

INDUSTRIAL WORKER

OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER OF THE INDUSTRIAL WORKERS OF THE WORLD

June 2010 #1726 Vol. 107 No. 5 \$1/ £1/ €1



Finnish Labour Temple Celebrates 100 Years 3

International IWW May Day Reports 6-7

Fighting Rio Tinto's Borax Mining Industry 9

Transport Workers Strike In South Africa 12

Todos Somos Ilegales. Todos Somos Arizona.

By J. Pierce

Within days, the passage of Senate Bill 1070 has transformed Arizona into an openly-polarized territory. The right wing's gloating and congratulations were short-lived as our people awakened with massive student walkouts, civil disobedience, calls for a boycott of Arizona, "Los Suns" jerseys on the basketball court, politicians, celebrities, and institutions taking a stand, and huge, day-long Primero de Mayo demonstrations at the State Capital Building in Tucson, and other parts of the state.

By making it a state crime to be in Arizona illegally and obligating the police to investigate a person's citizenship status, SB 1070 intends to cover any interaction an undocumented worker might have and allow the police to initiate a "legitimate contact." The law gives the police or other agencies new opportunities to initiate this "contact" and then investigate a "reasonable suspicion" that someone is illegal. For example, if you are waiting for work on the side of the street and a potential employer can be accused of blocking the flow of traffic, SB 1070 specifically criminalizes this scenario (regardless of your status)

which then provides an opportunity for the cops to ask, "Your papers, please."

For the IWW, our workplace activity will be affected by this law. We as individuals, or as an organization, could come under attack for assisting our undocumented members and co-workers in any way. Helping them find housing ("harboring" and "concealing"), assisting with employment ("soliciting" work or "hiring"), driving home from work or to a demonstration ("transporting" or "trafficking")—all of these are things we do in the course of our organizing and which might soon be criminal. We could claim that we thought everyone was "legal" but the law makes it a crime to "recklessly disregard" the possibility that your friend, co-worker, or family member is undocumented.

The exact aims of these deranged Arizona lawmakers are difficult to determine, but the effects of SB 1070 are crystal clear. By making it a crime to assist undocumented workers in any way, the law aims to depute the population against each other and make us police ourselves. They want us to fear for our safety any time we help out our fellow

Continued on 5



Photo: Alexis Garcia

Members of the Phoenix IWW fighting against racism at the State Capital.

Judge Orders New Trial For Wobbly Alexandra Svoboda



Photo: indymedia.org.uk

On Aug. 11, 2007, three officers arrested Alex Svoboda simultaneously, causing the severe dislocation of her knee and sending her to the ground.

PROVIDENCE, R.I. — On May 7, Superior Court Judge Joseph F. Rodgers Jr. ordered a new trial for IWW member Alexandra Svoboda, who was accused of assaulting North Providence police officers during a peaceful union solidarity rally held by the Providence IWW in August 2007.

Svoboda was brutally attacked by the police and, in the cruelest of ironies, she was then charged with assaulting the police officers who made the arrest. Three officers arrested her simultaneously, causing the severe dislocation of her knee and sending her to the ground. Even though the policemen knew the obvious seriousness of the act they had

just committed, one officer aggressively sat on and handcuffed Alex while others pepper sprayed another demonstrator and arrested Jason Friedmutter, also a Providence IWW member.

Rodgers ordered a new trial for Alex on three counts of simple assault on the officers, and said he did not feel convinced beyond a reasonable doubt that she had assaulted the officers by striking them with drumsticks during the protest, despite a jury's finding the prior week that she was guilty on all three counts. Rodgers did, however, let stand the jury's verdict that Alex had resisted arrest while picketing Jacky's Galaxie, a restaurant which supported the New

York City-based HWH/Dragonland, a dry goods supplier notorious for its slave labor conditions. HWH/Dragonland workers had organized themselves under the 460/640 IWW campaign in New York City, but collective bargaining had been marred by lockouts and illegal activity by HWH bosses.

To support FW Alex Svoboda, send letters of support or checks to: Friends of Alex, P.O. Box 5795, c/o Providence IWW, Providence, Rhode Island, 02903, United States. Please make checks out to "Providence IWW," or donate online at <http://pledgie.com/campaigns/10117>.

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

IWW Hosts Sweatshop Workers Tour Of U.S.

By Erik Davis

Kalpona Akter has been working in sweatshops since she was 12 years old. Coming from already-desperate poverty, she spent a few years thinking of her exploitation in relatively benign terms: "I thought I had a good job! I worked for them, and they paid me money," she said, even though, as she described moments later, she was working non-stop for 23 days at a stretch, and living on the factory floors. At the age of 12, she lived with her family for about five days a month between "shifts." It wasn't until Kalpona heard about Bangladesh's formal—and rarely enforced—labor laws that she realized her job was actually a horrendous violation of what other people thought her rights should, and could, be. Today, Kalpona is a union activist working at Bangladesh Center for Worker Solidarity (BCWS).

Along with Zehra Bano from the Home Based Women Workers union in Pakistan, Kalpona kicked off a national speaking tour on April 16 at Macalester College in St. Paul, Minn. The "Sweat Shop Workers Speak Out!" tour was organized nationally by the International Labor Rights Forum (ILRF) and Sweat Free Communities (SFC), and was organized locally by the Twin Cities IWW and Macalester College Religious Studies. Similar speaking events were hosted by IWW branches throughout April. In the Twin Cities, the IWW organized an evening benefit concert for the workers.

Kalpona's experience—moving from a situation of such desperate exploitation and poverty that she herself didn't even realize it—is emblematic of the situation of workers in sweatshops and Export Processing Zones (EPZs) around

Continued on 11

Industrial Worker
PO Box 180195
Chicago, IL 60618, USA



Periodicals Postage
PAID
Cincinnati, OH
and additional
mailing offices

ISSN 0019-8870
ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



**Letters Welcome!**

Send your letters to iw@iww.org, or write to:
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, United States.

\$12 for 1" tall, 1 column wide
\$40 for 4" by 2 columns
\$90 for a quarter page

Correction: The first sentence of "German IWW Campaigns Against Ford Motor Company," which appears on page 1 of the April *IW*, incorrectly states that Ford Cologne produced its four millionth car in February 2010. It was the plant's 40 millionth car.

Authors Respond To "NFL Players Are Not Workers Too"

This letter is a response to FW X365465's letter "NFL Players Are Not Workers Too," which appeared on page 2 of the April *Industrial Worker*.

As we, the authors of the column "Football Through Labor's Lens, Part 1," which appeared on page 9 of the February/March *IW*, wrote "Too often 'the left,' as well as everyday people, portray professional athletes as greedy and overpaid. It is worth remembering that only decades of organization, struggle and professionalism have allowed these athletes to retain so much of the massive amount of wealth that their labor creates." The purpose of this letter is to rebut the arguments made by FW X365465 which fall into the all too common criticism of sports we previously mentioned.

The author of this letter appears not to have much working knowledge of the salary structure of professional football as he calls most athletes "millionaire cry babies." The 2009 data from *USA Today* shows National Football League (NFL) median salaries range from \$488,640 to \$1,325,000 per year, depending on the

franchise in which one plays. The average playing career is only 3.5 to 4 years. Unlike Major League Baseball and the National Basketball Association, NFL players are guaranteed only what signing bonuses they can negotiate. The teams retain the unilateral right to release players at will. Additionally, the earnings of young players are most closely tied to where they are selected in the NFL draft. That is, each slot of the top rounds has a "slotted" initial contract structure. Being drafted does not guarantee a contract, as seven rounds' worth of picks in addition to myriad "undrafted free agents" find themselves in the several training camps competing with incumbent veterans for 53 roster spots, of which eight will be inactive (not counted toward service time) on game day.

The NFL has had, until the expiration of the most recent collective bargaining agreement (CBA), what is known as a "hard salary cap and floor," which means that there is a defined window of total player compensation each team is allowed, and required, to spend. There is great variance in the value placed on

individual positions, as well as a drastic drop in compensation from a projected starting player to his positional backups.

The idea we wish to stress to our readers is that a worker is not made by his salary.

Only a small number of these professional athletes are fortunate to make a large salary playing a game at an extremely expert level. We broached the topic of the NFL and its players primarily due to the biases and misconceptions held by many with whom we would otherwise politically agree. The superstars of the NFL that are showcased in *People* magazine and in the mainstream media are visible outliers. For FW X365465 to claim that these statistical outliers are representative of the overall group is ridiculous. Historically, the majority of aspirants have failed in making it to the professional level. Of those who have accomplished such a goal, most tend to not last long and then return to the life they would have had—selling cars, learning a trade, etc.

With the recent death of Colorado

Continued on 5

Industrial Worker

The Voice of Revolutionary
Industrial Unionism

ORGANIZATION
EDUCATION
EMANCIPATION

Official newspaper of the
INDUSTRIAL WORKERS

OF THE WORLD

Post Office Box 180195
Chicago, IL 60618 USA
773.857.1090 • ghq@iww.org
www.iww.org

GENERAL SECRETARY-TREASURER:
Joe Tessone

GENERAL EXECUTIVE BOARD:

Monika Vykoukal, Koala Largess,
Robert Rush, Ryan Gaughan,
E. Wolfson, Slava Osowska,
Bob Ratynski

EDITOR & GRAPHIC DESIGNER:
Diane Krauthamer
iw@iww.org

FINAL EDIT COMMITTEE:

Maria Rodriguez Gil, Tom Levy,
Nick Jusino, Slava Osowska, FW D.
Keenan, Joseph Pigg, Ryan Boyd

PRINTER:
Saltus Press
Worcester, MA

**Next deadline is
June 4, 2010.**

US IW mailing address:
IW, PO Box 7430, JAF Sta-
tion, New York, NY 10116

ISSN 0019-8870
Periodicals postage
paid Cincinnati, OH.

POSTMASTER: Send address
changes to IW, Post Office Box
180195 Chicago, IL 60618 USA

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Individual Subscriptions: \$18
International Subscriptions: \$20
Library Subs: \$24/year
Union dues includes subscription.

Published monthly with the excep-
tion of March and September.

**Articles not so designated do
not reflect the IWW's
official position.**

Press Date: May 21, 2010.



IWW directory

Australia

IWW Regional Organising Committee: PO Box 1866,
Albany, WA www.iww.org.au

Sydney: PO Box 241, Surry Hills.

Melbourne: PO Box 145, Moreland 3058.

British Isles

IWW Regional Organising Committee: PO Box 1158,
Newcastle Upon Tyne NE9 4XL. rocsec@iww.org.uk,
www.iww.org.uk

Baristas United Campaign: baristasunited.org.uk
National Blood Service Campaign: nbs.iww.org

Bradford: bradford@iww.org.uk

Bristol: PO Box 4, 82 Colston street, BS1 5BB. Tel.
07506592180. bristol-iww@riseup.net

Burnley: burnley@iww-manchester.org.uk

Cambridge: IWW c/o Arjuna, 12 Mill Road, Cam-
bridge CB1 2AD cambridge@iww.org.uk

Dorset: dorset@iww.org.uk

Dumfries: iww_dg@yahoo.co.uk

Hull: hull@iww.org.uk

London GMB: c/o Freedom Bookshop, Angel Alley,
84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX. Tel.
+44 (0) 20 3393 1295, londoniww@gmail.com

London Building Workers IU 330 Branch: c/o Adam
Lincoln, UCU, Carlow Street, London NW1 7LH

Leicestershire GMB and DMU IU620 Job Branch:
Unit 107, 40 Halford St., Leicester LE1 1TQ, England.
Tel. 07981 433 637, leics@iww.org.uk www.leicestershire-iww.org.uk

Leeds: leeds-iww@hotmail.co.uk

Manchester: manchester@iww.org.uk www.iww-manchester.org.uk

Norwich: norwich@iww.org.uk www.iww-norwich.org.uk

Nottingham: notts@iww.org.uk

Reading: reading@iww.org.uk

Sheffield: cwellbrook@riseup.net

Somerset: guarita_carlos@yahoo.co.uk

Tyne and Wear: c/o Philip Le Marquand, 36 Abbot
Court, Gateshead NE8 3JY. tyneandwear@iww.org.uk

West Midlands: The Warehouse, 54-57 Allison Street
Digbeth, Birmingham B5 5TH westmids@iww.org.uk
www.wmiww.org

York: york@iww.org.uk

Scotland

Aberdeen: aberdeen@iww.org.uk

Clydeside GMB: c/o IWW PO Box 7593, Glasgow, G42
2EX. clydeside@iww.org.uk <http://iwwscotland.wordpress.com>

Dumfries and Galloway GMB: dumfries@iww.org.uk

Edinburgh IWW: c/o 17 W. Montgomery Place,
EH7 5HA. 0131-557-6242, edinburgh@iww.org.uk

Canada

Alberta

Edmonton GMB: PO Box 75175, T6E 6K1. edmon-ton@lists.iww.org, edmonton.iww.ca

British Columbia

Vancouver IWW: 204-2274 York Ave., Vancouver, BC,
V6K 1C6. Phone/fax 604-732-9613. gmb-van@iww.ca,
vancouver.iww.ca, vancouverwob.blogspot.com

