More repression of ICE detainees

Mexican workers stealing jobs?

Starsbucks Settles Sixth Labor Complaint

Labor Violations Fan the Flames of Escalating Public Outcry

By the IWW Starbucks Workers Union

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

“This settlement proves that Starbucks executives are not above the law and cannot block hardworking baristas from making positive change,” said Angel Gardiner, a barista and member of the Starbucks Workers Union (SWU) in the Twin Cities. “How can Starbucks claim that it maintains a positive work environment when one labor case after another exposes its lack of respect for employees?”

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

The settlement is the first since a Labor Board judge found Starbucks guilty of similar rights violations in the first ever trial between baristas and the coffee chain in December 2008. “Howard Schultz needs to create quality jobs for hardworking families, not just line the pockets of the fat cats at corporate headquarters,” said Erik Forman, a barista and member of the Starbucks Workers Union. “Our campaign for secure work hours, fair pay, and a voice at work gains momentum every day.”

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

By Thomas Good

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

On May 30, more than 700 strikers and their supporters rallied outside the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) Marble Hill Houses, in the South Bronx, and then marched to the Stella D’Oro plant—located at West 237 Street and Broadway—where a second rally was held. The strikers were joined by members of several unions: New York State United Teachers (NYSUT), Transportation Workers Union (TWU) Local 100, City University’s Professional Staff Congress (PSC-CUNY), the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists (CFTU) and the NY Metro Postal Union (APWU). As the protesters proceeded north on Broadway the orderly march was briefly disrupted when someone threw a bottle from an apartment building. Marchers took to the street and the procession continued.

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

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

California CWA Locals Preparing to Strike

By Freedom Socialist

Instead of punching time clocks at the University of California (UC) Berkeley on May 6, members of University Professional and Technical Employees—Communications Workers of America (UPE-T-USTA) Local 1 mounted spirited picket lines on the campus. They are fed up with the university’s management, which has obstructed bargaining a new contract for more than a year. The UC administration has imposed increased healthcare and parking costs without negotiating—and have also harassed and laid off a union bargainer.

The one-day Unfair Labor Practice strike brought out impressive support—both on- and off-campus—including endorsements and donations from the faculty union at City College, the Office and Professional Employees International Union (OPEIU) Local 9, as well as the San Francisco Labor Council. The campus American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) union also backs UPE-T, as they were on strike one year ago and won contract protections for immi- grant workers. UPE-T solidarity pickets closed down a construction site during that action, reported Nancy Kato, a UC worker and activist with Bay Area Rad- ical Women. “AFSCME’s strike was our strike too,” she said. “Same boss, same struggle, same fight.”

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

Continued on 7
Dear Editors,

I think the Industrial Worker should have a column devoted entirely to unemployability. IWW hardly ever speaks to this problem that is plaguing society, but when the newspaper does touch on this issue, it is great.

Sincerely,

Joe Randall

---

Letters welcome! Send your letters to: iww@iww.org with “Letters in the subject.

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

Get the Word Out!
IWW members, branches, shops and other affiliated bodies can get the word out about their pet project, event, campaign or protest each month in the Industrial Worker. Send announcements to iww@iww.org. The deadline for submissions is the 15th of the month preceding the month of publication. For the following sizes should be sent to IWW GHQ, PO Box 23085, Cincinnati OH 45223 USA.

