community. One Belfast trade unionist, commenting on the ordinariness of where things begin, said, "Who'd have thought the revolution would begin in Finaghy... !?"

For the latest news and information on this struggle, visit <http://libcom.org/tags/visteon-occupation>.

World Labor Solidarity

A COLUMN BY THE
INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY COMMISSION

The IWW formed the International Solidarity Commission to help the union build the worker-to-worker solidarity that can lead to effective action against the bosses of the world. To contact the ISC, email solidarity@iww.org.

By John Kalwaic

Polish Anarchist Union ZSP Pickets Starbucks in Solidarity with IWW

On May 17 the anarcho-syndicalist union known as the Związek Syndykalistów Polski (ZSP)—or Union of Syndicalists—organized pickets to raise awareness of the union-busting tactics of Starbucks against the IWW. There were two pickets at Starbucks cafes in Poland—one in Warsaw and one in Wrocław, the two cities where Starbucks opened their first Polish cafes in April.

The ZSP chose to picket the stores on May 17, as it was the fifth anniversary of the founding of the IWW Starbucks Workers Union. The pickets were organized as solidarity campaigns, but also to raise awareness about working conditions in the café/restaurant industry and to encourage workers to organize.

The ZSP handed out information about what is going on along “Nowy Świat” (New World) Street in Warsaw, where Starbucks is located. According to the union, almost all of the well-known cafes along the street have closed down due to astronomical rents, leaving room only for corporate chains, ultra-exclusive places and money-laundering fronts. The last of the famous cafes on the street, Café Bajka—which has been there for 53 years—is being forced to close since their rent was raised to an astronomical 20,000 zloties per month, which is the equivalent of approximately \$6,000 U.S. dollars.

According to the ZSP, it is visible on the street that other cafes and small shops have closed and are being replaced by such corporate chains as Subway and Häagen-Dazs,

“The price of coffee in Starbucks is similar to that in the U.S., despite the fact that average wages in the U.S. are many times higher. This makes brands like these clearly brands for yuppies and tourists. Seeing what is going on with the rapid influx of corporate chain stores along New World Street, we renamed it ‘Brave New World Street.’

“We have also noticed that Starbucks in Poland has started an extensive green-washing campaign, which an average consumer might misunderstand and believe the prices are high because they are buying fair trade coffee. Only about 5 percent of Starbucks coffee is fair trade, but they are presenting themselves as the most ‘ethical’ coffee in town.”

The pickets were conducted primarily to bring attention to the plight of workers in the café/restaurant industry as well as to criticize Starbucks for pushing out the small independent cafes.

With files from ainfos.ca

Turkish Trade Unionists Arrested

Thirty-five teachers who are members of a public employees union in Turkey known as the Kamu Emekçileri Sendikaları Konfederasyonu (KESK) were detained due to fabricated “terrorism” charges. The government of Turkey is targeting them in a crackdown against

Kurdish activists. The government’s idea is to target members of the guerilla group known as Kurdistan Workers’ Party, or PKK, but instead they are targeting any Kurdish activists, including trade union activists. It is reported that 14 of the detainees have been released, but others remain in prison. Some detainees have allegedly been sexually harassed. International labor unions have called for the release of the detainees.

Strikes and Lockouts in South Korea

In the midst of a global economic downturn, car manufacturers and other major employers in South Korea have been laying off workers. This has led to stiff opposition from unions in the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions (KCTU). Labor federations have a long and militant history in South Korea.

Workers at the Ssangyong Motor Company, which is owned by China’s top automaker, Shanghai Automotive Industry Corporation, went on strike against layoffs at that company on May 21. Ssangyong locked the workers out after they claimed that the workers took part in an illegal sit-in and blocked managers from going to work.

Construction workers from the Korean Construction Workers Union also went on strike at the end of May in South Korea. The union claims that the government is increasingly using outside workers and contractors on construction projects, diminishing opportunities for union members. It also wants the government to provide guaranteed labor rights for so-called “special workers,” most of whom are self-employed.



KCTU members rally. Photo: libcom.org

Teachers Occupy Banks and Offices in Oaxaca, Mexico

Teachers in the southern Mexican province of Oaxaca are occupying offices and banks. They’re demanding pay raises and the resignation of the unpopular governor Utiel Ruiz. Oaxaca is now famous for the occupations and riots that took place in 2006, when the students, teachers and other workers were making many similar demands. In May, teachers protested the banks and effectively forced bank employees out and set up tents, shutting all bank branches in the city.

Indigenous People Massacred in Peru

The government of Peru ordered the Policía Nacional del Perú (PNP), or the national police, to attack the Amazonian indigenous peoples in early June. Civilians were shot from helicopters in the cities of Bagua Grande and Bagua Chica and in the Amazonas region. As of June 9, more than 84 people died.



Indigenous leading march in the Amazon. Photo: anarkismo.net

The attack began just a day after the Congress of Peru decided not to debate one of the most important decrees that allows the sale of indigenous land. Indigenous peoples in Peru went on strike in mid-April to protest against free trade policies that would allow multinationals to take over their territories.

Last year, Amazonian people led a nine-month rebellion. According to the Unión Socialista Libertaria, “the war drums are sounding again, calling the people to rebel in an indefinite popular general strike that has been spreading through the countryside and the Amazon regions since April 9, and that has, since May 14, gone on to become a call to insurgency for the people in struggle...”