Manitoba

Winnipeg GMB: IWW, c/o WORC, PO Box 1, R3C 2G1.
winnipeg-iww@hotmail.com, garth.hardy@union.org.za

Ontario

Ottawa-Outaouais GMB & GDC Local 6: PO Box
52003, 298 Dalhousie St. K1N 1S0, 613-225-9655,
ott-out@iww.org French: ott_out_fr@yahoo.ca

Peterborough: c/o PCAP, 393 Water St. #17, K9H 3L7,
705-749-9694, ptboiww@riseup.net

Toronto GMB: c/o Libra Knowledge & Information
Sys Co-op, PO Box 353 Stn. A, M5W 1C2. 416-919-
7392. iwwtoronto@gmail.com

Québec

Montreal: iww_quebec@riseup.net

Europe

Finland

Helsinki: Reko Ravela, Otto Brandintie 11 B 25,
00650. iwwsuomi@helsinki.fi

German Language Area

IWW German Language Area Regional Organizing
Committee (GLAMROC): Post Fach 19 02 03, 60089
Frankfurt/M, Germany iww-germany@gmx.net
www.wobblies.de

Austria: iwwaustria@gmail.com, www.iwwaustria.wordpress.com

Frankfurt am Main: iww-frankfurt@gmx.net

Goettingen: iww-goettingen@gmx.net

Koeln: stuhlfauth@wobblies.de

Munich: iww.muenchen@gmx.de

Luxembourg: ashbrmi@pt.lu, 0352 691 31 99 71

Switzerland: IWW-Zurich@gmx.ch

Greece

Athens: Themistokleous 66 Exarhia Athens
iwgreece@iww.org

Netherlands: iww.ned@gmail.com

United States

Arizona

Phoenix GMB: 1205 E Hubble, 85006-1758. (602)
486-9014 or (480) 946-2160. phoenix@iww.org

Arkansas

Fayetteville: PO Box 283, 72702. 479-200-1859,
nwar_iww@hotmail.com

DC

DC GMB (Washington): 741 Morton St NW, Washing-
ton DC, 20010. 571-276-1935.

California

Los Angeles GMB: PO Box 811064, 90081. (310)205-
2667. la_gmb@iww.org

North Coast GMB: PO Box 844, Eureka 95502-0844.
707-725-8090, angstink@gmail.com

San Francisco Bay Area GMB: (Curbside and Buyback
IU 670 Recycling Shops; Stonemountain Fabrics
Job Shop and IU 410 Garment and Textile Worker's
Industrial Organizing Committee; Shattuck Cinemas)
PO Box 11412, Berkeley 94712. 510-845-0540.

Evergreen Printing: 2335 Valley Street, Oakland, CA
94612. 510-835-0254 dkaroly@igc.org

San Jose: sjiww@yahoo.com

Colorado

Denver GMB: c/o P&L Printing Job Shop: 2298 Clay,
Denver 80211. 303-433-1852.

Four Corners (AZ, CO, NM, UT): 970-903-8721,
4corners@iww.org

Florida

Gainesville GMB: 1021 W. University, 32601. 352-
246-2240, gainesvilleiww@riseup.net

Pensacola GMB: PO Box 2662, Pensacola, FL 32513-
2662. 840-437-1323, iwwpensacola@yahoo.com,
www.angelfire.com/fl5/iww

St Petersburg/Tampa: Frank Green, P.O. Box 5058,
Gulfport, FL 33737. (727)324-9517. NoWageSlaves@gmail.com

Hobe Sound: P. Shultz, 8274 SE Pine Circle, 33455-
6608. 772-545-9591 okiedog2002@yahoo.com

Georgia

Atlanta: M. Bell, 404.693.4728, iwwbell@gmail.com

Hawaii

Honolulu: Tony Donnes, del., donnes@hawaii.edu

Idaho

Boise: Ritchie Eppink, del., PO Box 453, 83701.
(208) 371-9752. eppink@gmail.com

Illinois

Chicago GMB: 2117 W. Irving Park Rd., 60618.
773-857-1090.

Central III GMB: 903 S. Elm, Champaign, IL, 61820.
217-356-8247

Freight Truckers Hotline: 224-353-7189, mtw530@iww.org

Waukegan: PO Box 274, 60079.

Indiana

Lafayette GMB: P.O. Box 3793, West Lafayette, IN
47906, 765-242-1722

Iowa

Eastern Iowa GMB: 114 1/2 E. College Street
Iowa City, IA 52240 easterniowa@iww.org

Maine

Barry Rodrigue, 75 Russell Street, Bath, ME 04530.
(207)-442-7779

Maryland

Baltimore IWW: PO Box 33350, Baltimore MD
21218, mike.pesa@gmail.com

Massachusetts

Boston Area GMB: PO Box 391724, Cambridge
02139. 617-469-5162.

Cape Cod/SE Massachusetts: PO Box 315, West
Barnstable, MA 02668 thematch@riseup.net

Western Mass. Public Service IU 650 Branch: IWW,
Po Box 1581, Northampton 01061.

Michigan

Detroit GMB: 22514 Brittany Avenue, E. Detroit, MI
48021. detroit@iww.org

Grand Rapids GMB: PO Box 6629, Grand Rapids MI
49516. 616-881-5263

Central Michigan: 5007 W. Columbia Rd., Mason
48854. 517-676-9446, happyhippie66@hotmail.com.

Minnesota

Twin Cities GMB: 79 13th Ave NE Suite 103A
Minneapolis MN 55413. twincities@iww.org.
Red River IWW: POB 103, Moorhead, MN 56561
218-287-0053. iww@gomoorhead.com

Missouri

Kansas City GMB: c/o 5506 Holmes St., 64110.
816-523-3995.

Montana

Two Rivers GMB: PO Box 9366, Missoula, MT 59807,
tworiversgmb@iww.org 406-459-7585.
Construction Workers IU 330: 406-490-3869,
trampiu330@aol.com

New Jersey

Central New Jersey GMB: PO Box 10021, New Bruns-
wick 08906. 732-801-7001 iwwcnj@gmail.com

New Mexico

Albuquerque: 202 Harvard Dr. SE, 87106. 505-227-
0206, abq@iww.org

New York

Binghamton Education Workers Union: bingham-toniww@gmail.com

NYC GMB: PO Box 7430, JAF Station, New York City
10116, iww-nyc@iww.org. www.wobblycity.org
Starbucks Campaign: 44-61 11th St. Fl. 3, Long
Island City, NY 11101 starbucksunion@yahoo.com
www.starbucksunion.org

Upstate NY GMB: PO Box 235, Albany 12201-
0235, 518-833-6853 or 518-861-5627. www.upstate-nyiww.org,
secretary@upstate-ny-iww.org,
Rochelle Semel, del., PO Box 172, Fly Creek 13337,
607-293-6489, rochelle71@peoplepc.com.

Hudson Valley GMB: PO Box 48, Huguenot, 12746,
845-342-3405, hviww@aol.com, <http://hviww.blogspot.com/>

Ohio

Finnish Labour Temple Commemorates A Century Of Working-Class Solidarity

By Saku Pinta

An historic moment transpired on the morning of Friday, May 7, 2010 at the Finnish Labour Temple in Thunder Bay, Ontario, Canada. On this occasion, Labour Council President Melanie Kelso and Canadian Auto Workers Local 1075 President Paul Pugh representing the Thunder Bay and District Labour Council; Brent Kelso, president of the Finnish Canadian Historical Society; and myself, Saku Pinta, representing the Industrial Workers of the World, officially donated shares in the Finnish Building Company, held by our respective organizations, to the Finlandia Club. The commemorative event, attended by local media and Finlandia Club members, both marked an exciting new era for the Finnish Labour Temple and publicly recognized a century of support of the hall by the working-class movement.

This year, as the Finnish Labour Temple turns 100 years old, efforts have been revamped to ensure the restoration of the “Big Finn Hall” to its former glory, once the largest workers’ hall in Canada. The first phase of construction, before considerable repairs to the interior and exterior begin, will be the addition of elevators to increase accessibility and provide better wheelchair access. A portion of the cost for these major restoration efforts, coming in at well over \$2 million dollars, has been secured through grants and fundraising. However, further grants and loans to cover the remainder of these costs require a single “owner” as a legal precondition. Individuals, community and labor organizations in the city have clearly recognized the significance of these restoration efforts, given the Finnish Labour Temple’s tremendous historical and contemporary importance as a gathering place for the community, and in particular the Finns, and as a unique, living, and active cultural jewel. To these ends, the Thunder Bay and District Labour Council donated

nearly 3,000 shares in the building to the Finlandia Club to help clear the funding hurdle. The IWW shares totalled seven: two IWW shares and five from the Canadian Teollisuusunionistinen Kansallisuusliitto (CTKL; or Canadian Industrial Unionist Support League), a now-defunct Finnish-Canadian IWW auxiliary organization made up of small farmers who supported the IWW Preamble and Aims.

A Short History of the Finnish Labour Temple

The Finnish Labour Temple is a famous local landmark perhaps best known today as the home of the Hoito Restaurant, a cooperatively-operated eatery established by IWW Lumber Workers in 1918, and continuously in operation since then. The building was established in 1910 as a joint stock company, the Finnish Building Company, which sold shares to raise funds for, and debt incurred during, its construction. Over 100 years, some 12,000 shares in the Finnish Building Company have been purchased. Of this total, a mere 400 represent shares sold to individuals, with the vast majority belonging to organizations.

The list of shareholders in the building reads like a “Who’s Who” of the local, regional, and national labor movement. The founding organizations of the Finnish Labour Temple were the Finnish-American Workers’ League Imatra #9 and Uusi Yritys (New Attempt) Temperance Society. Less than a year after the building’s completion in March 1910, shares in the Finnish Building Company shifted to the city’s Socialist



Photo: *Industrial Pioneer*, March 1926

Party of Canada, Finnish local, and subsequently to the Finnish-language locals of the Social Democratic Party of Canada.

During World War I, foreign-language affiliates of the Social Democratic Party were declared illegal and suppressed by the Canadian

government: activists were arrested, newspapers banned, and some people were even deported. At this point, shares were transferred over to the locals of the Canadian One Big Union (OBU), the labor federation most famously associated with the 1919 Winnipeg General Strike.

It was during the 1919 One Big Union National Convention, held in Thunder Bay (then the twin cities of Port Arthur and Fort William) at the Finnish Labour Temple that a highly divisive split occurred within the local Finnish working-class community. This split was between proponents of revolutionary industrial unionism on the one hand and pro-Bolshevik Communists on the other, based on questions of revolutionary organization: was the social revolution to be instigated and carried out directly by the workers following the principle that “the emancipation of the working class must be carried out by the workers themselves,” or did changes of this magnitude require that a revolutionary party seize state power and direct the revolution from above? Revolutionary industrial unionists, who shortly after lined up with the IWW and its auxiliary organizations, carried the day and maintained control of the hall. The ousted pro-Bolshevik faction aligned themselves with the Finnish Organization of Canada, the Communist Party of Canada’s Finnish-

language federation, and purchased their own building right next door at 316 Bay Street, popularly known as “Little Finn Hall.”

Finnish Wobblies would maintain majority ownership of the Finnish Labour Temple for about four decades, into the early 1960s. During their stewardship they were successful in paying off the mortgage on the building, establishing a network of cooperatives and rural IWW halls, contributing to the Finnish IWW press (*Industrialisti*, published in Duluth, Minnesota until 1975) and, for a time, housing the offices of the Canadian IWW administration. This activity was carried out alongside a vibrant working-class culture, which included support for a variety of causes for economic and social justice; such as raising funds for Sacco and Vanzetti, assisting the Spanish anti-fascist struggle, organizing countless plays, dances, lectures, and socials, and of course, supporting striking workers. In 1926, visiting IWW organizer J. A. McDonald described the Finnish Labour Temple in glowing terms in the *Industrial Pioneer*: “The activities of our Finnish membership here is a lesson on building the new society right now.”

“The big house with three floors, two halls, a director of dramatic art, a community restaurant, three different athletic clubs (one for the men, one for women, and the third for children) and countless other activities is a social center that although it is in the middle capitalism is yet more in line with the new society than with the old,” noted McDonald.

A New Era

An aging IWW membership and another major wave of Finnish immigration to the region in the 1960s saw the majority ownership of the Finnish Labour Temple change hands, this time to the Finlandia Club of Port Arthur. The Finlandia Club has held a majority of shares in the hall from the 1960s right up to the present day, and is now the full title holder to the building and the lot. With the transfer of the remaining shares of the building, an historical era in the Finnish Labour Temple comes to a close, and a new era begins, but one which not only will see the restoration of an important working-class institution, but also the return of the IWW as a presence in the local and regional working-class movement.

A number of cultural and educational events celebrating the centenary of the “Big Finn Hall” have provided the ideal backdrop for a small group of local Wobblies to raise the profile of the union, its aims and principles, and our local revolutionary working-class heritage. It is our hope that we can use this momentum and renewed attention to lay down the solid foundations for rebuilding the IWW—and the traditions of working-class self-organization that it represents—in Northwestern Ontario.

