



I.B.E.W. Local 336

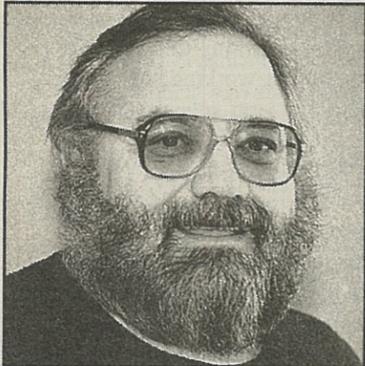
News *Views*

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VOLUME 9, NUMBER 3

Labor Omnia Vincit

SEPTEMBER, 1995



FROM
THE
PRESIDENT

by Albert J. Franzen, President/Bus. Manager

It has been a long Summer of bargaining at both Ameritech and AT&T, and although things got tough, I'm happy to report that AT&T members have ratified their contract, and Ameritech members are now voting on a tentative agreement.

AT&T bargaining went beyond the deadline, but a good agreement was hammered out. I want to thank Business Rep John Greenwald for the extraordinary effort he put forth, spending weeks in Washington representing our local at AT&T national bargaining.

On the Ameritech negotiations, I can attest that the company has never been as hard-nosed as they were this time around. The company attempted to impose their will on us with a regressive final offer that would have meant the beginning of the end of our way of life as telephone workers. I am pleased and proud to report that we were able to defend the standards we have fought for over five decades-- and make progress.

The Company wanted a two-tier wage, a free hand in scheduling, reductions in benefits, more freedom to contract out our work, etc. With a company that continuously posts record profits and has the most productive work force of the RBOCs, you'd think they might be a little less heavy-handed with the people who have built the business.

Fortunately, we were all able to pull together to forcefully reject the company's demands. This was the best part of this negotiation. From the solidarity of individual workers pulling together, all the way to the System Council bargaining team, we presented a united front.

We should turn to the person next to us and say thanks, because it really was a collective union effort. On a more personal level, I want to thank all Local 336 members, stewards, officers and staff for all of the effort put forth during this contract campaign to bring the full force of every member to the bargaining table.

Additionally, I want to thank our System Council Chair Lynda Hackstaff of Local 383, John Cheeseman from Local 165, Sarita Triplett at Local 188, and Bill Hunter from Local 399. These business managers and their local unions worked hard, and never wavered in their determination that all Ameritech workers receive a fair contract.

The tentative agreement we have with Ameritech is a fair one, and we recommend that you vote yes for it. After ratification all members will receive a printed copy of the new agreement, and our work begins anew.

continued, center column

Agreements Reached At AT&T, Ameritech

Nearly 4,000 Local 336 members suffered through a hot Summer of intense negotiations as both the AT&T and Ameritech contracts had to be extended before acceptable terms were reached.

The AT&T contract expired on May 28th with the union and company still far apart. The IBEW System Council T-3 national bargaining team extended the contract day-to-day until terms were reached on June 16th. The new contract, featuring a 10.5% wage increase, was overwhelmingly ratified by the membership.

Ameritech attempted to impose a regressive final offer on 11,400 members of System Council T-4. The concessionary demands were submitted-- per IBEW policy-- to the membership with a recommendation to reject the terms and authorize the union bargaining team to call a strike. This was the first time in the 48 year history of Local 336 that bargainers urged a no vote on a 'Bell' contract.

When nearly 95% of the members voted no, the company began to get more serious about bargaining a fair contract. (A sidenote to the balloting was that nearly 85% of eligible members participated in the democratic process!) At the brink of a strike late August 9th, bargainers 'stopped the clock' as the company began rapidly backing off on their demands.

By later the following day, the union bargaining team had in hand an acceptable agreement to submit to the membership with a yes recommendation. This tentative contract contained none of the major concessions the company had been demanding, including a two-tier wage scale. The contract did, however, have a wage increase of 10.5%.

In both AT&T and Ameritech bargaining, the unprecedented solidarity that rank and file union members demonstrated daily on jobsites across the U.S., was credited by union leaders as the deciding factor in beating back the concessionary pattern that telecom companies, particularly Ameritech, hoped to establish.

Franzen, continued

The work I'm referring to is all of us maintaining the solidarity we built during bargaining. The company came out to the work place and pushed the final offer hard, and we stood together and told them "NO!" The courage that took has helped to build muscle in our union, now we must keep 'pumping iron' to stay solid. The company will be coming after us-- and it won't just be in 1998-- but every day on the job.

As Ron Kastner states in his column elsewhere in this issue, "Preparations for 1998 bargaining began on August 10th." A truer statement couldn't be made, so stick together, our solidarity has to be a way of life. I think we're up to it, I hope you do too.

An Open Letter To The CEO Of Ameritech

Good Morning DICK!

1995 negotiations are concluded and we, hopefully, have averted a strike.

When you include the time spent by our respective subcommittees, over 18 months of our time went into this new contract. It should not have been as big a struggle as you made it, but it was.

Today, the most often asked question I get from members all over this union is, "With the record profits that Ameritech has seen over the last three years, why are they giving us such a hard time?" It's a question I cannot answer. I wish you would.

And I mean an honest answer. Don't reply with your stock "Fear of Competition" line you've been feeding us for too long now. We aren't buying it. We all know that as far as competition goes, Ameritech is the 'tall hog at the trough.'

And well we should be. You have at your disposal the most well-trained and willing work force in the land. A work force that can respond and win over any and all who wish to take us on in the marketplace. But this is only if you allow us to do it, and that gets to the heart of this letter.

IBEW members know what is needed to kick butt in the competitive arena, but we aren't inclined to tell you. The reason is two-fold: First, you don't truly want our input, and more importantly, you would not be interested in following our suggestions.

Unfortunately you have surrounded yourself with self-proclaimed 'experts' whose attitude is that they certainly know more about how to serve telephone customers than telephone people do. The result is that the business is a mess.

Worse than that, you have not earned anyone's trust. Sad to say, that fact has been demonstrated in many ways, most prominently in these latest negotiations.

Dick, your 'team' (us) is angry. That anger is going to stay with people unless you do something genuine about it, and do it soon. We are all tired of the disrespect that you and your underlings show us. Until you go beyond the empty words, your problems will continue.

You have an opportunity at hand though. You can still help to make Ameritech a work place filled with pride and dedication, or you can continue to steer it down a path where people want to flee from it at the earliest opportunity.

The choice is yours. We'll wait to hear from you.

-Don Moseley, Vice President





WE SURVIVED '95

by Vance Peters, Business Representative

Last year, if you recall, I wrote a column called "Survive In '95." I am happy and proud to report that we have done just that.