$12 for 1st, all column wide $4.00 for 4’ ² by 2 columns $90 for a quarter page

Page 2 • Industrial Worker • July 2009

Correction and Gratitude

Huw Jones’ article, “First IWW Event in Wales Celebrates Past & Present” on page 5 of the June 2009 Industrial Worker, incorrectly states that the May Day walking tour was the first IWW event in Wales. A previous issue of the IW carried a photo of the IWW Centenary Stone that was unveiled in 2005 in a public forum in Conway, Wales. At this event, Coast Redwoods were also planted. The memory of Judi Bari, and the Unofficial Reform Committee of the South Wales Miners’ Federation were saluted. According to a letter submitted to the Industrial Worker by Ilyan Thomas, ap-

plaguing society, but when the newspa-

— Joe Randall

---

Industrial Worker

The Voice of Revolutionary Industrial Unionism

ORGANIZATION EMANCIPATION

Official newspaper of the Industrial Workers of the World

Post Office Box 21098
Cincinnati OH 45223 USA

ISSN 1359-8870

Periodical postage paid at Cincinnati, OH.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to IW, PO Box 21098, Cincinnati, OH 45223 USA

Page 2 • Industrial Worker • July 2009

---

- Endnotes -

1. Robert Kolb.

2. Chris Lytle

3. Joe Randall

---

Letters welcome! Send your letters to: iww@iww.org with “Letters in the subject.

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

Get the Word Out!
IWW members, branches, shops and other affiliated bodies can get the word out about their pet project, event, campaign or protest each month in the Industrial Worker. Send announcements to iww@iww.org. The deadline for submissions is the 15th of the month preceding the month of publication. For the following sizes should be sent to IWW GHQ, PO Box 23085, Cincinnati OH 45223 USA.

$12 for 1st, all column wide $4.00 for 4’ ² by 2 columns $90 for a quarter page

Page 2 • Industrial Worker • July 2009

Correction and Gratitude

Huw Jones’ article, “First IWW Event in Wales Celebrates Past & Present” on page 5 of the June 2009 Industrial Worker, incorrectly states that the May Day walking tour was the first IWW event in Wales. A previous issue of the IW carried a photo of the IWW Centenary Stone that was unveiled in 2005 in a public forum in Conway, Wales. At this event, Coast Redwoods were also planted. The memory of Judi Bari, and the Unofficial Reform Committee of the South Wales Miners’ Federation were saluted. According to a letter submitted to the Industrial Worker by Ilyan Thomas, ap-
By Greg Rodriguez

Word of the day was anger and sadness for people in the Rio Grande Valley, Texas—a region known for its vast rural landscape and primarily immigrant communities. At around 8 a.m., Thursday, May 15, 2009, Southwest Workers Union (SWU) member Nazeisha Garza received a phone call from a detainer and received news of her husband Rama Carty’s deportation to Haiti, Carty said. Carty then proceeded to drag him away.

Garcia and Carty, who have a connection with the people through community organizations in the Southwest, were at PIDC when they heard the news. They had a schedule to meet and that they did not bother to join the community action or step out of their vehicle.

PIDC Hunger Strike Leader Assaulted, Threatened with Deportation

No Time Wasted

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

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

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

The SWU staged a zero hour protest outside the PIDC, denouncing what happened and demanding a freeze on Carty’s deportation. Still, protesting is not their biggest chance of stopping the illegal removal of Carty was for Amnesty International to take action. They were, after all, on the inside. Organizers made several phone calls to Reynolds, informing her of what was happening to Carty and requesting they meet with him and stop the transfer.

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

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

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

Since April 2009, local organizers with the SWU and members of Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) have been working for justice at PIDC. They have had weekly visits with the detainees, but have not been allowed to monitor conditions on the inside or the state of those still fasting.

The hunger strikers are spearheading a movement to put an end to the inhumane detention of immigrant workers, and they believe it is part of the broader class war. The Department of Homeland Security’s (DHS) action against Carty is viewed as retaliation and have had a definite effect on all the immigrants at PIDC.

Hunger Strike Organizer

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

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

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

Carty has been interviewed by several news sources, including a recorded telephone interview with the Texas Observer that was aired on the popular independent radio/television news program “Democracy Now.” At the writing of this story, it was known that Carty was at the LaSalle Detention Facility in Jena, Louisiana. The Consulate General of Haiti is refusing to issue DHS a travel permit in the name of those still fasting. They have not been able to contact their family in Haiti for about two months.