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 180195, Chicago, IL 60618, 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: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Post Code, Country: _____

Occupation: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Amount Enclosed: _____

Membership includes a subscription to the *Industrial Worker*.

Subscribe to the Industrial Worker

10 issues for:

- US \$18 for individuals.
- US \$20 for internationals.
- US \$24 for institutions.

Name: _____

Address: _____

State/Province: _____

Zip/PC _____

Send to:
Industrial Workers of the
World
P.O. Box 180195
Chicago, IL 60618 USA

Subscribe Today!

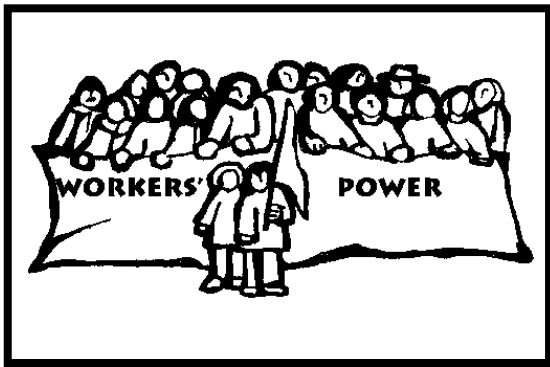
Contract, No Contract

By Nick D.

I was in for one hell of a shock today. I finally got the names and addresses of the four “Rand”* members working at the courier company I was re-organizing. In the same day I saw them threaten a wildcat strike and then get fired. I had the pleasure of introducing them to the glories of union representation only ten minutes before Sylvain, the boss, accused the workers of blackmailing him and then fired them.

By talking to the workers I pieced together what had happened. The boss used to run a 30-person outfit that was unionized under the Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW). When they lost their major contract the company shrank down to one driver. Now they are building their business back up; as they hire new drivers they do not tell them about the union. There are now 11 people working in the shop—well, 11 minus 4 fired men. These guys will likely be replaced by a new batch.

The boss was bullshitting the union too—he never told us when he hired more guys on. Even though the contract said that they had to inform us of any new workers, they also had to send them over to the union office to sign cards as a condition of work. The employer also had to provide us with regular seniority lists. In every instance they simply ignored the contract. They even hired these four guys on as independent contractors under a separate deal than the collective agreement we negotiated with



the company. They pretended the union didn't exist and the strategy worked for them for three years.

While the workers were getting their letters one of the fired workers looked across the room at me as he took his dismissal letter out of the boss' hand. He smirked at me and winked. That's when it hit me—these guys didn't care. They agreed to certain terms and conditions and the employer broke their side of the deal. They didn't have a union as far as they knew so they created one on the spot. They drafted up a letter with a list of demands, all four signed the bottom and handed it in. If Sylvain didn't meet their demands they said they would try and convince the courier company's clients to stop using them as a courier and would show up for work Monday but refuse to do anything until their demands were met.

These workers didn't know about the union, and then we show up saying we “represent” them. I looked across the room at Al, the local president who was negotiating with the boss. He was a model of restraint; Sylvain on the phone was not. I could hear words not fit for print from 15 feet away. For a brief moment I saw how comical this all was; I saw things from the point of view of the four guys who just got fired. The workers invited us along for the ride; they didn't need us to represent them, they wanted outside witnesses to support a struggle that they took on themselves. We were frowning; to us this was serious business. They were smiling; to them it was a joke.

We all had a conversation in the parking lot afterwards. I told them that we would grieve the firings, and our reps would also bring up their return to work at negotiations for the new contract. Their odds of getting their jobs back were pretty good, and the odds of them getting back pay were even better according to our regional office. They

said a settlement would be nice and they would think about their jobs, but what they really wanted was to cause as much trouble for that business as humanly possible. I said I would see what I could do, returning the smirk.

Later that day while driving back to the union office Al was horrified to hear me call the situation funny. He didn't like my take on things at all; he said I enjoyed the conflict too much. Al and I have been through a lot and I respect him, he's got 30 years at the post office under his belt and hasn't been afraid to encourage workers to take action. I told him I would think about what he had to say.

The Canadian Union of Postal Workers' unionism is one of worker organizers servicing a contract that is negotiated with the employer. A large body of volunteers and a handful of paid staff provide a service to workers who are expected to come to the union with their grievances.

Servicing a contract is pointless if the union doesn't know who is in the shop, how many workers are in the shop and what the issues are. A contract is even more useless if the workers don't know it exists. In this shop the collective agreement required the employer to come to us when they hired new people. They

pulled a fast one on us, and as the grievances roll in it is becoming apparent they have pulled a fast one on us for three years.

The point of a contract is to mark gains negotiated by the bargaining committee. In

exchange we trade off our right to strike and submit to a grievance procedure where issues are settled off the floor, allowing the business to run smoothly. Most of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers is based in the post office and we have a large volunteer steward body that can help people with filing their own grievances in our postal sector bargaining units. A situation like this can't happen at the post office because the union is institutionally a part of the culture of the workplace.

Small shops face a real challenge to this model because there isn't a concentration of shop stewards to enforce the contract. When these workers took action they acted as most workers in most industries do when confronted with an injustice at work: they withheld their labor. Trade unionists tend to see non-union industries as static and without struggle, but in a lot of cases the struggle is far more direct and personal in nature when the union is not there. In fact the union, through the contract, is what puts limits on this struggle and determines its course.

Al seemed to think that if we had better contact with the shop we could have filed a grievance and these guys would still have their jobs. Al's probably right. But the problem was that a contract cannot enforce itself, a contract does not make a union. Contracts are pieces of paper; unions are relationships between workers and their work. The reason we didn't have better contact with the shop is all the workers who voted for the union were gone and replaced with new workers who weren't told about the union. These workers did not have the chance to struggle together as a group to get the organization needed to enforce the contract.

When they did struggle they did the one thing the contract says you can't do, they struck and then got fired. Next week they will be working at another



Chapter 34 Taking on the Sweatshops

At the insistence of Elizabeth Morgan of the Ladies Federal Labor Union, the Chicago Trades and Labor Assembly in 1891 agreed to an investigation of Chicago sweatshops. The result, according to labor historian Philip Foner, was “one of the most important and influential reports in American labor history, which eventually called the attention of the entire nation to the sweating system.”

A labor investigative team including Morgan and accompanied by representatives of the city health department, city attorney's office and the press made unannounced visits to 30 sweatshops. Interviews with women and children workers revealed unhealthy working conditions and pitifully poor pay. Some of the worst shops were owned by a philanthropist, J.V. Farwell; one was a tiny 10-foot square basement where 23 people worked. Young girls received only \$3 for a 60-70 hour week making velvet cloaks for the wealthy.



The findings were published in a pamphlet, which aroused the public's fear of contagious diseases as much as its sense of decency. The report named names and detailed unsanitary conditions, hours and wages. This information became the basis for action: a campaign for an anti-sweatshop bill. Thanks to the hard work of Elizabeth Morgan, the Illinois Women's Alliance and the labor movement, the Illinois legislature enacted the Factory and Workshop Inspection Act in 1893.

Graphic: Mike Konopacki

courier firm and a new batch of drivers will be working at this company. When these new drivers are hired they will be union members as soon as they walk in the door; the company will inform us of their membership and their contract and everyone will follow the rules. Not because they want to but because the company wants to avoid this from happening again too.

What is most ironic about the whole situation is that because these workers did not know about the contract, they went out and acted against the contract and were fired for violating the contract. That is what gave the contract life again. It was no longer a piece of paper but a

document that outlined a relationship between a group of workers and their boss. It also ensures that as long as the contract is followed, what gave the contract any real meaning on the job won't happen again.

*A “Rand” member is someone who is paying dues to a union but has not signed a union card, named after Justice Rand who set the precedent for dues check-off for unions in Canada.

If you would like to submit a column for consideration, or have any ideas or suggestions, please email “Worker's Power” editor Colin Bossen at cbossen@gmail.com.

Taxi Drivers Fight Discrimination

By Miami Autonomy and Solidarity

MIAMI – On April 13, Miami-Dade County taxi drivers organized with New Vision Taxi Association picketed outside of a county commissioners' meeting at Government Center. The taxi drivers are engaged in a campaign to stop the passage of a law giving the county power to ticket any driver who drives without a functioning Sun Pass in their car. The drivers are demanding that the Sun Pass, a private commodity, be optional rather than state-mandated. The county has been ticketing drivers for years without ever having passed into law an ordinance that would give them the power to do so. The new initiative by county commissioners to pass such an ordinance has been delayed twice before amidst protests by cab drivers. Drivers argue that they are being discriminated against, as no other drivers (such as limo or shuttle van drivers) are being targeted for the law. The proposed ordinance falls upon individuals rather than companies. This creates paradoxes which ultimately harm the taxi workers. A driver who rents different vehicles daily is unable to obtain a Sun Pass for each vehicle, which requires registering your personal license plate, and therefore would be ticketed for the owner not having obtained a Sun Pass for the vehicle they rent. New Vision says that such tickets are common.

The ordinance was again delayed by the county commissioners during the April 13 protest. Drivers distributed fliers, chanted, and carried signs,

while some entered the commissioners' chambers while wearing T-shirts reading "Sun Pass should be optional." The drivers vow to continue the fight until the attempt to force them to buy a state-sponsored commodity is abandoned.

The drivers' action attracted the interest of those who would see the workers' struggle drawn into institutional channels. Three candidates for Florida state congress, members of the community relations board, and uniformed personnel visited the drivers. Reporters from various local news outlets attended, though only the *Miami Herald* ran an article on the fight. The message of this circus was that the drivers should take their strength to realms outside of their control—the ballot box and media—to try and win favor from those in power. However, as we have seen again and again, it is only when workers fight with where their strength is, their work and communities, that they will win their gains. New Vision Taxi Alliance sat on the county's Taxi Action Group for years without any significant victories through its lobbying. It has only been when a series of actions, wildcats, and picketing has been unleashed by cabbies that the authorities have been willing to meet their demands.

Sun Pass likewise will be defeated—not through flashy marketing or goodwill by one of the rulers, but by the collective strength and fight of the taxi drivers and our communities organized alongside them.

Authors Respond To "NFL Players Are Not Workers Too"

Continued from 2

Rockies executive Keli McGregor at 48, we have been given another tragic reminder of this. McGregor played in the NFL for only one year after being drafted out of Colorado State University in 1985. His biography after his short career nowhere implies that he was a spoiled, paparazzi-seeking, hard-partying millionaire who made it rain until 6:00 a.m. every morning. Rather, he worked for the University of Arkansas' athletic department as an associate athletic director for four years. He then earned his Master's degree in Education from the University of Florida while serving as an assistant football coach. When the Colorado Rockies finished their first season as a Major League Baseball team in the fall of 1993, McGregor came on board as senior director of operations. As a football guy, he "didn't understand what a 6-4-3 was or what an ERA



was," said then-manager Don Baylor on ESPN. But he worked his way up in the organization, learned the game, and had held his most recent position as team president for close to a decade.

For every Terrell Owens or Adam "Pacman" Jones, there are dozens and dozens of Keli McGregors. There are going to be dozens and dozens of Mike Websters and Wayne Chrebetts before all is said and done, as well. We choose to recognize those who work, those who have given, and those who are likely to be taken away. The imagined menace of the spoiled, sixth-round, third string tight end aside, we recognize the humanity of the individual and the real risks to which he exposes himself. None of these factors are diminished by the size of one's paycheck, especially when it is not likely going to last for more than a few years. We respect workers, whether they are sacking groceries or quarterbacks. And we believe strongly that the long, hard struggle that athletes undertook to gain their current earning power is not only educational, but rather inspiring for all workers. It took some eight decades

for baseball players to break the owners and earn free agency, and the NFL players today still are struggling even as Julius Peppers signs his recent long-term contract with the Chicago Bears.

Reality is the sum total of what has happened. It is far more than the reductive narratives ascribed to anecdotal evidence and skewed reporting that fit one's preexisting political worldview. Sports have a rich history of labor activism that can both inspire and educate the wider labor movement at large. By failing to make these connections, we workers are failing to utilize a major tool that can assist in making progressive issues more meaningful for the wider public.

The bias against the invisible is always present and so often ignored: only those readily-visible anecdotes are recorded, let alone remembered. Please don't allow yourself to be swayed by an unrepresentative sample. Rather, consider reality before giving in to unsubstantiated vitriol that is a poor substitute for reasoned debate.

- Neil Parthun and Dann McKeegan
(Editor's Note: The statistics presented in this letter were intentionally left out due to space limitations.)

Thoughts On The April IW

Fellow Workers:

I finally received my late delivery of the April *IW*, which was not the fault of our conscientious, hard-working editor Diane Krauthamer. I was happy to see the "Defiant Spirit," the publication of our General Defense Committee, included as a column on page 4. This makes good sense. It saves the extra costs of producing it as a separate paper which reaches but few people and enables our entire membership to see what the GDC is doing, which should boost our support of this important affiliate. That reminds me: I'd better get hopping and pony up my 2010 GDC dues and include a couple bucks extra to help out FWs Andrew, Alex, Marie and others. Bosses? Who needs 'em!