The events that have transpired over the past few months have been inspiring and historic: Solidarity efforts in the work place, marches in Chicago, the overwhelming number of members who volunteered extra help, the extraordinary support to vote no on Ameritech's final offer, and many other things too numerous to mention, all added to the kind of spirit and support our bargaining team needed during a tough round of negotiations.

Now, as I sit here trying to think of all of the people that should be thanked, I have this powerful feeling of pride and brotherhood that tells me we should all thank each other. Sure there were people who distinguished themselves in this fight, but without the thousands of small acts of solidarity, we would have all been in the "dumper."

Each and every one of us made this possible, and I am proud to have played a small part in what I feel was the greatest solidarity effort in our union's history. I thank everyone who did their part to make this contract campaign a success. But take heed, our survival was for only one battle. The war still goes on. We have to hang in there and stay united. '95 is not the end, but a new beginning to build on. If we can build and grow stronger, "Things will be great in '98."

Strike Bluff?

by Larry Moeller, Strike Director

A "hairs' width away" was how close we were to a strike against Ameritech. Although the possibility of a strike still exists, it is greatly reduced by the tentative agreement that our bargaining committee is recommending a yes vote on.

Although nobody wants to go on strike, sometimes it is the only weapon we have, so we must prepare for it every time we go to the bargaining table. Because of the size of the Ameritech bargaining unit, this required months of preparation.

Strike directors for each unit were appointed and trained, strike actions were designed and assigned, pagers were rented, thousands of picket signs were printed and stationed throughout the bargaining unit, and even a strike newsletter was written, printed and stationed with the picket signs.

This is all another necessary part, like our solidarity actions, of giving our bargaining committee the most leverage we can muster. A strike threat must be real-- not a bluff-- to be effective.

After September 29th we'll know if we can recall the materials, return the pagers, and "stand down." I want to thank everyone who was involved for their efforts. This may turn out to be "just a drill," but it is good to know that when our "finger was on the button," it was connected to a powerful weapon.

Corporate Stress Attack

by Linda Corcoran, Chief Steward

It's apparent in visiting work sites and talking to people that everyone is under a lot of stress. Common reasons are too much work; not enough people; change in management; change in organization; lack of communication, training and direction; poor and illogical corporate decision-making; no one listening...the list is endless.

It's also apparent that we are letting that stress undermine the solidarity of some work groups. We all recently worked together to get a fair contract. That brother or sister sitting next to you, across from you or on the other end of that phone was willing to stand next to you on a picket line to better our working conditions. Cut them some slack and direct your anger and frustration to where it belongs-- Ameritech.

If you can't do that and still feel it's your responsibility to judge your fellow worker's ability, why not discuss it with that person one on one?

Why not offer to show someone something they may not know? Why not show the same compassion and understanding that you expect for yourself? Is it really necessary to give management more ammunition to use against us?

The bond we have built has to remain-- and remain strong-- for our survival. Think before you speak-- and to whom you are speaking to-- and of.

New Car Sale!

United Buying Service (UBS), a union benefit of Local 336 membership, announced that they are having a new car celebration for the 1996 models from October 14-28, 1995. During this celebration, union members and their families can take advantage of special pricing on 1996 cars, trucks and vans that drive prices down as low as \$50 over dealer factory invoice! Call UBS for your free UBS Discount Purchase Certificate guaranteeing you low prices at 1.800.666.7887.

News & Views

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President-Business Manager

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FIRST ANNUAL

Solidarity '95 Golf Outing

Sponsored By Local 336, IBEW for members only.

Join your Brothers and Sisters for a day of sun, fun, food and... GOLF!

Tee times can be requested, however they cannot be guaranteed. The cost of green fees, cart, prizes and bar-be-que lunch will be \$50 per person. A cash bar will be available.



Sunday October 8

Tamarack Golf Club, Naperville

Route 59 between 103rd St. & 111th St., 8.5 miles south of I-88

Tee times start at 7:40 a.m.

To sign up for the Golf Outing contact your Steward to complete the registration form and forward to the union office, along with a check for \$50 payable to Solidarity '95 Golf Outing or Larry Moeller. The deadline for registration is September 29.

For those Local 336 members that are interested in participating, but not golfing, the price of the lunch only will be \$10. Additionally, any volunteers will be welcomed to help with the outing.

Opinion

Labor Day 1995: It's Now or Never

by Arthur Shostak

Unionists who proudly marched in Labor Day parades coast-to-coast, know the year ahead is probably the most critical for organized labor in post-war history...one whose wins and losses will determine whether or not Labor Day parades and picnics the rest of this decade will be celebratory or mournful.

As if this wasn't enough, unionists know their fate and that of the Democratic Party are unalterably intertwined: If organized labor reaches Labor Day in 1996 in an upbeat way the Dems have a real chance in November '96 to hold the White House and hold back right wing gains in Congress. But should Labor falter throughout 1995, and slide even further in '96, the GOP will likely sweep.

Much of this will become clear when in October, convention delegates will choose the new president of the 14-million member AFL-CIO, the largest such federation in the world. No gathering of unionists nowadays is without dramatic debate and fascinating rumors about this hotly-fought contest, the first since the 1955 formation of the labor federation. The election signals the overdue end of 40 years of one-party rule, and ushers in an era of contested elections that just could prove a welcomed spur to innovation.

It remains to be seen, however, if the losers in October will prove mature and wise enough to rally behind the winner for Labor's sake. Or if they instead sulk and carp and withhold resources from the AFL-CIO. Labor needs honest scrutiny of the October winners by a loyal opposition, but it will not survive a return to civil war like that which raged between the AFL and CIO from 1937 to 1955 before George Meany and Walter Reuther forced the two bloody sides together.

Another frontier involves the crucial need to organize as never before. To merely keep its market share of our growing labor force, unions must bring in over 300,000 new members annually. To increase from 16 to 17% of the labor force requires a gain of over 1 million new members. In its best year recently, labor had a net gain of over 200,000, while in most post-war years it has hemorrhaged members. Only five, or perhaps six unions (AFSME, CWA, SEIU, UFCW, USW, etc) stand out as truly organizing unions, and the number cannot increase soon enough.

Much to their credit, both presidential candidates, Tom Donohue and John Sweeney, have pledged to make organizing their number one priority. The AFL-CIO Organizing Institute graduated 118 unionists this past Fall, and had nearly 400 job offers for them for Labor's more dynamic unions-- and the Institute expects a ten-fold increase to 1,250 recruits in the Fall of 1996. Graduates take encouragement from the fact that one-third of the nation's unorganized workers tell pollsters they would unionize at the first opportunity, and 58% of all Americans continue to believe America is better off having strong labor unions.