Rama Carty is known for his leadership on the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) Industrial Worker Hunger Strike in July 2009.

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 themselves to meet the needs of the entire population, not merely a handful of exploiters.

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 have to live or work in.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.
Building a Ship

By Nate Holdren

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

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

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

On a personal note, I'm happy to report that my wife is pregnant and that our daughter is due to be born at the end of August. I am very excited to meet my daughter and to raise her. At the same time, I know parenting will involve being stressed, missing sleep, being tired, and a lot of hard work. Along the same lines, I've learned as an independent nature lover that sometimes, but that's a different matter. The work we need to do is often hard, trying, tiring and involves sacrifices. Many things worth doing are hard and are not immediately rewarding. But it is unjustifiable not to do them because they are a challenge—and this applies to parenting too. It's both rewarding and really hard at the same time.

"May never sail on it." I told FW Phillips that his music and stories were big parts of my introduction to the IWW, and that I had never had anyone talking with him and hearing his stories. He said something, "I was your age when I met the people who got me into this and they were about the age I am now. Someday you'll be my age and will be getting new people into all this." It was a sobering thing to say, and definitely felt like shoes I can't fill. It's also an important reminder to think long term. Utah was, I think, 73 when I met him. I had just turned 30.

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

"Gonna build it anyway." That's an introduction to the issue we need to discuss throughout our union as we continue to grow—the IWW's growing experience with contracts. Historically, the IWW, not ineffectual contracts.

NLRB Is No Friend in Portland

By Chris Agenda

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

The common line in each of these cases was that the NLRB had to defer to arbitration, since that was provided for in the contracts between the IWW and Janus. Once we charged the company with malfeasance, the NLRB still sat on their hands. The NLRB representatives were involved in the dispute, “there’s really nothing we can do.”

I found that to be a useful reminder to think long term: Utah was talking with FW Phillips to build the One Big Union, and that I have not forgotten the refrain, "Building a ship." The IWW is a sort of ecosystem where local branches and other elements depend on each other, and move at different paces. Trainings and administrative work are the main things I do in the IWW now. This is important, but it’s hard because the payoffs don’t come quickly and often happen elsewhere, out of my direct sight/experience. This is different from helping organize a picket or a job action or moving a coworker in another one-on-one.

On a personal note, I’m happy to report that my wife is pregnant and that our daughter is due to be born at the end of August. I am very excited to meet my daughter and to raise her. At the same time, I know parenting will involve being stressed, missing sleep, being tired, and a lot of hard work. Along the same lines, I’ve learned as an independent nature lover that sometimes, but that’s a different matter. The work we need to do is often hard, trying, tiring and involves sacrifices. Many things worth doing are hard and are not immediately rewarding. But it is unjustifiable not to do them because they are a challenge—and this applies to parenting too. It’s both rewarding and really hard at the same time.

"May never sail on it." I told FW Phillips that his music and stories were big parts of my introduction to the IWW, and that I had never had anyone talking with him and hearing his stories. He said something, “I was your age when I met the people who got me into this and they were about the age I am now. Someday you’ll be my age and will be getting new people into all this.” It was a sobering thing to say, and definitely felt like shoes I can’t fill. It’s also an important reminder to think long term. Utah was, I think, 73 when I met him. I had just turned 30.

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

"Gonna build it anyway." That’s an introduction to the issue we need to discuss throughout our union as we continue to grow—the IWW’s growing experience with contracts. Historically, the IWW, not ineffectual contracts.

Working women were hard-hit. Maids were dismissed, sales clerks let go “factory girls” faced prospects of not seeing women were destitute. These garment workers, working at home, saw sewing machines repurposed; unable to pay the rent, they were evicted. According to one historian, it was no exaggeration to say that working women in New York faced a choice between starvation and prostitution. "There never was a period at which working women were in more need of help than now," the New York Times said on December 1873.