- Harry Siitonen

Organizing Against Nuclear Weapons

By Tom Keough

NEW YORK – On Sunday, May 2, over 10,000 people, with hundreds of union members, marched to show opposition to nuclear weapons.

This march began with a rally at Times Square and ended with a rally and gathering at the United Nations. The protest was organized by people from all over the world because the U.N. had scheduled a formal "Special Session on Disarmament." This session began on Monday, May 3, almost three decades since the previous session was held in June 1982.

On Monday morning another part of the protest took place in Grand Central Station at the time when U.N. delegates had to travel through the station. Activists picketed and committed acts of non-violent civil disobedience by unveiling banners and staging a die-in. Twenty-two people were arrested.

The overwhelming majority of marchers were people who flew to New York from Japan. Much of the organizing was done by people from the Hiroshima and Nagasaki areas. These people know more than anyone about the death, pain, birth defects and long-term cancer caused by nuclear weapons.

One of the major organizers of the protest events was the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), which collected 6,901,037 petition signatures demanding that the nuclear weapons states destroy their nuclear weapons! The Japanese Trade Union Confederation, a member coalition of the ITUC, did a lot of the work. This was the largest effort of any of the participating organizations. At the end of the march when we arrived at the U.N. we could see the boxes of signed petitions from around the world. This is a big step in a new direction in the history of the movement in opposition to nuclear weapons. In the past the most active groups have been organized religious groups, often Japanese Buddhists and Western Christian pacifists.

Todos Somos Ilegales. Todos Somos Arizona.

Continued from 1

workers and family members. They want us each to carry our own papers around and justify our actions, constantly putting the burden of proof on the detainee, in hopes that this will divide us up and keep us quiet. The racists and political tricksters are having a field day with these new statutes. Or least they were.

However, the bosses chose the wrong demographic to fuck with. Latino and immigrant workers, already militant from previous class-struggle experiences, are an immense economic and social force in the United States and especially in the American Southwest (a.k.a. "Aztlán"). Taken as a whole, their power is unfathomable. With nation-wide general strikes in 2006 and 2007 over immigrants' rights, you'd think the capitalists would have learned their lesson. But no, they need to be taught it over and over again. Senate Bill 1070, like HR 4437 before it, could be a blessing in disguise. We already know there is a class war being waged upon us, so all that is really needed is for us to fight back. Student walkouts, mass demonstrations, non-compliance campaigns, economic boycotts, and eventually generalized shutdowns, strikes, and stay aways—these are the powers at our disposal and they will be employed until victory. The revolutionary potential is very present and one can only speculate upon the consequences to American capitalism in attacking these sections of our class.



Japanese unionists rally at the U.N. Photo: Tom Keough

Several other unions were represented on the march, including the Japan Federation of Co-op Worker's Union, which gave away hundreds of bright green scarves. The Japan Printing and Publishing Workers Union was also present, as was the Confédération Générale du Travail (CGT) from France.

Almost no U.S. unions were there. This may have been because New York City's unions had been extremely busy working for the very large marches on Thursday, April 29, and Saturday's historic May Day march. Those marches showed strong labor opposition to the many budget cuts and layoffs from the New York City government. It would have been difficult to get their members out for a third march in four days. Many of the New York City labor unions were also preparing for a demonstration Wednesday, May 5, against the Metropolitan Transit Authority's budget cuts and layoffs.

The Times Square rally highlighted speakers from Japan, survivors of the bombings and the aftermath. One very interesting speaker was a left political leader from Korea who strongly opposed the governments of North and South Korea and the U.S. occupation. She opposed Korean nuclear weapons, which might be developed by the North or might already exist. She similarly feared U.S. use of nuclear weapons against North Korea.

The march was very well-received. At the U.N. there was a stage, a visual display and many informational tents set up by over two dozen groups.

Nearly every branch of the union has immigrant members and do you think for a second that anti-immigrant legislation is going to keep us from defending our fellow workers to the death? It never has and it never will. The IWW has never policed its members over nationality, papers, or any other category. We have never been on the wrong side of immigrant battles and we don't intend to start now. This spirit of common humanity cements IWW members together and puts us always on the side of the oppressed. This is the exact spirit that we need to take to our trade unions, community and religious groups, schools, places of recreation, and onto the job. We would do well to inspire each association and institution to adopt non-compliance policies and to establish protocols for protecting and defending anyone and everyone with whom we come into contact.

The IWW has been an illegal organization in the past. Being a member of the IWW is still technically a crime in states that never rescinded their "criminal syndicalism" laws. We are not afraid of being criminalized because our union and our historic mission have always been illegal in the eyes of capital. The cry "Todos Somos Arizona!" is our cry because we will never let them divide us from our fellow workers or prevent us from building the new society right here in the Grand Canyon State. ¡Sí, se puede!

May Day 2010

IWW, NGWF Celebrate May Day In Dhaka



Photo: Jonathan Christiansen

May Day Celebration declares: "No More Fires - No More Gate lock - No More Garment Worker Deaths and an increase in the minimum wage"

By FW Jonathan Christiansen

In the days leading up to May 1st, there were a series of strikes, road blockades and clashes with police by garment workers in the Mirpur section of Dhaka, Bangladesh. The garment workers were demanding an increase in the minimum wage, the right to freely form a union, and an end to unfair terminations, among other things. On May 1, approximately 5,000 garment work-

ers, the majority of whom are women, gathered at Palton More in central Dhaka for a rally and a march. The gathering was organized by the National Garment Workers Federation (NGWF) in celebration of May Day. At the rally the NGWF announced the launch of a new campaign: "No More Fires - No More Gate Lock - No More Garment Worker Deaths." The union joined with others demanding an increase in the minimum wage.

The demands were a response to the increasingly desperate situation of garment workers in Bangladesh's Ready-made Garment Industry (RMG). Specifically the campaigns are a response to a recent fire at a garment factory which killed 21 workers. The demand for an increase in the minimum wage

also reflects the increasing cost of basic goods in Dhaka, and throughout the country.

Speakers at the gathering included NGWF President Amirul Haque Amin, Workers Party of Bangladesh President Rashed Khan Menon M.P., NGWF Secretary Safia Pervin. NGWF Central leaders Nurun Nahar, Sultana Akter, Arifa Akter, Faruk Khan, Arju Ara and Rashida Akter also addressed the gathering. In addition,

Socialist Party President Hasanul Haque Inu M.P. sent a message of support. I also had the privilege of attending the May Day rally and made a banner for the occasion. On the banner was the timeless IWW slogan of "Solidarity Forever," in both English and Bangla. Amirul Haque Amin also read a message of solidarity from the IWW to the rally participants.

In addition to the message of solidarity, speakers at the gathering noted that since 1990, there have been 33 major garment factory fires in which more than 400 garment workers have been killed. In addition to the fatal fires, during this same period more than 500 workers have been injured in more than 200 factory fires. A further 64 workers were killed in the Spectrum Factory collapse in 2005. In all these tragedies the main reason there have been so many casualties is because factory gates are locked, leaving the workers trapped in the buildings.

Many garment factories in Bangladesh lack health and safety standards. This has contributed to widespread dangerous working conditions, and leads to higher incidences of industrial accidents such as factory fires. Therefore, the NGWF demands "No More Fires, No More Gate Lock and No More Worker Deaths."

The NGWF also joined thousands of others in the streets on May Day in

demanding a new minimum wage of 5,000 taka (\$71) per month. The current minimum wage is a meager 1,662 taka (\$24) per month, and many workers are not even guaranteed that. The current minimum wage was established 12 years ago and has not been increased since, despite massive price increases on food and basic living expenses throughout the country, particularly in the capital city of Dhaka. Further demands included the withdrawal of all written and unwritten barriers to trade union formation and related activities in the garment sector: equal wages, equal rights, equal dignity and equality in promotions for women workers.

After the speeches were delivered, the NGWF participated in the "Garment Workers May Day Rally 2010," in which more than 5,000 people filled the streets. They carried the flags of Bangladesh, NGWF flags and the red workers' flag.

The participants also chanted workers' rights slogans and celebrated the day of worker struggles. The day was a powerful display of workers' power. The presence of the IWW banner and our message of solidarity was a good illustration of the global struggle of the working class. This Fellow Worker was glad to be able to share this day of struggle with the NGWF and others struggling for the emancipation of the working class.

Chicago Wobs March With Immigrants On May Day

By x358360

Twelve members of the Chicago IWW marched in solidarity with immigrants and other labor unions in the May Day Immigrant Rights March this year.

The day's events began at 10:00 a.m. with a rally at the Haymarket Monument at Randolph and Des Plaines, sponsored by the Illinois Labor History Society. There were about 200 people there. FW Bucky Halker sang labor songs. General Secretary-Treasurer of the IWW Joe Tessone gave a speech, along with many other labor leaders.

A delegation of 74 members from Zenroren Labor Federation, Japan's leftist union block, presented a plaque which was mounted on the base of the monument. They had been invited to Chicago by the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America (UE), and were going to New York City for an anti-nuclear protest the following Day (see "Organizing Against Nuclear Weapons,"

page 5). The leader of Zenroren gave a speech. There were a number of young Japanese workers wearing T-shirts with one big letter on them. The letters were jumbled up, but all together they read: "No Nukes!"

The May Day Immigrant Rights March started with a rally at Union Park at 1:00 p.m. Union Park covers two city blocks at Lake Street and Ashland Avenue. It was entirely filled with people. Chicago IWW members circulated around the crowd, talking to people and handing out fliers. A Fellow Worker handed out drum buckets. We stood for hours, holding up the IWW banner while listening to the speeches.

Finally we began to march down Washington Street to Daley Plaza, about two miles away. The energy of the people was palpable. When the march stopped ahead of us, everyone sat down. We rose up with a big yell when it started moving again. This happened again and again.

We passed Franklin Street, which was blocked by Illinois State Troopers with riot gear on.

The IWW contingent approached Daley Plaza. The Plaza holds approximately 7,500 people, and it was jammed. The march came to a halt. Chicago police on horses blocked Clark Street. There was nowhere to go.

The march was backed up on Washington for several blocks. We raised the IWW banner and faced off with angry words against the cops. The horses reared on their hind legs. I thought they were going to charge us. It seemed like the cops could barely control their horses.

Fortunately, the cops decided to open Clark Street, relieving the crowding on Washington. Marchers spilled into the open space. Nobody could hear the speakers in Daley Plaza; we heard only echoes. The Chicago Police



Chicago IWW rallying.

Photo: Desiree Weber

Department estimated the crowd to be 10,000. The march's organizers said it was 20,000. In any case, it was a great turnout for May Day in Chicago!

Milwaukee's May Day Reveals Strengths, Weaknesses, & Potential



Milwaukee Wobs, taking a stand.

Photo: FW Trevor Smith

By Joe Walzer

May Day in Milwaukee saw another massive march this year calling for immigration reform. Voces de la Frontera, the organizers of Milwaukee's march for the last five years, estimated 65,000 people participated in this year's event, once more placing the city's march among the nation's largest.

Carrying signs opposing Arizona's recent immigration legislation and

waving American flags, marchers chanted "Sí se puede" (Yes we can), "Obama, escucha, estamos en la lucha!" (Obama, listen, we are in the struggle!), and, "El pueblo callado será deportado" (A community that's silent will be deported). In addition to Voces supporters, this year's march drew a wide variety of activist groups, including Act Everywhere, Milwaukee Students for a Democratic Society, and

Marquette University's JUSTICE (Jesus University Students Together In Concerned Empowerment). Members of Milwaukee's trade union locals, such as Construction & General Building Laborers' Local 113, The American Federation of Teachers (AFT) -Wisconsin, and United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America (UE) Local 1111 participated in large numbers as well.

The Milwaukee IWW also mustered an extremely vocal presence, chanting, "What Day? May Day! Who's Day? Our Day!" However, as branch members unfurled the union's black and red flags and hoisted the IWW emblem on a garison banner, these symbols served more as oddities, rather than trademarks, of a transnational movement. Curious observers wondering what the flags symbolized repeatedly approached Milwaukee IWW members. After fielding several of these queries myself, the misfortune of the situation occurred to me.

The contemporary immigrant rights movement in the United States has been characterized as a renewal of the historic Civil Rights movement, attempting to provide undocumented immigrants with access to the rights established by American citizenship. However, the conditions that immigrant rights activists are attempting to address arguably have more in common with the global labor struggle than anything the extension of national citizenship could achieve. Contradictions inherent in capitalism have become brutally clear as neoliberal policies allow capital to flow freely across national

borders while labor has been ruthlessly denied this luxury. Without state protection or benefits, an underclass of readily exploitable labor has been created, living in fear of deportation.

Absorbed in attempts to address these conditions through lobbying for legislation, immigrant rights groups, such as Voces de la Frontera, have had little success in challenging these gross injustices. Trade unions have also been ineffective in their preoccupation with political action. While it is debatable what methods would be successful, it has been proven time and again that "direct action gets the goods."