Third, organized labor stands to profit from mergers that have begun to rationalize its ranks. As 38 of the AFL-CIO's 80 affiliates have fewer than 50,000 members each, they must soon join larger unions, or die on the vine. The Rubber Workers, for example, recently joined the larger and more powerful Steelworkers Union. And that organization rocked the labor and business world alike with its announced intention soon after to join the Auto Workers union and the Machinists union in the largest merger in labor history.

Targeted to take five years to complete, the USW/UAW/IAM merger will create a behemoth with nearly \$1.4 billion in assets and an annual income in

continued, center column

Embarrassing Labor Vote Defeat For Conservatives

When fully one fifth of the House Republican membership deserts the party leadership to support organized labor's interests, that is news.

That's what happened July 25th when Rep. Ron Coleman (D-TX) offered an amendment to delete language that would have repealed most bargaining rights for the nation's transit workers from the Transportation Appropriations bill.

The vote represented the single biggest defection from a Republican leadership position so far this year and the defeat of Section 13(c) was by far the single most embarrassing defeat for House conservatives. Repeal of bargaining rights for transit workers ranked only behind repeal of Davis-Bacon on the list of priorities for conservative leaders of the House.

The revolt by House moderates, most of whom are freshmen or second termers, is particularly important to construction workers around the nation. This is because many of the same people in the House are expected to be those who join with Democratic colleagues to halt House conservatives from repealing Davis-Bacon laws.

While resolution of the Davis-Bacon issue is some months away yet, an intense struggle for the support of Republican members is underway. All 44 of the House Republicans who voted to retain bargaining rights for transit workers should be aware of the importance of Davis-Bacon to their constituents.

Among the 44 Republican members who deserve the thanks and appreciation of labor include Illinois Congressmen Flanagan and Weller, and Wisconsin member Neuman.

Labor Day 1995..., continued

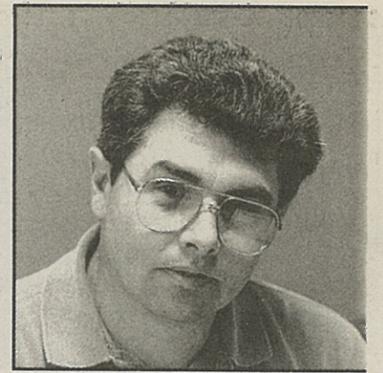
dues of close to \$1 billion. Such a union has never existed! This merger may have close to \$500 million freed up by staff reductions and the end of duplicate expenses, a half billion dollars to spend on organizing and political action!

Or, it may fall victim to struggles over turf and personal privilege that can sabotage the entire effort and leave it in tatters. By Labor Day next year the merger's fate should be clear.

Finally, efforts to clean up the corruption in a very few unions got a boost when the government reached new agreements in 1995 with two targeted organizations, the Laborers union and the Hotel and Restaurant Employees union. Both organizations have agreed they will investigate and correct long-standing problems, or accept the kind of full-fledged government intervention that has nearly bankrupted the Teamsters union. By Labor Day in 1996 the two unions will have made substantial progress, or both will offer labor's many critics more reason to smear the entire movement for the peccadilloes of a few.

The stakes could not be higher: Either organized labor will come together behind a new AFL-CIO president, organize hundreds of thousands of new members, merge unions for new strength, and sweep the vestiges of 'Wise Guy' sleaze into the gutter, or Labor will slide into insignificance...and with it, any chance the nation has of holding back Gingrich and the Contract on America. Yes, Labor Day 1995 marked the start of an incredibly revealing year.

Editor's Note: Professor Arthur B. Shostak, a sociologist at Drexel University, is the author of "Robust Unionism: Innovations In The Labor Movement," and "For Labor's Sake: Gains and Pains as Told by 28 Creative Union Activists." He serves as adjunct faculty member at the AFL-CIO George Meany Center for Labor Studies in Silver Springs, MD.



WHILE WE WERE AWAY

by Larry J. Moeller, COPE Director

The days from June 24th to August 9th were a roller coaster ride. Uncertainty about whether we would have a fair contract or be on strike justifiably captured all of our attention.

Our enemies in the U.S. Congress were not idle either. The workers' false friend Newt Gingrich and the GOP Contract On America were busy doing the bidding of the world's business interests.

On August 3rd the House of Representatives voted 216-208 to cut \$2 billion from important work place safety programs, and \$4 billion from retraining and education programs.

If passed in the Senate, we will all suffer when:

- OSHA funding is cut by 1/3. This means that half of the OSHA inspectors will be laid off. But Newt says not to worry, transnational corporations are benevolent and will police themselves.

- Funds for stopping illegal sweatshops, child labor, and exploitation of farm workers are cut by 12%. Again, the GOP pays back its real boss, big business.

- Money used to enforce Davis-Bacon, the oldest labor law in the land, is cut by 25%, driving down construction wages an estimated 20%. As part of the Contract On America, this is the payback to the construction lobby.

- Programs that monitor pension funds to make sure they are safe are cut by 8%. Once again, Newt and the good old boys tell us to not worry if some small or foreign-owned company steals our pension. We should lower our expectations, be grateful to have a job, and just keep on working.

- Funds for the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) are cut by 1/3. The NLRB is supposed to protect both employers and employees. The last 15 years it's been doing the bidding of the bosses. But lately, big business has become so abusive, that they are starting to lose too many cases to workers. Imagine that! So they called Newt and said, "Change the rules. Get the NLRB off our back, they're cutting into our happy hour at the country club."

- Here's something we've talked about before, repetitive motion injuries, particularly carpal tunnel syndrome. If Newt's bill passes, OSHA will be prevented from developing programs to prevent these injuries. If you're a CSA or splicer and are unlucky enough to suffer one of these injuries, don't expect the federal government to do anything about it. You'll have to go to the State of Illinois...Uh oh, I forgot, Pate Philip and Lee Daniels, our own version of the BBB Club (Buddies of Big Business) are busy making sure we can't get help in Illinois either.

But all is not lost. We have defeated regressive legislation like this before (see sidebar). Pick up the phone and dial 1.800.972.3524 and tell the operator you want to leave a message for our senators, Paul Simon and Carol Moseley-Braun if you live in Illinois, Richard Lugar and Dan Coats in Indiana. If you live in Wisconsin ask for Russ Feingold and Herbert Kohl. Politely tell them to vote no on any reductions in any Labor, Health and Human Services appropriations that would reduce work place safety, health and education funding.