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

By Dianne Feeley, UAW Local 235

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

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

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

From what I understand, the Hamtramck rally was nearly as large as the earlier one in Dearborn. The Hamtramck rally featured speakers such as Leo Gerard, Jessie Jackson, Dearborn Mayor Glover, John Conyers and Virgil Bernero, the feisty mayor of Lansing who is attempting to get other mayors to work together and oppose plant closings. They gave militant speeches about the need for single-payer health care and the necessity for a strong manufacturing base and decent jobs. Speakers such as state Senators Debby Stabenow and Sander Levin gave less militant, but still populist lists. For example, Stabenow talked about “universal health care” and when some in the crowd (like me) shouted out “single payer health care” she stopped and added, “and maybe single payer.”

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

The Sterling Heights rally had approximately 600 participants. I estimate that two-thirds of those in attendance were from Chrysler’s Sterling Heights Assembly Plant, or were former employees. UAW Local 1700 members are on layoff and the plant is slated to shut down next year. The local leadership had mobilized the membership through text messages and email. The platform featured politicians who delivered more conservative speeches than in Hamtramck. For example, Senator Levin talked about how we ought to be able to build all the vehicles needed for war, where as I thought I’d remember an anti-war comment by one of the speakers in Hamtramck. The USW representative who organized the rallies was standing next to me, and grumbled while Levin was giving his jingoistic and militarist rap.

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

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

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

For more information, please visit http://www.autoworkercaravan.org or http://www.peoplessummit.org.

Are Mexican Workers ‘Stealing Our Jobs’?
The crisis in the Mexican auto sector of new GM plants in Mexico

By the Maquila Solidarity Network

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

Canadian jobs and the announcement of the opening

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

Clearly, Canadian autoworkers are being unfairly victimized by an economic crisis that they had no role in creating, but the perception that Mexican workers are getting rich because of the crisis would appear to be mistaken. The devastation of the North American auto industry is also being felt in Mexico, a country heavily dependent on exports to the United States, and where the auto sector employs some 120,000 workers.

Mexican job losses

Mexican unions, concerned about the total North American auto production rose between 3-4 percent in 2008, exports from Mexico’s auto sector actually dropped by almost 7 percent between January 2008 and January 2009. This has meant dramatic job losses in many communities in Mexico that are highly dependent on the auto sector, such as Puebla, Coahuila and the State of Mexico.

Temporary closures or production slowdowns—called paros técnicos—have become the norm. For example, GM’s Guanajuato plant recently began an eight-week paro técnico which will affect some 10,000 workers. Paros técnicos are also underway at GM’s three other Mexico plants, affecting over 16,000 workers. The crisis is, of course, not restricted to production for the big three U.S. auto makers.

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

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

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

Impact on workers’ rights

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

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

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

For example, at the Johnson Controls Finsa plant in Puebla, where the CAT has been supporting a coalition of workers, the company has been disproportionately targeting members of the coalition in layoffs and then replacing them with temporary, casual workers contracted through an employment agency.

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


July 2009 • Industrial Worker • Page 5
By Mykke Holcomb & Adam Welch

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

In our precarious workforce, we now find ourselves on even shakier ground than before. With no net to fall back on, many are laying low to hold onto what they’ve got. Many workers who’ve been laid off have justified their bosses’ cutting them loose, naively assuming that their employers simply couldn’t afford to keep paying them. Most truckers know better. We know better than most how much money simply cannot be used to finance our wages and the corporations that make them little to nothing. For example, as Citigroup sacked 30,000 of its workers, it would come as no surprise to us that, just the year before, its CEO raked in $1,222,513. Dynamex workers in New York City, many of whom are recent immigrants, are among the lowest paid in the industry.