The IWW can be instrumental in this effort, especially as a transnational organizing model is necessary to challenge transnational injustices. Rather than being participants in an amorphous political movement, the IWW can provide an organizing model that has been tried and true. Rather than novel emblems lost in a sea of other novel emblems, the red and black must become the standard of the movement, under which we "together take a stand" against the conditions created by unfettered capitalism.

May Day 2010

NYC May Day: Eight Hours Later, Labor Continues The Fight



NYC Wobs march in Manhattan. Photo: Diane Krauthamer

By Diane Krauthamer

There is a spirit of resistance amongst the millions of underpaid and overworked New Yorkers, and once a year, thousands of them join together in the streets of Manhattan to celebrate the real International Workers' Holiday, May Day.

With the sun shining and the sound of music blasting, dozens of labor unions, community and immigrant rights activists, political groups, religious organizations, and elected officials from the New York metropolitan area kicked off this year's May Day at Foley Square with a rally and march through downtown Manhattan.

The event was organized by the Alliance for Labor & Immigrants Rights & Jobs For All, an alliance of more than 30 city and regional organizations, including national and local officers and mem-

bers from the Amalgamated Federation of State and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), the Communications Workers of America (CWA), Domestic Workers United, the International Brotherhood of Teamsters (IBT), the New York Taxi Workers Alliance, the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union (RWDSU), the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), the Trans-

port Workers Union (TWU), the United Auto Workers (UAW), the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) and the United Steelworkers (USW). The New York City IWW had a strong presence at the march, while inviting fellow unionists to a spirited IWW benefit party in Brooklyn later that night.

Demonstrators came together to demand the basic respect that all New Yorkers deserve and showed support for living wage jobs, workers' rights and community benefits for millions of low-wage workers throughout the city. With Brooklyn-based radical marching band the Rude Mechanical Orchestra playing songs of resistance like "Bella Ciao," the crowd queued up and walked down Centre Street, looped around City Hall Park, up Broadway and back over to Foley Square for a rally with speeches delivered by elected officials and labor

and community leaders.

While many of the demonstrators carried signs and chanted slogans which opposed the recent adoption of SB 1070 in Arizona—a bill which essentially legalizes racial profiling and strips undocumented citizens of essential rights—the demonstration did not turn a blind eye to the problems that rest here in the "melting pot" of the world.

All too regularly, undocumented workers are paid less than the minimum wage and are forced to work more than 40 hours per week without receiving the legally required overtime pay. Many times they work in unhealthy or hazardous conditions and are subject to a multitude of other labor violations. But immigrants are not alone in experiencing the brunt of such labor violations. Millions of workers in the industries that keep the city running and keep the economy bustling are paid at or around the minimum wage, denied overtime pay, receive little or no benefits, and are discriminated against when they complain or attempt to form into a union.

According to the National Employment Law Project's recent report, which surveyed 1,432 low-wage workers in New York City, titled "Working Without Laws: A Survey of Employment and Labor Law Violations in New York City," approximately one out of every five workers are paid less than the legally required minimum wage of \$7.25 an hour. More than half of these workers are underpaid by more than \$1 per hour. Meanwhile, approximately 25 percent

of low-wage workers in New York are denied overtime pay, and a majority of those who said they were denied this legally required time-and-a-half pay had worked an average of 13 hours per week in overtime. Additionally, 42 percent of the workers who complained of such lousy conditions or attempted to form a union were retaliated against. Workers reported that their hours and/or pay was cut, people were fired or suspended, and bosses threatened to call immigration authorities.

The illegal workplace violations are just one part of the problem. With 10 percent of the city's population receiving unemployment benefits, New Yorkers are struggling to get by. This figure has dropped since December 2009, when the unemployment rate was 10.6 percent—its highest in nearly 17 years—but much of the labor movement is in agreement that job creation is not enough for hard-working New Yorkers. Labor unions in New York and throughout the country are demanding that employers guarantee a living wage with benefits and the right to organize into a union without threat or intimidation.

In the face of rampant discrimination and the stripping of labor rights, New Yorkers proved once again that the spirit of resistance is as powerful as it was in 1886, when thousands walked off their jobs, striking for the eight-hour work day.

Many things have changed since then, but one thing remains the same: New York is still a union town.



Cologne IWW at Starbucks on May Day. Photo: x353162

International May Day Events In Germany, Canada and the United States.



Edmonton IWW rally on May Day. Photo: facebook.com



Atlanta Wobblies gather together. Photo: Mike Bell

May Day At The Boston Common Demonstrates Solidarity

By Matthew Andrews

Boston activists enjoyed summer-like weather on the Boston Common for a protest that looked like a response to the Tea Party of just a few weeks prior. But this demonstration wasn't merely inspired by the urge to counter Sarah Palin.

This year's rally, which the Boston IWW endorsed and participated in, began with a spirited anarchist-organized "feeder" march from Boston's North End, complete with giant puppets of the Haymarket martyrs of Chicago, as well as Sacco and Vanzetti—local Italian anarchists executed in 1926 by the state of Massachusetts in a climate of anti-radicalism and xenophobia. As Boston May Day Committee members Dorothea Manuela and Bryan Koulouris began introducing speakers, the crowd began to swell with one contingent after another arriving, including the Student Labor Action Movement, the Harvard No-Layoffs Campaign from Cambridge and the Student Immigrant Movement marching in graduation gowns. The rally also welcomed buses of people arriving from Worcester and Fitchburg, Mass. In total there were about 20 endorsing organizations.

We enjoyed music from the Bread and Puppet Theater troupe, and speeches covering a range of issues from immigrant rights, to the crisis in public funding for human needs and the costs of war. Some of the speakers were translated from Spanish and chants

in both English and Spanish rumbled through the crowd. Organizers worked the crowd passing out flyers, stickers and placards, signing up volunteers, and collecting donations to help cover the cost of the event. The demonstration peaked at around 1:00 p.m., when about 500 people filed into the streets. We marched down Washington Street where many shoppers and tourists took pictures or simply gawked as the anarchist contingent led chants of "Out of the shops and into the streets!" The march proceeded at a slow but steady pace to give onlookers time to absorb our message. We only briefly stop to make note of anti-labor practices at the Hyatt Hotel on Avenue de Lafayette and then again as we turned back on Tremont Street, just a short distance from the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) offices in the John F. Kennedy Federal Building on the other side of Government Center and in front of the federal building, but the Boston Police Department denied us the permit we wanted. The police took a stance that seemed more based on politics than public safety when they told us our march merited stopping traffic either to pass the Hyatt or the federal building, but not both. The rally concluded on Tremont Street outside a military recruitment center lined with police motorcycles. In a final somber act of theater, demonstrators lay down under body bags with statistics relating the

number of victims of war and border militarization. The Bread and Puppet troupe played a slow tune while flowers were placed beside each bag.

According to plan, May Day in downtown Boston concluded in just two hours so people could also visit other May Day celebrations in the neighborhoods of East Boston and Jamaica Plain. The Chelsea Collaborative, Centro Presente and SEIU Local 615 were sponsoring a long march with rally points in the immigrant communities of Everett, Chelsea, and East Boston. In Jamaica Plain there is an annual community festival the first Saturday of every May called "Wake Up the Earth," which celebrates the coming of spring, community arts, and the anniversary of a victory over a highway development plan through the neighborhood.

This year's May Day on the Boston Common is politically significant beyond its modest size. There was broad unity on a range of radical demands. Instead of waving U.S. flags and calling for the integration of immigrants, May Day revelers called for "full rights and citizenship for the undocumented." We replaced the nebulous slogan "Jobs not Greed" with clear demands, "Tax the rich, fund schools, clinics and communities." There was even an internationalist and anti-authoritarian flavor with the slogan, "Solidarity across borders, down with Washington's Orders." In the past it has been very hard to build unity around a set of demands that so clearly chal-



May Day in Boston. Photo: boston.indymedia.org

lenges corporate and government power and also highlights the economic class line. Typically demonstrations of this size or larger are only possible when focusing on a single issue, and are built in coalition with mainstream unions, large nonprofits, and others in the orbit of the Democratic Party. We can only dream of the Tea Party's resources, with full-time organizers, the corporate media's favor, and major financial underwriting. Nevertheless, May Day 2010 shows that the Left can speak its mind and still pull off a sizable demonstration. We might not make many friends in high places, but we can speak truth to power and build our base among regular working people. Boston is not alone. Demonstrations like this occurred across the country and around the world. Another world is not only possible; it's necessary. And every day more people are ready to stand up and demand it.

Reviews and Commentary

Urban Organizing: A Case For Direct Action!

Director: Scott Hamilton Kennedy. "The Garden." *Oscilloscope Laboratories, 2008. 80 minutes.*

By Kenneth Yates

Recently I watched a documentary called "The Garden." It was about a community of Latino farmers in Los Angeles who found themselves organizing to save a community garden—at the time, the largest urban garden in the United States—from being taken from them. The farmers cultivate the land into a lush and diverse self-sustaining resource, not only for themselves, but also the community around them.

The land was given (later redefined as "loaned") to the community by the city in order to help soften the blow following the destructive 1992 Los Angeles riots. Later it would be sold out from beneath them and back to the developer, who the city acquired it from through eminent domain in 1986. The farmers organized and were able to win a few small battles prolonging the life of their garden, but in the end they lost to the greed of an uncompromising capitalist.

For me, "The Garden" is more than the subject of the film, it's about the constant struggle and pitfalls activists run into while organizing in the interest of the people. No matter how righteous the cause, how much they follow procedure, how much press they can amass, how much community support and dialog they can stimulate, in the end, bureaucracy will serve the needs of capital and force those without it to compromise.

As a result we lose more than the struggle. It would likely be the last time any of those involved will ever attempt to organize against the rich, the powerful, and the political machine that serves them. Usually born from this loss is a new justification for apathy, one which will not easily be shaken.

If you take anything from this film, I believe it should be that nothing short of direct militant action on a national scale will result in a victory for the people. This means unifying your local struggle with other struggles in other cities, states, and eventually bringing it to the level of an international movement.

With this said, I don't want to suggest that grassroots struggles that appeal to government representatives to foster change is a counter-productive act. It seems like common sense to utilize all possible avenues to further your cause, as long as they are done democratically and honestly.

There have been many battles won for the people through the legislative process, like the Civil Rights Act, but even after that was written into law, people still had to resort to direct action in order to see it enforced on a federal level.

The militancy and leadership of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., and most of all that of Malcolm X, as well as direct action activists from organizations like the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), who played a major role in the sit-ins, freedom rides and voter registrations throughout the south also inspired organizations like the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) and the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) to stand in solidarity with African-American civil rights activists in the streets, on campuses, and the workplace.

Without individual activists and countless other radical organizations employing direct action tactics, progress would have taken significantly longer.

There are other examples where legislation was never an option. After the 1886 demonstration in Chicago for the eight-hour workday, also known as the Haymarket Massacre during which several demonstrators were killed when police opened fire, the labor movement responded globally with a mandatory general strike on May 1, demanding the "...legal establishment of the eight-hour day, for the class demands of the proletariat, and for universal peace."

As a result, their demand for the eight-hour work day was written into law—a perfect example that sometimes in order to change the law, we must be willing to break it.

Overall, the argument I'm trying to make is that the struggle for Civil Rights, the eight-hour workday, and the South Central Garden isn't any different than the struggle of Residents of Public

Housing in Richmond Against Mass Eviction (RePHRAME) which is fighting to insure that they still have a home when the demolition and redevelopment slated for Gilpin Court and Fay Towers in Richmond, Virginia is complete.

Without certain revisions to the city's ordinance, such as one-for-one replacement, increased representation on the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authorities Board, and the right to return, 800 or more families could find themselves homeless as early as August 2010.

Those struggles aren't any different than that of the struggle which we should be fighting on behalf of lower income residents in the Jackson Ward neighborhood experiencing displacement due to gentrification.

Displacement is only being amplified by irresponsible downtown development that refuses to take the working class into consideration when initiating such projects.

However, the fault should not lie completely on the shoulders of local government and developers. It should be a concern as well for small businesses in the area who have found relative success in the old abandoned store fronts as galleries, salons, antique shops, restaurants and bars. These once scattered entrepreneurs soon formed an alliance under the banner of First Friday Art Walk, ushering in new life for this little downtown area in the historic working-class African-American neighborhood.

At least one night a month found the neighborhood flooded with middle class white people, who only a few years before deemed this neighborhood completely off-limits. They now scramble for parking spaces and casually stroll down the street, get drunk in its bars and socialize over art with friends.

Just as you might assume, the interests of the business owners didn't quite run parallel with the interests of the residential working class in the neighborhood. The business owners will argue that gentrification is a good thing: it has helped to clean up the neighborhood and make the area more inviting to new home owners and real estate investors. They will argue that the life of the neighborhood is much better now that it has been.