Speak up or our enemies will get what they want without a fight, and you, or the worker next to you, may pay the price in your job or your blood.



THINK!

by Ron Kastner, Business Representative

Greetings to the most intelligent group of union workers on the planet!

I feel so proud to have been able to address our rally at Haymarket that Saturday evening, and in the aftermath of our victory, I'm still damn proud of each and every member of our union.

The first ratification vote really was an 'idiot check--' and we all proved that we were ready for it. It also proved to be the reality check the company needed to come to its senses. That was exactly what our T-4 Council needed. Together, our smarts and guts were what won the day-- be proud of that and hold the feeling-- preparation for 1998 bargaining started on August 10th!

Our collective smarts brought us through bargaining, but even during the last tense weeks of contract negotiations, Ameritech's infamous Security Department was out there raiding our hen house. Unfortunately, in some of their raids, our sisters and brothers have had cases of 'brain fade.'

On more than one occasion, Ameritech 'Ge-stapo' was out there threatening union members and intimidating them into signing away their legal right to union representation, and essentially bartering with things they have no authority over-- employment and pensions-- for instance. I'm sad to report that some unionists took the bait.

The right to union representation during meetings with management comes from a 1975 Supreme Court decision popularly known as "Weingarten," which allows you the right to request union representation during an investigative interview. The operative word here is **REQUEST!** and it is your responsibility to do that.

After you make the request, the employer must choose from three options:

- 1) Grant the request and delay questioning until the union representative arrives.
- 2) Deny the request and end the interview immediately.
- 3) Give the employee the choice of a) having the interview without representation (always a mistake), or b) ending the interview (the right choice!).

If the employer denies the request for union representation and questions the employee anyway, it has broken the law by committing an 'unfair labor practice.' At this point you may refuse to answer any questions.

REMEMBER-- unlike the Miranda Rights that allow a suspect to remain silent without a lawyer accorded to those arrested by police-- you need to ask for union representation-- the company will not offer it!

In closing, let's stay smart and stick together-- and grow smarter and tighter-- we'll need it for 1998 bargaining. Solidarity!

Weingarten Rights

IF THIS DISCUSSION COULD IN ANY WAY LEAD TO MY BEING DISCIPLINED OR TERMINATED OR CAUSE AN EFFECT ON MY PERSONAL WORKING CONDITIONS, I RESPECTFULLY REQUEST THAT MY UNION REPRESENTATIVE, OFFICER OR STEWARD BE PRESENT AT THIS MEETING. WITHOUT REPRESENTATION PRESENT, I CHOOSE NOT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS DISCUSSION.

PT PHONE HOME, INC. BRINGS BEDSIDE TELEPHONES TO VETERANS

In 1990, Frank Dosio, a Vietnam veteran and CWA member working for NY Telephone recognized a need as he did volunteer work at the Castle Point VA hospital in Beacon, NY.

Veterans, many of them patients for years, did not have telephones at their bedside. Frequently, when they needed to make a call they would have to wait hours-- or even days-- to have a coin phone wheeled in by hospital staff.

Brother Dosio spearheaded a volunteer effort by the CWA and NY Tel to wire Castle Point so each veteran could have a phone at their bedside. The IBEW quickly stepped forward and were soon joined by the VFW, American Legion, and the Telephone Pioneers. In a matter of months, more than 70 volunteer workers had completely wired the hospital for bedside phones.

Since that time, PT (hospital jargon for patient) Phone Home, Inc. has blossomed into a national non-profit, volunteer effort that has wired more than 40 VA hospitals.

Volunteers are needed for PT Phone Home projects. IBEW and CWA local unions initiate a partnership between local telephone companies, veterans groups, Pioneer groups, and the VA to wire up hospitals in their jurisdictions. In the Chicago area, IBEW Local 165 has successfully completed both the Westside and Lakeside hospitals, and Local 336 is about to begin work at North Chicago. Work will begin at Hines in Maywood in the near future. Ameritech and AT&T have both pledged their support of these projects.

Volunteers are needed from 6PM to 10PM, Monday through Friday, and 9AM to 4PM on Saturdays. You need not be an installer to do the work. There's plenty to do for people with all types of skills.

For more information, contact Local 336 Chief Steward Dale Carpenter at 708.960.4466, or the Pioneer volunteer hotline at 800.362.0045.

Digging Deep, continued

in the capital markets as a "buy" company. Investments need to be made internally to train and develop workers to make Ameritech a stronger powerhouse than it is today. The first final contract offer in late June of this year was disrespectful, cold, and extremely short-sighted for a company that states "...customers are at the heart of every decision we make."

A former chairman of the Illinois Commerce Commission, Terry Barnich, who now is a manufacturer's rep to Ameritech, was recently quoted in the *Chicago Tribune*, "...I think that three years from now you'll see a real fight when Ameritech and its unions negotiate again."

As the workers that have a long-term interest, and shareholders in both the corporation and its future, we need to all get more involved in our union. We understand best how to insure quality service and long-term employment at fair wages.

The unity of the members of this union is what got us our new agreement. This is a clear victory for all workers at Ameritech. This is a profitable corporation that felt prevailing middle class fears about employment would allow them to get whatever they wanted. We drew the line and stood fast. This toughness and spirit of all members was what made the difference at the bargaining table.

We have much to be proud of, and best of all, we can go home at night, look in the mirror and still sleep.

DIGGING DEEP



by Tom Hopper, Chief Steward

"...What does labor want? It wants the earth and the fulness thereof...We want more school houses and less jails; more books and less arsenals; more learning and less vice; more constant work and less crime; more leisure and less greed; more justice and less revenge..." Samuel Gompers spoke these moving words in Chicago in 1893.

I've looked at Gompers' statement and tried to relate parts of it to the last year at Ameritech. "More leisure and less greed" continues to stand out and trouble me as it should all union workers. There should be more leisure time to spend with friends and families, and for decent people to grow outside of a company that is obsessed by greed.

Greed is a word that first appeared around the 11th century and has a few different meanings. "Greedy, eager, keen, and marked by greed." I had to study these words more in depth. As I surfed through different resources for the undeniable meaning of this detestable word, I became enlightened as I found that **greed** and **dirty** are two of the same; true synonyms.