There is no good reason these layoffs should be occurring. There is no good reason we should catch the brunt of a recession we did not create. We created the profits the bosses and companies need; we paid for the recession. There is no good reason the workers who create the wealth should be the ones to suffer. In 2008, the CEOs of the world’s largest banks pocketed $10,341,357 in that year. And, of course, we’re expected to understand. The figures above should suffice to explain why our hardship usually is not necessary. But, nonetheless, you may wonder what we can do about it. Working people have an inspiring history of struggles and victories, even in times of recession. In fact, in these tougher times it is all the more vital for us to be organized. To accept defeat now will only hurt us more later. In this historic time, we may find history has valuable lessons for us.

Our current recession has been compared to the onset of the Great Depression that began in the late 1920s. The Great Depression was a time of increased union activity and worker militance. When unemployment soared, rather than hunker down and hope for the best, workers stood their ground and fought back. During this time, unionists in Minneapolis had organized an industrial union of truckers where there had been almost no union presence before. What union did exist was very small, divided by craft and hindered by a dead-weight bureaucracy. This situation allowed the power to stay in the hands of the employers, and the prospect of making gains didn’t look good. But the rank and file organized and fought for representation of all workers in the industry.

In 1943, when the bosses refused to recognize the union, they won on strike, and many of the Minneapolis’ workers followed. For weeks the city was at a standstill, and what did function was at the strikers’ call. They allied with farmers, the unemployed and the local public to strengthen support and so that the bosses couldn’t break the strike with scab labor. Decisions were made democratically, putting the rank and file in control of their own fight.

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

Around the same time in Detroit, IWW autoworkers at the Hudson Motor Car Company were successfully using the sit-down strike to push their wages up. According to the IWW website: “‘Sit down and watch your pay go up’ was the message that rolled down the assembly line on strikers that had been fastened to pieces of work. The steady practice of the sitdown raised wages 100% (from $.75 an hour to $1.50) in the middle of a depression.”

Today—as the economy recesses and layoffs soar, rather than hunker down and hope for the best, workers stand their ground and fight back. The steady practice of the sitdown not only raises wages, but for the city’s workers in general.

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

Around the same time in Detroit, IWW autoworkers at the Hudson Motor Car Company were successfully using the sit-down strike to push their wages up. According to the IWW website: “‘Sit down and watch your pay go up’ was the message that rolled down the assembly line on strikers that had been fastened to pieces of work. The steady practice of the sitdown raised wages 100% (from $.75 an hour to $1.50) in the middle of a depression.”

Today—as the economy recesses and layoffs soar, rather than hunker down and hope for the best, workers stand their ground and fight back. The steady practice of the sitdown not only raises wages, but for the city’s workers in general.

As we enter the new year, we have an inspiring history of struggles and victories, even in times of recession. In fact, in these tougher times it is all the more vital for us to be organized. To accept defeat now will only hurt us more later. In this historic time, we may find history has valuable lessons for us.

That’s right, Jane. Now is not the time to working people to demand basic necessities. It’s important to wait until all the bailout money is securely hidden in off-shore accounts.

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

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

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

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

With files from iww.org, the AFL-CIO and Subterranean Fire by Sharon Smith.
The Cure for Layoffs: Fire the Boss!

By Naomi Klein & Avi Lewis, CommonDreams.org

In 2004, we made a documentary called “The Take,” about Argentina’s movement of worker-run businesses. In the wake of the country’s dramatic economic collapse in 2001, thousands of workers walked into their shuttered factories and put them back into production as worker cooperatives. Abandoned by bosses and politicians, they regained unpaid wages and severance while re-claiming their jobs in the process. As we toured Europe and North America with the film, every Q&A ended up with the question, “That’s all very well in Argentina, but could that ever happen here?”

Well, with the world economy now looking remarkably like Argentina’s in 2001 (and for many of the same reasons) there is a new wave of direct action among workers in rich countries. Co-ops are once again emerging as a practical alternative to more layoffs. Workers in the U.S. and Europe are beginning to ask the same questions as their Latin American counterparts: Why do we have to get fired? Why can’t we fire the boss? Why is the same story repeated in the U.S. and Europe with the film, every Q&A ended up with the question, “That’s all very well in Argentina, but could that ever happen here?”