The working class residents of the area will argue that, while the neighborhood is brighter, generally busier and patrolled more often by police officers,



Graphic: notborntodie.org

it hasn't come without a price: increased rent (affordable perhaps by university students), new landlords (who are interested in having student tenants rather than ones who are working class), and increasing property taxes that made it unaffordable for the preexisting lower-income homeowners to live there (some of whom were retired and living on a fixed income).

Many are being forced to sell the property grossly below market value to avoid being foreclosed upon by the banks.

Fellow Workers, you may not be intimate with the concerns of Richmond's disenfranchised, but I'm positive that similar struggles exist in most major cities across the United States.

Some of the things we could be organizing to help the working class and working poor rise up out of poverty are programs like rent control and ceilings on property taxes for lower income residents and home owners in neighborhoods like Jackson Ward. Another idea would be to increase the minimum wage up to a living wage that reflects the cost of living in the affected area.

Without these protections, there is no chance for the working class to lift itself out of poverty and our cities will begin to reflect, even more than they already do, the desires of those with capital. Our cities will become places where only the wealthy and middle class can afford to live and play, and the only working-class people we will see will be in a position of servitude.

Understanding The Chicago Factory Occupation

Lyderson, Kari. "Revolt on Goose Island." *New York: Melville House, 2009. 176 pages, paperback, \$16.*

By James Generic

"Revolt on Goose Island" is a blow-by-blow account of the occupation at the Republic Windows and Doors Factory in December 2008, when the U.S. economy rapidly collapsed and workers were being thrown out of their jobs by the hundreds of thousands. When the workers at the factory were told that they were being left without jobs, suddenly and without any notice, they said, "Enough is enough" and fought for at least some severance money.

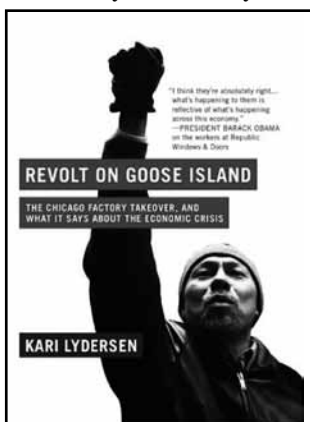
Kari Lyderson does a good job of bringing the story down to reality with emphasis on the people involved, with background on the situation, the company, Bank of America (who had cut the company off of financial credit shortly after taking billions of dollars in emergency taxpayer money through the Troubled Asset Relief Program, or TARP), and the union. What Lyderson does a great job of emphasizing is the fact that the only reason the workers were able to pull off the occupation was because they had a strong, democratic, member-driven union in

the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America (UE), a small progressive union of about 35,000 with a rich history of militant action.

Lyderson also does a great job painting why the workers decided to go after Bank of America when it was really the company's fault. The economy had soured people's moods towards the financial giants, and the company, which was incompetently run by its owner, kept trying to blame the bank, and so the union put pressure on him to show his finances by targeting the bank.

In the end, all sorts of politicians, including then president-elect Barak Obama, came out in support of the workers. It was the right thing to do, at the right time. Usually, factory occupations, which are common in other countries, have a hard time in the United States, where private property laws reign supreme even over people's lives. But at that moment, the mood of the country was with the workers.

The Republic Workers' story had a happy ending as they received everything they fought for, and the factory itself has started to re-open after a year, re-hiring those workers who stood up and emerged as heroes during those days in December.



Graphic: notborntodie.org

Subscribe to the Industrial Worker

Subscribe or renew your *Industrial Worker* subscription.

Give a gift that keeps your family or friends thinking.

Get 10 issues of working class news and views for:

- US \$18 for individuals.
- US \$24 for library/institutions.
- US \$20 for international subscriptions.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Province: _____

Zip/Postal Code: _____

Send this subscription form to:

Industrial Worker Subscriptions,
PO Box 180195, Chicago, IL 60618 USA
 Subscribe to the *Industrial Worker* today!

Special

Labor War In The Mojave: California Miners Struggle

By Mike Davis

The biggest hole in California, with the exception of the current state budget, is Rio Tinto's huge open-pit mine at the town of Boron, near Edwards Air Force Base, 80 miles northeast of Los Angeles.

Seen from Google Earth, it is easy to imagine that the 700-foot-deep crater was blasted out of the Mojave Desert by an errant asteroid or comet. From the vantage point of Highway 58, however, the landscape is enigmatic: a mile-long rampart of ochre earth and gray mudstone, terminating at what looks like a giant chemical refinery.

At night, when a driver's mind is most prone to legends of the desert, the complex's intense illumination is startling, even slightly extraterrestrial, like the sinister off-world mining colony in "Aliens."

Terri Judd's labor owns part of this eerie landscape—or rather its void. She's a third-generation borax miner, as deeply rooted in the high desert as one of the native Joshua trees. Every working morning for the past 13 years, she has bundled her long red hair under a hard hat, climbed up the ladder of a giant Le Tourneau wheel loader and turned on its 1,600-horsepower Detroit Diesel engine. Her air-conditioned cab perches almost treetop height above custom-made, 12-foot-high tires that cost \$30,000 each. She operates this leviathan with delicate manipulations of two joysticks, more high-skill video game than Mad Max.

In a regular 12.5-hour shift, she ceaselessly repeats the same mechanical callisthenic: lowering her 20-foot-wide bucket, deftly scooping up 25 to 30 tons of borax ore, then delivering the load to one of the mine's plants to be made into boric acid or granulated for eventual use in dozens of industrial applications, from fiberglass surfboards to HD display screens.

Each year one million tons of borax products are fed into hopper cars (800 of which are permanently assigned to the mine) and hauled to the Los Angeles harbor for shipment to China and other industrializing countries hungry for the caustic residue of the Mojave's ancient lakes. The Boron pit, which replaced an underground mine, produces almost half the world's supply of refined borates.

Strip mining the Mojave may not be everyone's cup of tea, but Terri—a combat veteran of Operation Desert Storm and a single mom—flat-out loves her job. "What can I say? We get to play with the big toys. I guess I was always a tomboy. I preferred Tonkas to Barbies, socket wrenches to dollhouses."

But she doesn't play alone: Big Brother is looking over her shoulder, evaluating her performance. "In effect, the boss rides with me. The GPS in my loader can be monitored not only from the plant but from Rio Tinto's U.S. headquarters in Denver, or, for that matter, from the global head office in London."

Peeping Toms, however, don't normally perturb Terri. "There are no slackers in the pit. Our productivity is sky-high because borax mining is our family history." Indeed, a Boron workforce shrunk to less than 40 percent of its 1980 size produces record outputs despite a rapidly aging plant; an ornery, dipping ore body; and an increasingly remote and hostile management.

Terri acknowledges that her devotion to the mine has been an act of unrequited love. In last year's contract negotiations, Rio Tinto (the British-Australian multinational acquired its Boron facility, U.S. Borax, in 1968 and renamed it Rio Tinto Borax) stunned members of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) Local 30, by demanding abolition of the contractually enshrined seniority system and the surrender of



Busloads of scabs replace locked-out ILWU Local 30 members. Photo: labournet.net

any worker voice in the labor process.

According to Dean Gehring, the latest in a succession of recent mine managers, international competition compels a drastic switch to "high-performance teams that have the flexibility to do many different jobs, and we need to reward and promote our top performers. The old contract doesn't allow us to do that."

The company wanted a contract that would allow it to capriciously promote or demote; to outsource union jobs; to convert full-time to part-time positions with little or no benefits; to reorganize shift schedules without warning; to eliminate existing work rules; to cut holidays, sick leave and pension payments; to impose involuntary overtime; and to heavily penalize the union if workers file grievances against the company with the National Labor Relations Board.

Rio Tinto, in essence, claims the right to rule by divine whim, to blatantly discriminate against and even fire employees for felonies like "failing to have or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with company personnel, client personnel, contractor, and visitors."

"The company's proposal," union negotiators emphasized, "would destroy our union, lower our living standards, and give Borax total control over our jobs." On January 30, Local 30 members unanimously rejected the concessions demanded by Rio Tinto.

The company deadline expired the next morning, when Terri Judd set off for work as usual with her lunchbox and thermos. At the locked front gate she and other day-shift workers encountered a phalanx of nervous Kern County sheriff's deputies in full riot gear. Inside the plant, an elite "strike security team" hired by Rio Tinto had taken control of operations.

Delaware-based J.R. Gettier & Associates brags that it is the Home Depot of union busting, a one-stop source for security planners, armed guards, legal experts, industrial spies and, most important, highly-skilled replacement workers. It even has staff who can oper-

ate Terri's giant loader.

The Gettier mercenaries wore sneers and dark glasses as they pushed their convoy past a crowd of angry Local 30 members.

"Being locked out," says Terri, "is different from going on strike. Initially there's disbelief that the company is actually serious about booting you out the door. Hey, my granddad worked in this mine. But then you see that caravan of scabs coming to take your jobs, and the betrayal cuts like a knife in your heart." The future of a small town in the Mojave is entangled in geo-economic competitions far larger and more important than the borate market itself. So what chance do 560 miners and their families have in a fight with Godzilla?

The record of the past 20 years is not encouraging. With some heroic exceptions—the 1989-90 Pittston coal strike in Virginia, the 1990s Frontier Casinos strike in Las Vegas and a few others—international unions have seldom been willing to support a local fight to the last bullet or bitter dime.

But ILWU has a unique street credibility. The pit bull of CIO-generation unions, it bit into the heels of the West Coast stevedoring industry in 1934 and never let go. Industrial unions are supposed to be dying, but the ILWU, despite its modest size, punches hard enough to keep the powerful Pacific Maritime Association sulking in its corner, while ensuring that the docks remain safe and well paid.

As the only union that survived McCarthyism with its left-wing leadership (under Harry Bridges) intact, the ILWU is also legendary for putting muscle behind the slogan of "working-class solidarity." Since the 1960s it has conducted scores of job actions and walkouts in support of striking Australian dockers, California farm workers and South African freedom fighters. Indeed, in May 2008 the union shut down the West Coast for a day to protest the war in Iraq.

In anticipation of the Boron lockout, ILWU had persuaded members of an international coalition of mining and maritime unions—many of whom have

done battle with Rio Tinto—to hold their periodic conference in the nearby desert city of Palmdale. On Feb. 16 the delegates, along with rank and file from other ILWU locals, held a big Local 30 barbecue.

The overture to the protest is the earthshaking full-throttle roar of shovelhead and twin-cam Harley-Davidson engines. The stevedore-bikers of Local 13 (L.A. Harbor) emerge out of the desert haze like Marlon Brando's leather-clad horde in "The Wild One."

Carloads of out-of-town ILWU members arrive, then two buses carrying dozens of U.S. and foreign labor leaders. The crowd applauds, people shake hands, someone turns up the volume on "Born in the USA" and the marchers begin to assemble, about 600-strong, behind a banner that spans the entire width of the road: "An Injury to One Is an Injury to All."

Local 30 brings a dozen American and Marine Corps flags to the front, and begins to chant, "We Wanna Work, We Wanna Work." The sheriffs are relaxed, but the Gettier security guards up the road nervously shift their feet. As usual, their faces are inscrutable behind dark glasses, but you can almost smell their guilty sweat.

Ken Riley, president of the largely-black International Longshoremen's Association Local 1422 in Charleston, S.C., summarizes the case for optimism: "You pick on the ILWU, you pick on the world. When our own international deserted us, they were there. Now we're here."

"This isn't political theater. The first month of a struggle is decisive, and the ILWU is doing a terrific job marketing Boron's importance to the rest of the labor movement. Internationally, our unions understand that we have to organize the logistics chain, from producers to transport to distributor to retailer. This is a new model of power for the labor movement, like industrial unionism in the 1930s, but adapted to the reality of globalization," Ken later tells me.

"But Boron?" I ask.

"Hey, something new is being born here. It has to be."

Toni McCormick, a pretty, jovial woman in her late 20s, gives me a ride back to my car. The wife of a Local 30 member, she coaches the cheer squad at Boron High. "I'm fourth generation," she tells me. "My great-grandfather's house is still standing, made out of old dynamite boxes held together with chicken wire. Our football team plays in a high desert league with other mining and military towns. Sometimes they have to tackle each other in the dirt because grass won't grow in a saline lake bed."

"Can anything grow in a dry lake?" I wonder.

"Sure," Toni smiles. "Miners can."

"Labor War in the Mojave" originally appeared in the March 29, 2010 edition of The Nation magazine. A portion of this story was reprinted with permission from The Nation.

UPDATE: Solidarity Results In Contract For Rio Tinto Miners

From aflcio.org/blog.

The combination of worker solidarity and the strong support of their neighbors helped workers at Rio Tinto's borax mine in Borax, Calif., take on one of the world's largest mining companies. On May 15, approximately 75 percent of the 570 locked-out mine workers voted to approve a new six-year contract that protects their jobs, calls for raises and maintains protections against discrimination and favoritism.

With the new contract, workers will receive an annual 2.5 percent wage increase in each year of the six years. Workers will keep their protections against discrimination and favoritism in promotions, shifts, scheduling and overtime assignments. The company also is not allowed to convert full-time jobs into part-time, temporary jobs. Current employees will continue to receive solid retirement pensions; and newly-hired employees would receive 401(k) plans with a generous company match.