Dirty also has several meanings. "Morally unclean or corrupt: as indecent, vulgar, dishonorable or unsportsmanlike." How about "disreputable, hateful, highly regrettable" and even this: "war is a business." Then, I realized that I had reached the conclusion of this search for the genuine meaning when I read the following: *Squalid* adds to the idea of dirtiness and filth; that of "slovenly neglect, 'squalid slums.'" All these terms are also applicable to moral uncleanness or baseness or obscenity. *Dirty* then stresses meanness or despicableness, "don't ask me to do your dirty work," while *filthy* and *foul* describe disgusting obscenity or loathsome behavior "filthy street language," or "a foul story of lust and greed," and *nasty* implies a peculiarly offensive unpleasantness; a "stand-up comedian known for nasty humor." Distinctively, *squalid* implies sordidness as well as baseness and dirtiness, "engaged in a series of squalid affairs."

War is a business, as a meaning for the word greed and sums it all up. At Ameritech this war is ongoing and every worker has to remain forever vigilant in fighting for what is right, and not for what Corporate America would like us to believe-- or should we say-- how they would like us to behave.

The aging of the population will directly affect tomorrow's labor force. As the proportion of young workers declines, the pool of experienced workers will increase. What does that mean to us? Look at yourself and ask a few questions: Will I survive this war? Should I slide through and not get involved? Will I make a difference and be a teacher, an activist-- a true leader. History proves that this war will continue and that it is, at its most basic, a struggle between fairness and greed.

As the most productive workers in the communications industry, employed by a global giant making record profits off the sweat of our backs, it was not fair to be subjected to the BS we all went through wondering if tomorrow meant going to work or walking a picket line! Greed is, and always will be, **dirty**.

Ameritech executives appear to make all decisions based on short-term results so they are judged

continued, center column

Come The Revolution

by Bill Doyle

I am a pipe fitter, and have worked out of Pipe Fitters Local 597 in Chicago for more than 20 years. The short answer to the question that I'm always asked is that pipe fitters install and maintain industrial piping systems. When, during the uniquely American practice of interrogating people about their occupational state, I mention that I work in nuclear power stations, oil refineries, chemical plants and steel mills, eyes all over the room start to glaze over.

I am not offended when people don't know what a pipe fitter does, even though in my world, pipe fitting is considered a prime and indispensable craft. What depresses and infuriates me is the astonishing number of people who look through the barbed-wire fences of our industrial plants and choose to see only machines. The ignorance of the kind of work people like myself do is not just comical. It is willful and destructive.

This attitude was never more apparent than in some published letters responding to an essay by a Wisconsin construction worker a few years ago. In the column he proposed, very tongue-in-cheek, that the year be designated "The Year of the Blue-Collar Guy." In a few serious asides, the writer reminded us that regular guys and gals get hurt occasionally and even fall off a roof once in a while. Back came the letters from egocentric Yuppies. One even asked, "Who asked you to fall off the roof?"

That question's author should be forced to ask it repeatedly in a crowded steel-mill bar. For those who want to know, I'll tell you who asks. You do-- all of you-- every minute of every day. When you turn on a light, buy some lumber or fill up the car, you ask countless workers to risk life and limb to keep the powerhouse running, fell the trees and refine the gasoline. There are jobs in the business world that must be performed or the entire system will cease to function. I assure you that many of these occupations are hazardous by definition. It is repugnant to suggest that there is a choice about becoming a casualty.

Respect in this country is based on class. The faster we race toward a two-tiered society, the more we champion the fantasy that it is classless. I challenge anyone who believes this notion to spend some time in an oil refinery. You will soon discover that lives of workers are considered less valuable and not as noteworthy as those of our corporate elite.

This disrespect is evident in many ways. Of all the people I've known who have been killed on the job, some quite horribly, only one death was reported in the media. That accident occurred on a high-rise building in downtown Chicago, and newspaper reporters rushed to the scene. After all, the office workers in the buildings next door were curious about the commotion.

Industrial facilities don't get much attention from the media until an explosion turns them into good television. Reporters turn into upper-middle-class pussycats when they go after stories behind the barbed-wire fences. If a small flash fire snuffs out a life or a pipe falls and crushes vertebrae the accidents rarely get much

public attention. If thousands of lives are shortened by the toxic chemical soup present in every factory, it is the workers themselves who have to prove that conditions are harmful.

When they're not in casual denial about on-the-job accidents, the media generally ignore the working stiff's views altogether. We've all read magazine stories with titles like "Generation X-- Who Are These Yardbirds?" or "Baby Boomers: Endless Love/Hate." These kinds of articles offer insights from a purported cross section of the group in question. The people who are quoted, though, are invariably a "usual suspects" list the writers feel comfortable with: artists, marketing gurus, Wall Street types and other assorted "professionals." God forbid the readers be subjected to the thoughts of an electrician, an auto worker or a nurse's aide.

Then there's the subject of money. We've spent the last 20 years transferring more wealth to the already affluent. That trend became a story only when it was a *fait accompli*. It didn't seem to bother anyone when labor lawyers and right-wingers conspired, with government acquiescence, to destroy unions during the '80s-- even though this action directly and indirectly depressed the wages of many Americans. It's easy to deny a living wage and decent conditions to people about whom we know so little.

I do not dislike corporate executives or journalists. My local union-- more than a century old-- has a great relationship with our contractors, public utilities, the city and the local media. What angers me is the notion that it's acceptable to reward upper-income professionals disproportionately to their contributions while denigrating working people to the point of invisibility.

We don't bat an eye at CEOs and Hollywood producers making millions of dollars. At the same time, public officials, acting as corporate shills, run around the country denouncing proposals to raise the minimum wage. We live in a nation where it's routine to deny countless Americans what they need so that we can continue to give a few what they merely want.

I'm not calling for understanding or sensitivity here. I'm delivering a warning. In similar periods in our history, when the quality of life for working stiff was diminished to please unfettered business interest, we've had strikes, demonstrations and boycotts. These actions were necessary to support our interests, but they were disruptive to our social fabric. Why must we repeat this depressing process every 40 years or so?

In the wake of the economic and social train wreck called the 1980s, one of three things can happen. Perhaps American workers, both blue and white collar, will quietly accept a class-based society that enriches only the lucky few. Or perhaps we'll revisit the 1930s, when violent street battles and sit-down strikes were the workers' court of last resort. But a third option is my favorite: that we embrace our real patriotism and value each helping hand that shapes the nation. Whatever occurs will be our choice. It always has been.