In Argentina—the direct inspiration for many current worker actions—there has been a new wave of “bossnappings” this year, in which angry employees have detained their bosses in factories that are facing closure. Companies targeted so far include Caterpillar, 3M, Sony and Hewlett Packard.

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

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

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

In Southern Poland, at the largest coal coking producer in Europe, thousands of workers struck the company’s headquarters, protesting wage cuts.

In the United States, the USW, have authorized a strike. They are fighting to prevent a reduction in their association with the company, which would mean layoffs and cuts to their pension plan.

In Europe, the E.U. Workers in Chicago Facing Another Plant Closure

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

Friday, June 5, marked the six-month anniversary since the first day of our occupation at the Republic Window and Doors Chicago factory. The bank allowed to drive our company into bankruptcy, fired 90 employees and left them in the lurch. The workers voted to occupy their Chicago factory and keep it operating, but the bank has refused to put the money in the plant to keep it open. The workers have been working unpaid for months.

The cure for layoffs: fire the boss.

In California, CWA Locals Preparing to Strike

In California, CWA Locals are preparing to strike won through struggles that go back to the 1930s. Muffy Stumpf, a Local 9900 CWA member and Los Angeles Freedom Socialist Party organizer said “A victory for labor in this battle could change the power relations between unions and management across the country.”

The company’s belligerent stance has been reinforced by the CWA’s members’ intransigence. AT&T traded in a cool $22 billion in profit last year alone, and gave CEO Randall Stephenson a 22 percent salary increase. Withdrawing labor power is the strongest weapon that working people have. It looks like CWA workers are getting ready just for that.

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

by Andy Piascik

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

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

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

In “Sisters,” electrician Brunilda Hernandez describes an incident with a drunk coworker who, from the time she was hired, did everything he could to make her life difficult. “[He] threatened that up one day and a woman worker, he was so scared … I was what? 19 maybe? I was skinny, five-foot-five, and I’m like, ‘Oh my God, I’m going to be killed.’ I was so scared.” Like the other women in “Sisters,” however, Hernandez persevered and ultimately triumphed, and that is the real story of the book.

Day after day, year after year, they went to work, often without a female co-worker in sight, and did their jobs. Their move up the ladder of their chosen fields was made more difficult and took longer because of those who resented their presence. Some were sent to the least desirable workplaces to do the worst jobs; others worked with no one to teach them the necessary skills of their trades. Despite that, virtually all eventually got to do work at a level that brought them a great deal of satisfaction. In addition, they made it possible for more women to find their way into those jobs.

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

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

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

Relationships between women of color in the coalitions were not always smooth either, and both LaTour and those she interviewed addressed those hurdles as well.

Tensions inevitably arose, and they were not always worked out amicably. Still, the best testament that these were more frequently manageable disagreements than irreconcilable ones is provided by the reflections of those involved. Thirty years later, the women of color in “Sisters” look back quite fondly at the bonds of solidarity that were forged, and that is true for the bonds with whites, as well as those with other women of color.

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

If the courage of the trailblazing women and the support they got from a broad spectrum is the most inspirational theme of LaTour’s book, then perhaps the most shameful piece of the story is where they apparently got into New York’s unions. The deplorable conduct of so many from the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers and the other unions specifically discussed in “Sisters” speaks for itself, but their villainy is by no means the whole story.

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

That stirring reality in which working class women and coalition-type organizations stepped into this breach evokes what Elizabeth Fase and other historians have called “community-based unionism.” Union bureaucrats appear in “Sisters” as either hostile or negligent, their organizations as ossified perhaps beyond repair. The extra-union activity LaTour describes so compellingly, on the other hand, served the women in her book well, and workers in any number of circumstances would do well to heed it.