Photo: labournet.net

OFFERINGS FROM THE I.W.W. *Literature* DEPARTMENT

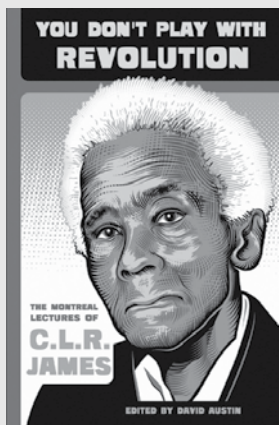


One Big Blend Coffee A Celebration of the I.W.W.

While you're plotting your wake-up call to the employing class, wake yourself up with coffee roasted by your fellow workers! A blend of light and dark roasted shade-grown, fair trade, organic coffee from Peru and Mexico, made by Just Coffee, an I.W.W. job shop located in Madison, Wisconsin.

Just Coffee Co-op's mission is to work with small grower cooperatives in true partnership, using the language and mechanics of market economics to turn the market on its ear. We source the finest green coffee on earth, air-roast it to perfection, and to deliver the highest quality beans proving to our customers that a better model can also deliver higher quality products. We aim for total transparency, sustainable business practices, and long-term relationships with all of our partners while providing a fun and meaningful cooperative workplace for the people we work with. Oh, and we also seek to change global social and economic inequality by practicing REAL fair trade in direct opposition to gluttonous "free trade" and corporate fair trade. We recognize fair trade as one strategy for change within a larger movement for global social justice.

12 OZ. PER BAG, \$10.00



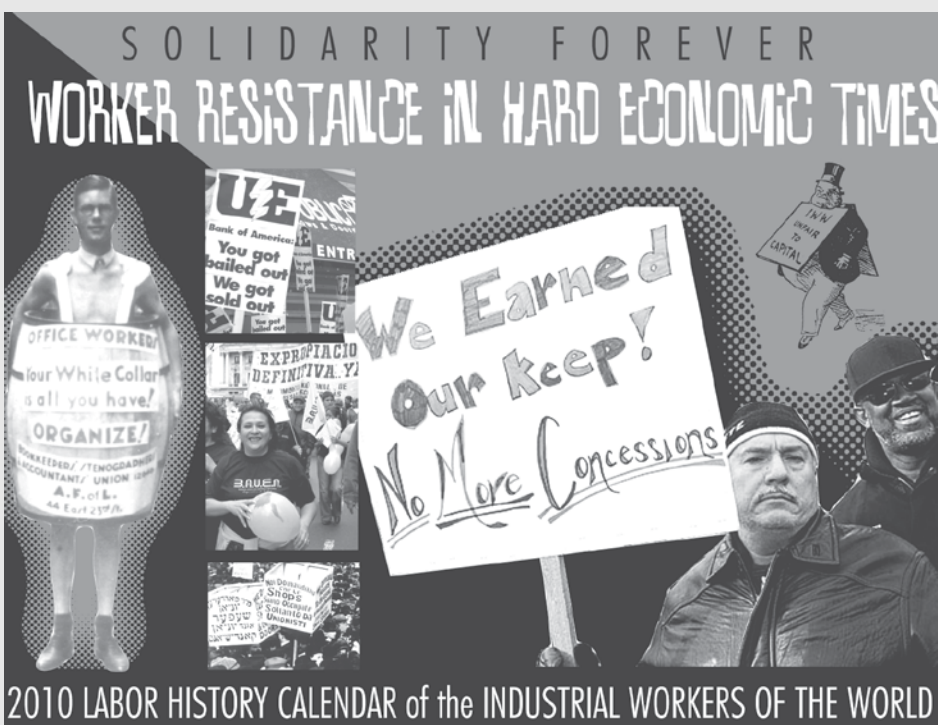
You Don't Play With Revolution by C.L.R. James

This new collection of essays by radical activist/critic C.L.R. James (perhaps best known today for his *Every Cook Can Govern*) features eight never-before-published lectures delivered in Montreal in 1967 and 1968, on subjects ranging from Shakespeare and Rousseau to Caribbean history and the Haitian Revolution.

Editor David Austin contributes a historical introduction to James' life and work. The book also includes two interviews from James' stay in Canada, selected correspondence from the period, and an appendix of essays including Marty Glaberman's "C.L.R. James: The Man and His Work."

This book is essential reading for everyone who has grappled with James' contributions to radical theory, in particular his efforts to fuse radical Marxism with an approach focused on supporting autonomous struggles by the dispossessed.

333 PAGES, \$18.95



Solidarity Forever: Worker Resistance in Hard Economic Times

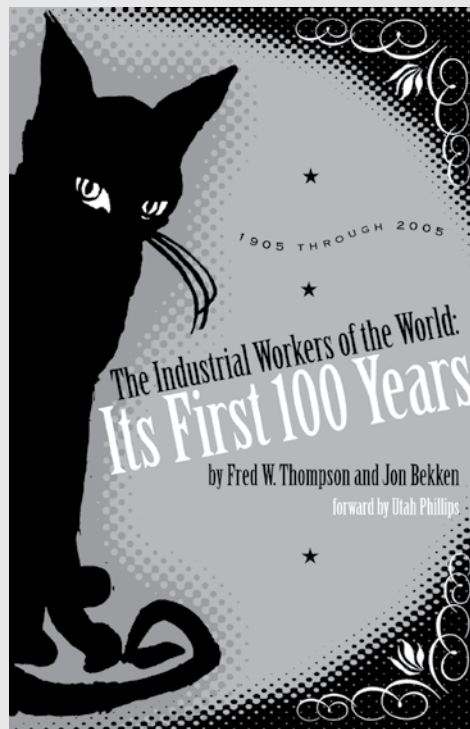
2010 Labor History Calendar of the IWW

The IWW's revolutionary labor calendar with compelling photographs of workers' struggles from around the world and hundreds of notes marking important dates in the fight for industrial freedom.

This year's edition celebrates actions working people have taken during rough economic times: from beating back concessions and demanding shorter work hours, to taking over shut down enterprises.

A sure source of inspiration for every wage slave!

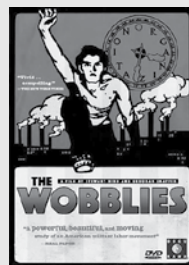
\$12.50 each Beginning of the year sale: \$10.00 each
\$6.50 each for five or more to the same address



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



The Wobblies DVD

This documentary from 1979 takes a look at the IWW's early days, with a combination of interviews and archival footage.

90 minutes, \$26.95

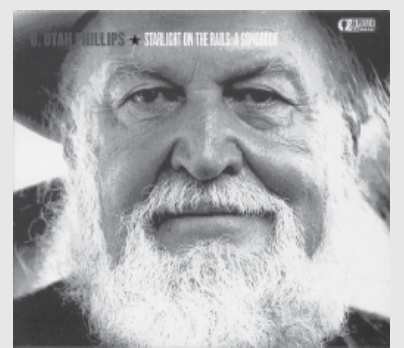


Women's Cut IWW T-shirts

Sabo-cat design printed on union-made taffy pink or olive green shirt

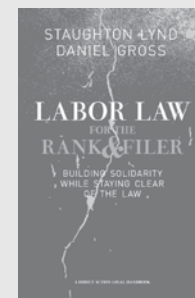
Sizes S-XL \$15.00

Sizes run small, order up a size for a looser fit. Specify color and size when ordering.



Utah Phillips: Starlight on the Rails Boxed CD Set

This four CD set contains 63 stories and 61 songs, spanning over 40 years of Utah's performing career. \$38.95



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. Illustrative stories of workers' struggles make the legal principles come alive.

110 pages, \$10.00

ORDER FORM

MAIL TO: IWW LITERATURE, PO BOX 42777, PHILA, PA 19101

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP CODE: _____

QUANTITY	ITEM	PRICE

*Shipping/Handling

In the U.S., please add \$3.00 for first item & \$1.00 for each additional item
Canada: Add \$4.00 for the first item, \$1.00 for each additional item
Overseas: Add \$5.00 for the first item, \$2.00 for each additional item

SUB-TOTAL: _____

SHIPPING*: _____

TOTAL ENCLOSED: _____

IWW Hosts Sweatshop Workers Tour Of U.S.

Continued from 1

the world: it was not until Kalpona discovered that laws existed protecting her as a worker that she felt emboldened to question the conditions of her labor, and to struggle to have those conditions improved. The tour she and Zehra went on addresses precisely the disconnect between nice words and good laws, and their lack of associated action and enforcement.

Procurement

In many of the factories around the world, over 50 percent of the products they make are purchased by one large end-consumer. This usually happens through a process called “Procurement,” which means nothing more and nothing less than institutional purchasing, by city, state, and federal governments, or by educational institutions. Workers in these sweatshops spend their working hours sewing uniforms for police, sheriffs, prisoners, janitors, and others. In Pakistan, where Zehra Bano works with women who stitch soccer balls at home for piece-work rates, women and their daughters stitch together the 32 panels of soccer balls that are then purchased by schools, public school districts, and municipal sports teams.

While consumers are often encouraged to take personal moral responsibility for their own purchases, it is intimidating and often overwhelming to imagine how such individual purchases can make a difference. By focusing on procurement policies and enforcement, however, citizens, representatives, activists, unionists, and people of basic human compassion and decency can make effective changes through collective action.

This national speaking tour focuses on two aspects of municipal and institutional procurement—policies, and enforcement. There are places on this tour where local city and state governments, or large universities, have refused or resisted adopting Sweat Free Procurement Policies. We should be very clear about what this means:

Sweat Free Procurement Policies are nothing more, and nothing less, than a promise on the part of the consumer institution (local government, university, etc.) to demand information from their vendors about the conditions of work in the factories where the products are made, and to make purchasing decisions with working conditions as a priority consideration. In other words, a government or other institution that adopts a Sweat Free Procurement Policy promises to make good faith efforts to purchase from companies that do not actively, intentionally, and repeatedly violate existing labor laws, abuse their workers, and organize their mass deaths. It shocks the

individual conscience that any human being could explicitly refuse to adopt such policies, and instead continue to profit from such inhumane working conditions. But these are the explicit positions of many governments and institutions. Their citizens and neighbors must pressure these decision makers to change their minds in such cases.

But for institutions to adopt Sweat Free Policies on their own is not a solution, and that leads to the second goal of the tour. In Minnesota, almost every major educational institution has already signed on to various forms of Sweat Free Procurement—either by joining the Workers Rights Consortium, or through a variety of Designated Supplier Programs. But these policies are nothing but window dressing if they are not enforced, and enforcement is the second goal of the tour.

Just as Kalpona’s real struggle began not with the adoption of Bangladesh’s labor laws, but in her awareness that these laws were being egregiously violated, so too our real struggle for solidarity with factory workers around the world—the people who make our products—begins with the realization that such violations of human dignity, worker rights, and basic decency must be challenged, and that Sweat Free Procurement Policies, when adopted, are only the beginning of a struggle for enforcement.

To make real progress in the factories of Bangladesh, Honduras, El Salvador, Cambodia, China, Indonesia, or in the home-based piece work of Pakistan and elsewhere, excellent policies must be met with vigilant work. Policies by themselves do nothing; all real work is done by human beings. Where institutions refuse to even adopt Sweat Free Policies, the response of activists should be pressure and attack—there is no legitimate reason for such refusal. But when such policies are adopted, the situation becomes more complex.

Because such policies and enforcement campaigns are relatively recent, systems of monitoring, reporting, and enforcement are still in the making. At one college with a Sweat Free Procure-



Zehra and Kalpona on tour. Photo: laborrights.org

ment Policy, the flow of communication has been so slow between vendors, producers, and purchasers that it became very unclear how even a person acting in full good faith could proceed. To that end, this tour aims also to connect purchasing agents and procurement departments with workers, unions, citizens, and student activists. We must pressure responsible parties to do the right thing, but we must also help make doing the right thing possible.

The specific enforcement mechanisms promoted on this tour fall into three rough categories: (1) Direct worker monitoring of factory conditions, with reports from the workers to union and worker organizations, which then transmit the information to the Workers Rights Consortium databases; (2) Regular queries of vendors from purchasers about the named specific factories where products are produced, and reports (from both vendors and workers’ organizations) about conditions in those factories; and (3) Purchasing decisions by institutions will then be made on the basis of evaluation of worker conditions in source factories.

These proposals improve on the current condition in many ways. Currently, the “showpiece” monitoring organizations of Sweatshop factories, such as that of Better Factories in Cambodia (a project of the International Labor Organization, or ILO), is announced ahead of time to factory owners and managers, takes place only at work (and not in workers’ home communities), and most commonly under the watchful eyes of managers. Accurate assessment of worker conditions is impossible through such practices. Instead, the proposed enforcement mechanisms on this tour include surprise workplace visits, interviews without managers present, and visits to worker home communities.