-Newsweek



BENEFITS CORNER

by Linda Corcoran, Benefits Coordinator

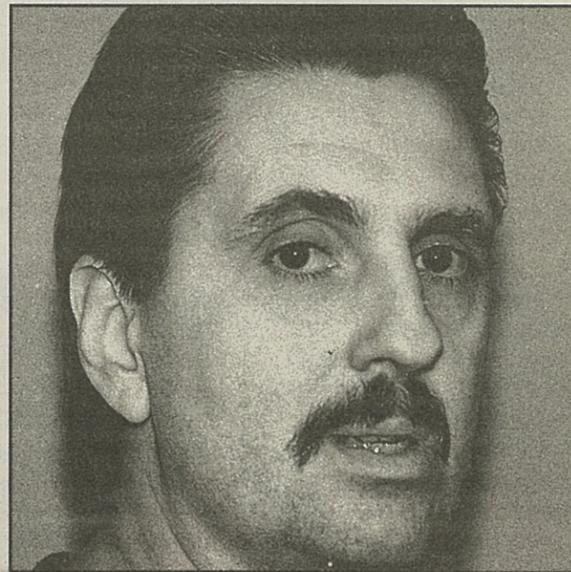
After a ten week disability, I'm back! During that time I had an opportunity to see first-hand how the Ameritech disability process works-- it doesn't. Nothing in the paper process happened in a timely manner. Result? My pay was suspended. Fortunately, within a few days everything got corrected. Not so for many others at Ameritech. We'll continue to discuss this issue with the company.

Ameritech employees with Blue Cross coverage need to verify that your insurance card reflects your correct plan. If you are in a mandatory HCN zip code, your card says "Managed Care Network Preferred" at the top. Notify Blue Cross at 1.800.621.7336 if it is incorrect.

Open enrollment for 1996 medical and dental options should arrive at your home by the first week of October. In the past, enrollment kits were delivered to your work location. The deadline for changing your coverage, if you so desire, is midnight November 3rd. Also included in the enrollment kit is information to enroll in a Health or Dependent Care Flexible Spending Account. Read all information carefully. Your choices remain in effect for one year and can't be changed until the next open enrollment.

Zip code 46304 in Indiana was removed from the mandatory list as it did not meet the necessary criteria. Members affected by this were notified by Ameritech. A big thank you to those members who helped us prove the criteria was not accurate. They truly understand the U in UNION. Solidarity.

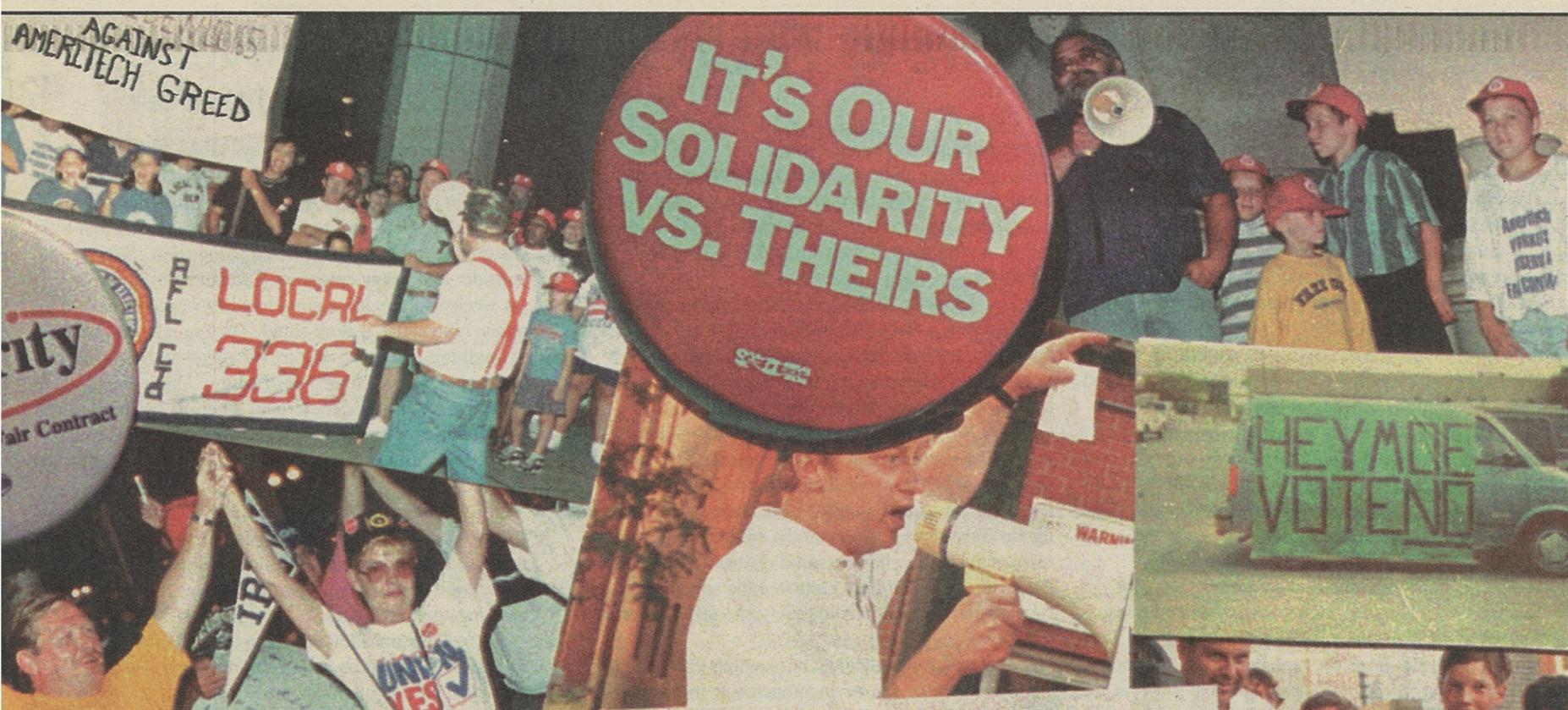
NEW STAFFER



President/Business Manager Al Franzen announced the appointment of Steve Tengblad as Chief Steward for Unit 7 effective September 1st. Brother Tengblad works at Indiana Bell, where he initiated into Local 336 as a frameman in 1969. He is currently a systems tech at the Gary East garage. Steve has served Local 336 members in NW Indiana as a shop steward since 1983.

ATTENTION AMERITECH MEMBERS

By October 10th all Ameritech workers should have a package for benefits open enrollment. Options may only be changed during this period. Completed forms must be received by midnight November 3rd, or you'll have to wait until next year.



IBEW STRIKE NEWS

NUMBER ONE

NOW WHAT?

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imposed layoff procedur...
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health Care benefits.
disrupt our family life.

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NO!