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

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

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 23085, Cincinnati OH 45223 USA

Subscribe to the Industrial Worker today!
Enhancing The Human Condition

By Ken Lawless

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

Marie Mason is a 46-year-old mother of two,
a poet, a musician, and a volunteer at a free herbal healthcare collective.
She helped get free medical care for a Michigan State researcher funded by Monsanto and USAID,
genetic engineering capable of altering life for eternity.
Marie Mason was sentenced to 21 years ten months though the average federal sentence for arson is seven years.
Judge Paul L. Mahoney sentenced her under an Enhanced Terrorism law, a new concept in this climate of fears.
The Red Scare is turning neon green
while greenback dollars keep track of the score.
What sentence is appropriate for those whose attack on the Afghan village of Garani killed up to 450 civilians, severely wounding up to two dozen more?
American F-18s, a B-1 bomber, and drones destroyed a dozen homes in mud-walled compounds.
"The Taliban had already left," said 15- year-old Naeem, whose mother was killed and three sisters also suffered severe burn wounds.
Mohedin, a 55-year-old farmer, asked why Americans who can identify a cell phone
whose mother was killed and three sisters also suffered severe burn wounds.
"The Taliban had already left," said 13-year-old Naeem, destroyed a dozen homes in mud-walled compounds.

Picket The Mechanized

By Mark Wolff

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

Marvelous was the man.
Marvelous was in the man.

Dedicated to Franklin Rosemont (1943-2009)

By Len Wallace

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

My Accordion is a receptacle,
NOT a spittoon for the army of dead potatoes
who call themselves RICH men.

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

My Accordion is a receptacle,
NOT a spittoon for the army of dead potatoes
who call themselves RICH men.

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

Abolish whiteness, miserabilism!
Fourier!
He wove the thread
of the absurd.

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

Abolish whiteness, miserabilism!
Fourier!
He wove the thread
of the absurd.

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

Abolish whiteness, miserabilism!
Fourier!
He wove the thread
of the absurd.

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

Abolish whiteness, miserabilism!
Fourier!
He wove the thread
of the absurd.

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

Abolish whiteness, miserabilism!
Fourier!
He wove the thread
of the absurd.

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

Abolish whiteness, miserabilism!
Fourier!
He wove the thread
of the absurd.

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

Abolish whiteness, miserabilism!
Fourier!
He wove the thread
of the absurd.

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

Abolish whiteness, miserabilism!
Fourier!
He wove the thread
of the absurd.
Studs Terkel's Working: A Graphic Adaptation
BY HARVEY PEIRAH (AUTHOR)
PAUL BEHLE (EDITOR)

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

In the thirty-five years since Pulitzer Prize-winner Studs Terkel's Working was first published, it has captivated millions of readers with lyrical and heartbreaking accounts of how their fellow citizens earn a living. Widely regarded as a masterpiece of words, it is now adapting into comic book form by comic legend Harvey Pekar, the blue-collar amid-hero of his American Book Award-winning comics series American Splendor.

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

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

Studs Terkel's Working will delight Terkel fans everywhere, and introduce his most powerful work to a new generation.

208 pages, $22.95

Dynamite: The Story of Class Violence In America
BY LOUIS ADAMIC
WITH A FOREWORD BY JON BEKKEN

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

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

380 pages, $19.95

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

39 tracks on 2 CDs, $15.98

Static Cling Decal
3.5’x black and red IWW logo, suitable for car windows, $2.50 each

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 the first item & $.50 for each additional item. Overseas: Add $5.00 for the first item, $1.00 for each additional item. Overseas: Add $10.00 for the first item, $2.00 for each additional item.

SUB-TOTAL: ________________________
TOTAL ENCLOSED: ____________________
The IWW formed the International Solidarity Commission to help the union build the new solidarity that can lead to effective action against the bosses of the world. To contact the ISC, email solidarity@iww.org.