“As libertarian communists who expect nothing from the State (other

than its destruction), we sympathize with the struggle of the native peoples as an immediate part of a larger project for the liberation of all exploited people, and thus part of a wider strategy or maximum program of social revolution.

“We thus ask our libertarian comrades to organize mobilizations and demonstrations outside Peruvian embassies in every country, in coordination with other sectors in struggle, in order to denounce the actions of the State and the multinationals in this country.”

For more information, please visit <http://www.uslperu.blogspot.com> and <http://latinamericansolidaritynetwork.org>.

With files from anarkismo.net, *Unión Socialista Libertaria* and the *Latin American Solidarity Network*.

IPSO Strike a Tremendous Success



ECB members marche through Frankfurt. Photo: IPSO

By International and European Public Services Organisation

On June 3, members of staff of the European Central Bank participated in a warning strike organized by IPSO (International and European Public Services Organization) in Frankfurt, Germany. The event began with a gathering in the park next to the Eurotower, followed by a march past other ECB buildings, and ended back in the park.

The staff members were greeted by the sounds of African drummers and presented with blue whistles to be used during the event. At approximately 4:00 p.m., IPSO President Adrian Petty welcomed the crowd with a short speech, and then introduced the guest speaker, Dr. Udo Bullmann, Member of the European Parliament.

Bullmann spoke in full support of the event, pointing out that the European Parliament relies on the work of the European Central Bank, and that the ECB could not exist if it were not for the hard work of its staff.

The crowd of several hundred staff members began its march along Kaiserstrasse and Neue Mainzer Strasse. It was led by the members of the IPSO Executive Board and Advisory Board carrying a banner with the single word “NEGOTIATION.”

Other banners carried the words “PARTICIPATION” and “TRANSPARENCY,” and marchers carried several

European flags and many blue IPSO umbrellas.

The protest march halted outside the Commerzbank building and the Eurotheum, where the noise attracted more staff from inside the buildings and encouraged them to join the protest. By the time the march had reached the Goetheplatz, nearly 400 staff members marched, gaining much attention and support from the public, who were provided with flyers with information on the reasons behind the action.

On arrival back at Willy Brandt Platz, there was a speech of support, this time from Harald Fiedler, Head of the DGB Region Frankfurt (Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund), who proclaimed that “next time ECB staff goes onto the street, they will have most of Frankfurt’s bankers marching with them.”

Following a short address by Emmanuel Larue, IPSO Vice President and Spokesperson of the Staff Committee, Adrian Petty once more roused the crowd by addressing the members of the Governing Council in attendance, and waved towards the top floors of the Eurotower. These and many other images were captured by the news media.

Following the action, the staff members dispersed; some to go home, many to return to their desks, where they were expected to work unpaid overtime to compensate for their participation in the event.

Support international solidarity!

Assessments for \$3, \$6 are available from your delegate or IWW headquarters PO Box 23085, Cincinnati, OH 45223-3085, USA.



Visteon workers in Enfield. Photo: libcom.org



Steelworkers protesting. Photo: netzeitung.de

By CUPE Ontario

Since mid-April, two locals of the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) have been on strike. Local 82, which represents some 300 outdoors municipal workers, and Local 543, which represents 1,600 indoors municipal workers, have been holding the line for the hard won wages and benefits that sustain their local community in Windsor, Ontario. This strike could be happening anywhere in Ontario. Across the province, more employers are using the current economic crisis to try to extract concessions from workers. Help to send a clear message that CUPE members won't let that happen.

Instead of finding solutions to benefit both the local community and municipal workers, Windsor's mayor and city council have fuelled a city workers' strike affecting nearly 2,000 CUPE members and their families. Now in a

city reeling from the economic crisis, some city politicians are trying to pit public and private sector workers against one another.

Support our Windsor City Workers and send a message to governments and employers that workers didn't create this economic mess. Workers are part of the solution. Bargaining concessions won't help the local economy. We know that the best way out of this economic crisis is for our governments to invest directly in local communities, to expand our public services, and to promote green, sustainable jobs.

Get updates and send web support by visiting the locals' strike websites: <http://www.82.cupe.ca> or <http://www.543.cupe.ca>.

Checks can be made payable to "CUPE Local 543 and Local 82 Strike Fund," 1576 Parent Avenue, Windsor, Ontario N8X 4J7, Canada.

By the ACTU

Unions welcome the historic introduction of a universal, government-funded paid maternity leave scheme covering the majority of Australian women and their families.

"The campaign to win this essential piece of social infrastructure has taken 30 long years," said Sharan Burrow, presidents of the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU).

"This is a major achievement for the thousands of women and men who have worked so hard to bring this scheme to fruition. The scheme will cover hundreds of thousands of women in lower paid jobs with poor job security, especially in

hospitality and retail where there's been very limited access to paid maternity leave," reported the ACTU.

Treasurer Wayne Swan confirmed that a universal paid maternity leave scheme will go ahead, with funding to be committed in the near future.

Burrow said the 18-week scheme would give mothers time to bond with and breastfeed their babies without financial stress forcing them back to work too early, sometimes within weeks, as is currently the case.

"The ACTU and unions will continue to help working women bargain for measures to help balance their work and family responsibilities," said Burrow.