MOM n DAD
DESERVE A
FAIR CONTRACT



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OCCUPATIONAL
MEDICINE
WHEN YOU Cutoff MY
BENEFITS

PHOTOGRAPHS BY MICHAEL SACCO, ARMANDO SERAFINI, TOM FRANZEN AND RAY EICH/DESIGNED BY MICHAEL SACCO

The Great Train Wreck

by E. Shrdlu

Once upon a time we worked for a pretty good company. I can always remember there being problems; there has always been room for improvement, and we've always taken management to task for their failings.

But things are different now. Most of the management people we used to complain to had come up through the ranks and knew something about running a phone company and providing reliable phone service. These people who now have control of Ameritech are **not phone people**. They have BSs or MBAs, can read and interpret all the stock quotes, and know how to get this or that report out of their laptops while flying business class to the next very important meeting. But they know nothing about the phone biz.

The basic assumption and most prevalent marketing tool a management diploma gives, is the foolish and vain notion that one who holds such a degree, can manage anything and anybody. Thus, our latest vice president and presumed savior has come from a recent job at the Kansas City Chiefs football team. Even the most casual observer can see the qualifications that make him the best choice for this critical job-- he can probably get tickets to the Super Bowl for many

upper management hangers-on.

People with business degrees have marketed themselves as being able to manage anything. They can't. They can do their spread sheets and flow charts, but, as is painfully obvious, **BO DON'T KNOW PHONES!**

Oh yeah, they learned some nifty new words in management school, "breakthrough," "team player," "grow the business" (this phrase is not even good English), etc., but none of the new catchwords get the trouble fixed or the phones answered.

We have suffered under this "breakthrough" regime for several years. We have done **EVERYTHING THEY WANTED**, even when we knew it was wrong. Every single change that we have been subjected to in the last few years has been at the behest of this new management, who have assured us that it would "grow the business"-- and they produced the spread sheets and flow charts to prove it. And they've trashed this company.

Ameritech is now approaching train wreck status because of a gross incompetence on the part of this (mis)management.

Recently, one of the guys in my garage was suspended for a customer complaint. The details aren't important here-- he was only trying to make his "numbers." What's important is that management felt that a customer complaint warranted a suspension. Now, consider that **every customer** I've talked to in the last six weeks is irate, has a complaint, or would switch phone companies if they could. They're mad not because of anything I've done, nor are they mad at those who they contacted by phone, all of whom, I am assured, were helpful and pleasant. They're mad because of hold times of an hour and 40 minutes, missed appointments, repeat trouble because of moldy cables, out of service for four weeks, etc.

Lately, management has begun saying that we are in a "crisis." But is this a crisis, or is it a system that is self-destructing-- imploding under the weight of its poor conception and flawed execution? Is it a crisis, or just bad management?

Customers know what real crises are. They are furious because of the way the company has been mismanaged.

My question is; **who should get suspended?**

A Struggle for the Americas

by Fred J. Solowey

The top leader of the Chilean labor movement says he is determined to add strong social protections to any trade agreement between the United States and Chile, or to lead labor's efforts against it.

"US workers put up a good fight against NAFTA. Now we have to fight together with them for our common rights in any expansion of the Agreement," said Manuel Bustos, president of the Central Unitaria de Trabajadores (CUT), the Chilean equivalent of the AFL-CIO.

The 30-year activist for the rights of Chilean workers suffered greatly under the military government that ruled Chile for 17 years. He was imprisoned in Chile's national stadium (where many met their deaths) for 12 days immediately after the September 11, 1973, military coup. Arrested again in 1976, he served three years in prison for his union activities, and was jailed again in 1980. Later came a year of forced exile, and another six months in prison in 1985.

Never cowed, he then helped lead labor's successful fight to win a return to elected civilian government in 1990.

Yet, because of his strong opposition to NAFTA, he has been smeared by Chilean business leaders as being more concerned about the interests of US workers than those of Chilean toilers.

But he fires right back at his critics. "I say it is good that we support US workers. Their rights are my rights, too," said Bustos, now 49 and the father of four, who began working in a textile factory at age 19.

"We don't want a race to the bottom with workers in the United States and

Chile competing against each other," he said. "We don't want US companies coming here to Chile to pay miserable wages while they are damaging employment in the United States. We only want foreign investment that will help bring all people up. That's real development."

Bustos argues that the multinational corporations want Chile as the next NAFTA country in part because of the great damage done to worker rights under the dictatorship. And he knows that the fight being waged now will be important to all workers in the Americas.

"Chile is a landing site for corporations and capital, and what the transnationals want is to dominate the entire region in a free trade zone," he explained. "As it stands now, this expanded NAFTA will be for the rest of Latin America what it has been in Mexico--misery for workers. It won't solve the problems of underdevelopment and poverty and it will continue to hurt workers in the United States and Canada."

Bustos is determined to continue the fight to win stronger labor laws to protect Chilean workers and at the same time work with allies in the north for strong social clauses in the trade pact. "I'm grateful for the solidarity US and Canadian workers showed us while we were fighting against the dictatorship. The fact that the unions in the three countries are working together and coordinating their efforts now makes government and business uncomfortable. Maybe it will make them listen," he said. "Without our unions, our unity and our solidarity with each other, we are easy prey."

-The Union Builder

Thai Sweatshop Tip of Iceberg

by Muriel H. Cooper

Americans were shocked to learn about the 70 illegal Thai workers toiling in slave-like conditions in Los Angeles, but the case is not unusual, the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees (UNITE) said.

"The recent revelation of immigrant apparel workers in California treated as slaves has justifiably focused the nation's attention on the shameful conditions that are all too prevalent throughout the industry," said UNITE President Jay Mazur.

Government agents on Aug. 2nd raided a guarded El Monte apartment compound confined by high walls and topped with barbed wire. The workers, almost all women, were forced to work 17-hour shifts, some for as long as seven years, for less than \$2 a day.

The workers were threatened with rape, death or retaliation against their families in Thailand if they stopped churning out garments for major retail stores, from Montgomery Ward to Neiman Marcus.

"We were appalled at the sight" of the slave labor sweatshop, said Labor Secretary Robert Reich. "Many of us continue to shake our heads in disbelief that this could happen in this country in the 1990s..."

UNITE and Sweatshop Watch, a coalition of community, civil rights and religious organizations, helped the workers gain their freedom and offered legal counsel. Immigration and Labor Department officials freed 74 of the workers.

The Labor Department is seeking \$5 million from clothing makers linked to the sweatshop. The department also plans to ask the manufacturers to "accept responsibility for a share of the \$5 million in

wages owed to the Thai workers" under a 40-year-old "hot goods" provision in the Fair Labor Standards Act.