There are limits to what the adoption, monitoring, and enforcement of such policies can accomplish. These policies and their enforcement are not magic bullets which will slay the giant of economic exploitation, or immediately bring working standards in Bangladesh or Pakistan to levels acceptable to workers in North America. But these are

important, necessary steps that if taken vigorously, can effectively and quickly help empower workers in countries all over the world to take control of their work situations, and hence, of their own lives, communities, and destinies.

In late February 2010, 21 workers at the Garib and Garib Factory, which produces for H&M, Wal-Mart, JC Penny and others, died when a fire broke out inside the factory. Just as in the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire, the workers were locked inside the factory, which led directly to the deaths of these workers, and the hospitalization of more than 50 others. Such factory fires and deaths are common in Export Processing Zones around the world today.

The Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire brought the plight of young immigrant workers in New York’s sweatshops to full public attention. The image of adolescent girls’ bodies slamming into the sidewalks was too much for even the most comfortable of citizens to simply ignore. Predecessor organizations of Occupational Safety and Hazard Administration (OSHA) began in its aftermath, and unions and politicians alike began to push for improved—and enforced—working conditions. For a while, U.S. citizens managed to put an end to the vilest forms of sweatshop labor (they are creeping back now, though largely illegally; the legal ones are largely in our enormous penitentiary system, where minimum wage is not paid, and the intensely low wages allow the products to be competitive with products made in sweatshops abroad).

But these sweatshops did not disappear; they moved. They moved to places like Bangladesh and Pakistan, El Salvador and Honduras. The exploitation and planned murder of workers did not end, but moved abroad. Our global economy is connected now like never before in human history—a potentially wonderful or hateful thing, depending on how these connections are used. The differences between workers here in North America and those elsewhere—differences of geography, race, ethnicity, nation, citizenship, religion, political party, sex, sexual orientation, etc.—are used to justify the differences in working conditions. But those who work against exploitation and murder at work refuse this plan. We believe we are one humanity, and that the struggle of workers in Bangladesh and Pakistan is the same struggle as that of workers in the United States. There are many differences, to be sure, but like us, they struggle for dignity, safety, respect, and the right to the full value of their labor. We would do well to support them, for in the coming economic times, their recent past may very well resemble our future.

Thoughts On Pittsburgh’s Successful South Asian Garment Workers’ Tour Stop

By Kenneth Miller

On April 27, Kalpona Akter and Zehra Bano gave their testimony in front of the Pittsburgh City Council during a post-agenda hearing about anti-sweatshop policy, and then at a speaking event in support of union organizing in the global apparel industry, sponsored by 19 groups at the August Wilson Center.

As the workers’ tour of collaborating groups like the IWW, the Pittsburgh Anti-Sweatshop Community Alliance, the International Labor Rights Forum and SweatFree Communities wraps up, I’m left with many unfinished conversations. Here is a short list:

- The Bangladesh Center for Workers Solidarity has a working relationship with the U.S. State Department and



Graphic: Tom Keough

the USAID/AFL-CIO Solidarity Center. The NGWF of Bangladesh does not. How does this inform IWW initiatives to build solidarity with garment workers in Bangladesh?

- A policy victory at a university or with a governmental legislator still constitutes a “victory” for the anti-sweatshop movement. At what point does



Workers’ tour stop in PGH. Photo: Kenneth Miller

that become ridiculous when it is not followed by victories for workers? How are we going to use these policies more effectively? How are we going to leverage them to actually have an impact?

- I don’t think there is a meaningful comparison between the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire in New York City and the struggle of workers in Bangladesh;

the United States and Bangladesh don’t actually share any parallel development tracks.

- We cannot blame unions in Central America for anything. Blaming them for failures to organize at factories doing work for the U.S. consumer market is crazy. We need an analysis of garment worker unions in Central America that makes more sense than this. We need to be involved in the details of supporting a REGIONAL union-organizing approach in Central America.

- I’m tired of hearing “no tax dollars for sweatshops” and the equating of procurement policies with the creation of U.S. jobs. These cannot be campaign slogans; they have nothing to do with human rights or labor rights. We cannot make arguments directed at the media or to politicians and expect those arguments to hold water with our allies.

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 Matt Antosh

Your 2010 International Solidarity Commission continues to work to build international solidarity. This month, we are sending a letter condemning the execution of education worker and human rights activist Farzad Kamangar by the Islamic Republic of Iran; we are sending greetings of solidarity to the CNT in Spain and the SAC in Sweden to celebrate their centenaries; and we have sent more than \$4,000 to Fellow Workers in Haiti to support their ongoing struggle after the earthquake that struck their nation.

Iran Executes Activist Farzad Kamangar

The Islamic Republic of Iran executed education worker, teacher and human rights activist Farzad Kamangar and four political prisoners in Iran on May 9. In addition to Kamangar, Ali Heydari, Farhad Vakili, Shirin Alamoouli and Mehdi Eslamian were all executed in Evin Prison. None of the defendants' lawyers or families were aware of their executions.

The ISC has sent a letter of protest to the Islamic Republic of Iran, and encourages all Wobblies to do the same. Below is a portion of the message we sent:

"We, the International Solidarity Commission (ISC) of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) are writing this to strongly condemn the execution of Farzad Kamangar, teacher, labor and human rights' activist, by the Islamic Republic of Iran along with four other political prisoners.

"We condemn continuous gross attacks on human and workers' rights in Iran. We demand the immediate and unconditional freedom of all political prisoners and jailed workers and students.

"No one should be persecuted, jailed and assaulted because of practicing their fundamental human rights. Torture and executions must be stopped immediately."

Send a copy of your protest letters to: info@leader.ir, info@judiciary.ir, iran@un.int; ijpr@iranjudiciary.org, info@dadiran.ir, office@justice.ir, ilo@ilo.org; cabinet@ilo.org; eastgulf@amnesty.org; hrwgva@hrw.org. CC: info@workers-iran.org

IWW Supports Haitian Workers

The ISC thanks all the Fellow Work-



Graphic: poumista.wordpress.com

ers who generously gave to support workers in Haiti. We raised more than \$4,400 from small donations. This money was split between the Confédération des Travailleurs Haïtiens (CTH) and Batay Ouvriye, and sent to Haiti in time for May Day.

A Century of the Spanish CNT and Swedish SAC

2010 marks the centennial anniversary of the founding of both

the Confederación Nacional del Trabajo (CNT) in Spain and the Sveriges Arbetare Centralorganisation (SAC) of Sweden.

Since their founding, the CNT and the SAC's rebellious spirit has been an inspiration to workers around the world. The CNT's heroic raising against the fascists, and the revolution it spearheaded, continue to inspire new generations of workers everywhere, and to give concrete form to the slogan that another world is possible. IWW members fought and died in the Durruti Column to make that world possible, and the ties that bind our unions are drenched in blood.

The ties that bind the IWW and the SAC are also tied in the blood of our martyrs, particularly Joe Hill, Swedish songwriter murdered by the state. Today, Joe Hill's family house in Gästrikland is maintained by the SAC and serves as a memorial to Joe Hill and as a meeting place for the local SAC union.

The ISC sends our support to the CNT and the SAC, and look forward to the next 100 years of partnership in building an international revolutionary labor movement!

The ISC wants YOU!

The ISC is working to build a base of volunteers in each branch to help mobilize international solidarity. We are looking for motivated people who are interested in international solidarity work to liaise with the ISC. This work will include:

- * Passing motions of solidarity at branch level
- * Helping organize events, tours, and pickets
- * Keeping members informed on the activities of the ISC and the IWW's international allies

We hope to have a member from each branch volunteer. If you are interested in this work and would like to volunteer, email: solidarity@iww.org.

Transport Workers Strike In South Africa

From libcom.org

Transport workers in South Africa walked out on strike on May 10. Major South African exports, including fruit, metals and wine have sat idle in warehouses following the walkouts of railway and port workers.

The strike has involved some 50,000 workers, including members of the South African Transport and Allied Workers' Union (SATAWU), the South African Railways and Harbour Workers' Union and the United Transport and Allied Trade Union. The workers are in dispute with Transnet Ltd., South Africa's largest rail and port operator and freight logistics company.

The walkout was announced following the failure of pay negotiations with management, with an official demand of a 15 percent pay rise in opposition to management's offer of 11 percent. Duncan Spielman, a SATAWU shop steward, commented "Management is offering a conditional 11 per cent. That is unacceptable for our members. The way forward is that we will keep on engaging. We won't stop engaging. But the strike will go on until our demand of 15 percent is met. You can't compromise on 15 percent at this time. Over the years there has been a growing gap between the salaries of management and junior employees and we can't compromise this time around."

The citrus fruit trade, second only to that of Spain, has come to a total stand-

still as the strike prevents crops from being transported. Cold storage has been reported to have filled up at the end of the week, meaning future shipments will decompose in the heat.

South African exporters have posted notice of their inability to deliver shipments as the strike has paralyzed sections of the economy. A number of companies, including Samancor Ltd., Ruukki Group and Xstrata Plc.—all Ferrochrome producers—and Anglo-American Plc. subsidiary Kumba Iron Ore Ltd. posted "force majeure," a legal clause that states their inability to make shipments due to circumstances beyond their control.

Four weeks' worth of coal stocks are left.

The strike has been accompanied by protest marches in major cities. On May 11, demonstrators marched through Cape Town, Mafikeng, Port Elizabeth, East London, Richards Bay and Vryheid. Protests took place on May 12 in Durban and Polokwane, and on May 14 in Johannesburg. This led to a backlash from the state, with 13 protesters arrested for "violence and intimidation," according to Transnet management.

The Transnet strike has been accompanied by an "illegal" strike by Rea Vaya bus system workers in Johannesburg and strike action by the South African Communication Workers Union during the week. The bus workers struck to demand recognition for the South African Municipal Workers' Union (SAMWU).

Unite In Solidarity With JB Hi-Fi Workers

From unite.org.au

On May 8, the Unite Union organized a solidarity picket outside of one of the region's largest electronic retail stores, JB Hi-Fi, on Bourke Street in the city of Melbourne.

Hundreds of leaflets were distributed to customers explaining how the company is refusing to offer its New Zealand retail staff a pay rise. Passers-by expressed much interest in the union's information stall as they stopped to listen to speeches from Unite organizers.

Several members of JB Hi-Fi's management were seen spying on the action. Unite members warned them that future actions would be organized if the JB Hi-Fi New Zealand staff were not offered a decent pay rise soon.

JB Hi-Fi workers in New Zealand have been taking strike action in recent weeks as part of a campaign to win higher wages for retail workers. Their strike was the first industrial action at one of the company's stores in Australia or New Zealand in over 27 years of the company's history!

New Zealand's Unite Union has

been negotiating with JB Hi-Fi management for over six months for a collective agreement, but the Australian bosses are refusing to agree to any wage increases. New Zealand JB Hi-Fi workers haven't had a pay rise in two and a half years!

Most JB Hi-Fi workers in New Zealand are paid \$13.50 (NZ), almost half as much as JB Hi-Fi workers in Australia! While the retail giant's net profit after tax is expected to be as high as \$120 (NZ) million this year, CEO Richard Euchritz told their New Zealand employees that their demand for a pay rise is "absurd."

What is absurd is that Euchritz was paid almost AU\$3 million last year, while refusing any pay rises for his employees! The Unite Union will continue their action against JB Hi-Fi until they agree to pay decent wages to their employees.

Let JB Hi-Fi management know you don't support them ripping off their workers!

For more information about the dispute in New Zealand, visit the Unite Union website: <http://www.unite.org.nz>

Obituary

Rest In Peace: Marcel Szary, 1964-2010

By Workers' Initiative

Marcel Szary, an activist of the Workers' Initiative Trade Union (WI) in the Cegielski Factory in Poznań, died on the morning of March 30. He was also one of the founders of the union. It is a huge loss for the syndicalist and union movement in Poland.

Marcel Szary was an extraordinary union and worker activist. During the communist regime, he was a member of the underground Solidarność union, which he joined when he was still going to school. After 1989 he did not agree with the compromising politics of the union, and he gave up his union membership. In June 2004 he was one of the founders of the Workers' Initiative commission in the Cegielski Factory. He was a representative of the workers in the board of that factory. He was one of the most significant and active activists of WI. He was a friend of the anarchist movement,



Photo: mmpoznan.pl

which he thought was a symbol of workers' struggle.

We will remember Marcel as an uncompromising activist who always put the interests of workers and the management board over his own. We will remember his passionate speeches, his unbelievable sense of humor, and how he always offered a helping hand. He was often repressed for his activity, and in 2009 he was fined by the court in Poznań.

In 2007 Marcel was diagnosed with leukemia. Being ill, he was still struggling as a union activist. In December 2009 the doctors said the disease had reversed. Unfortunately, this was not for long. In late February 2010 he was back in the hospital, where in the last days of his passionate life, he got involved in the struggle in defense of the nurses of the hospital. Two weeks before his death, his condition drastically worsened. Marcel orphaned an 8-year-old son. This year he would have been 46 years old.

Support international solidarity!

Assessments for \$3, \$6 are available from your delegate or IWW headquarters
PO Box 180195
Chicago, IL 60618, USA.