By John Kalwaic

Polish Anarchist Union ZSP Pickets Starbucks

On May 17 the anarcho-syndicalist union known as the Związek Syndyka- towi Polski (ZSP)—or Union of Syndicalists—organized pickets to raise awareness of the union-busting tactics of Starbucks against the IWW. There were two pickets at Starbucks stores in Poland and another in Wro- saw and one in Wroclaw, the two cities where Starbucks opened their first Polish cafes in 2006.

The ZSP chose to picket the stores on May 17, as it was the fifth anniversary of the founding of the IWW Starbucks Work- ers Union. The pickets were organized as solidarity campaigns, but also to raise awareness for the growing numbers of customers in the café/restaurant industry and to encourage workers to organize.

The ZSP handed out information about what was happening on a street in Warsaw, where Starbucks is located. According to the union, many of the small independent cafes along the street have closed down due to astronomical rents, leaving room only for corporate chains, ultra-exclusive places and money-laundering fronts. The last of the famous cafes on the street, Café Bajka—which has been there for 53 years—is being forced to close since their rent was raised to an astronomical 20,000 złoty a month, which is the equivalent of approximately $6,000 U.S. dollars. According to the ZSP, it is visible on the street that other cafes and small shops have closed and are being replaced by such corporate chains as Subway and Häägen-Dazs.

The pickets were conducted primarily to bring attention to the plight of workers to work.

Strikes and Lockouts in South Korea

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

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

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

ECB members march through Frankfurt.

By International and European Public Services Union

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

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

Bullmann spoke in full support of the event, pointing out that the Euro- pean Parliament relies on the work of the European Central Bank, and that the ECB could not exist if it were not for the hard work of its staff. The crowed of several hundred staff members began its march along Kaiser- strasse and Neue Mainzer Strasse. It was led by the members of the IPSO Execu- tive Board and Advisory Board carrying a banner with the single word “NEGOS- TIATION.” The banner carried the words “PARTICIPATION” and “TRANSPAR- ENCY,” and marchers carried several European flags and many blue ECB union caps.

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

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

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

Following the action, the staff mem- bers dispersed; some to go home, many to return to their desks, where they were expected to return to work and compensate for their participation in the event.

Assessments for S3, S6 are available from your delegate or IWW headquarters PO Box 23085, Cincinnati, OH 45223-3085, USA.
Since mid-April, two locals of the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) have been on strike. Local 82, which represents some 300 outdoors municipal workers, and Local 543, which represents 4,600 indoors municipal workers, have been holding the line for the hard won wages and benefits that sustain their local community in Windsor, Ontario. This strike could be happening anywhere in Ontario. Across the province, more employers are using the current economic crisis to try to extract concessions from workers. Help to send a clear message that CUPE members won’t let that happen.

Instead of finding solutions to benefit both the local community and municipal workers, Windsor’s mayor and city council have fuelled a city workers’ strike affecting nearly 2,000 CUPE members and their families. Now in a city reeling from the economic crisis, some city politicians are trying to pit public and private sector workers against one another.

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

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

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

By CUPE Ontario

Unions have been on strike. Local 82, which represents some 300 outdoors municipal workers, and Local 543, which represents 4,600 indoors municipal workers, have been holding the line for the hard won wages and benefits that sustain their local community in Windsor, Ontario. This strike could be happening anywhere in Ontario. Across the province, more employers are using the current economic crisis to try to extract concessions from workers. Help to send a clear message that CUPE members won’t let that happen.

Instead of finding solutions to benefit both the local community and municipal workers, Windsor’s mayor and city council have fuelled a city workers’ strike affecting nearly 2,000 CUPE members and their families. Now in a city reeling from the economic crisis, some city politicians are trying to pit public and private sector workers against one another.

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

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

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

By the ACTU

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

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

“This is a major achievement for the thousands of women and men who have worked so hard to bring this scheme to fruition. The scheme will cover hundreds of thousands of women in lower paid jobs with poor job security, especially in hospitality and retail where there’s been very limited access to paid maternity leave,” reported the ACTU.

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

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

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