"The significance of these back wages goes beyond this case," said Reich. "When these contractors stoop to hiring illegal workers held in bondage, they also steal wages from the pockets of working Americans. We're going to do everything the law allows to recoup these wages."

"We have long encouraged Department of Labor enforcement efforts that insist on retailers and large manufacturers assuming responsibility for the conditions under which their goods are produced," said Mazur. "It is fiction that multibillion-dollar global corporations do not possess the resources to inform themselves of conditions under which the goods they sell are produced. They do, and they must."

The workers sewed women's clothing sold in department stores that include Macy's, Filene's, Hecht's and Famous-Barr. At least two of the chains, Mervyn's and Ward, were subpoenaed by the state of California, where garment manufacturers are liable for violations by their contractors if those contractors are unregistered.

Manufacturers named by the DoL include: Excuses sportswear, B.U.M. International and Diane Samandi (the "Jonquil" label).

The retailers named are: Foley's Petites, Macy's West, Meier & Frank, Robinson's, May, Hecht's, Filene's, Kaufman's, Neiman-Marcus, Dayton-Hudson, Mervyn's, Broadway, Rich's Specialty Retailers Inc., Montgomery Ward, Sears, Fred Meyer, Venture and Lerner.

-AFL-CIO News

12-Year-Old Child Labor Activist Killed In Pakistan

by Mike Matejka

At age four he was sold into slavery. At age nine he was liberated, and at age twelve he was killed.

The short life of Pakistani Iqbal Masih has drawn international attention to rampant child labor in the Asian carpet industry.

Masih, who won the Reebok Human Rights Award last December at age 11, was shot Easter Sunday in Lahore, Pakistan's capitol. A Christian in a predominately Muslim country, he was killed while returning home from Easter services.

Masih was president of the children's wing of the Bonded Labor Liberation Front of Pakistan (BLLFP).

Approximately a million children work making carpets in India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Nepal. Pakistan has the largest concentration of child laborers, approximately 900,000. According to the Child Labor Coalition, the children work 10-14 hours a day, seven days a week, are underfed, physically and sexually abused, and often left to sleep by their weaving looms. Children sit in a bent position the entire day which results in musculoskeletal disorders, chronic back and ankle pains and shortness of height.

Masih was one of 3,000 bonded children "liberated" in 1992 by the BLLFP. He immediately became an outspoken leader for the BLLFP, which has liberated 11,000 children in the past three years and placed them in a network of schools it operates.

Masih was sold into bondage at age four for a loan of \$12 to his family, paying for his elder brother's wedding. Eventually the family's debt grew to over \$200.

Masih was chained to his loom, worked 12-hour days and was beaten and malnourished.

At age nine he skipped work to attend a union rally, learned of his rights, and refused to return to work, instead becoming an outspoken advocate for children like himself.

Masih completed a five-year course in 30 months at a BLLFP school in Lahore and quickly became a leader. "Iqbal (Masih) was a brilliant student and a committed Front worker who became the target of the feudal landlords and carpet industry owners," BLLFP President Ehsanullah Khan said.

Masih had been promised a four-year scholarship at Brandeis University in Boston, once he completed his schooling.

The U.S. is the world's second largest market for hand-knotted Oriental carpets. In 1993 the US imported \$172 million worth of these carpets from India alone.

Children are the victim of "bonded labor" in Pakistan and other Asian nations. Poor families are given peshgi or bonded money; the family or person is then "bonded" to their creditor. Desperate families take money and then turn their children over to work off the debt. Often it takes generations to pay off a debt, or a continual cycle of indebtedness occurs.

Although Pakistan abolished bonded labor in 1992, the practice remains widespread. Besides the carpet industry, children and adult bonded laborers work in brickyards, farming, fisheries, shoe-making and refuse sorting. Children earn from 37 cents to \$1.50 a day for their work.

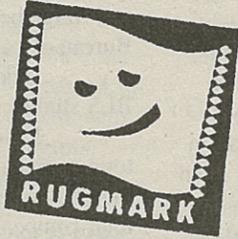
One international response to these poor conditions has been the "Rugmark" campaign. Headquartered in India and using a network of community organizations, "Rugmark" is a trademark that has begun appearing on Asian rugs.

Factories that gain the "Rugmark" status must agree to use no child labor, pay government-mandated minimum wages and agree to access to their looms for unannounced inspections. Factories will be inspected quarterly.

In response to Iqbal Masih's death, the AFL-CIO said it will continue to challenge international child labor.

"In memory of Iqbal Masih and all of the other children sacrificed on the altar of corporate greed, the AFL-CIO pledges to continue its campaign to end the lucrative international trade in the products of child slavery."

-Union News



Children In Anguish

Nearly a century ago Mary Harris "Mother" Jones led children out of the mines and sweatshops as she fought to abolish child labor in the United States. Today, many of us think that the horror and anguish of children, some as young as five, working is only a dark relic of the past.

Unfortunately, around the world-- even in the U.S.-- the image of a carefree childhood filled with play, a warm and safe home, and a decent education unravels in the cold reality of nearly 200 million of the world's children working long hours for little pay, in often terrifying conditions.

Most of these children lose their childhood to the drudgery and danger of working in fields, sewing in factories, or digging in mines. They do not do this to secure a better future, as the loss of their education ensures that they likely won't have one. In many cases, they are unable to even improve their current life. They are delivering their health and happiness up solely in the name of corporate profits.

Children are easily exploited. They are cheaper to hire and easier to manage. They make no demands, and they sure don't form unions. They have no expectations, because they are unaware of any alternatives.

Also unaware-- though with less of an excuse-- are the consumers from industrialized countries who through our purchases encourage and support this exploitation. Someone wears the pants and blouses, walks on the carpets, and eats the food. As the global economy grows so does the use of child labor, which becomes a "competitive advantage."

Asia accounts for more than half of child labor, while Africa has the highest percentage-- more than one third-- of its children working. In Latin America, 15 to 20 percent of all children work. Sound too far from home? Over the last decade reports of child labor violations in the U.S. have risen dramatically, even as government cutbacks have removed most investigators from the field.

The reasons behind child labor are varied. While many point to poverty-- and families trying to avoid it by working their children-- experts argue that child labor actually creates a nearly unbreakable cycle of poverty, stealing jobs from adults and leaving uneducated children without the skills to find good jobs in the future. This is borne out by the

fact that a child's earnings typically make up less than 20% of household income. In some developing countries, a child frequently gets no income, having been indentured to pay off a family debt, that with interest and meals amounts to a short, enslaved life in a squalid factory.

Illness, injury and death are commonplace, as children work 14-16 hours a day behind locked factory gates or suffer permanent damage to, for instance, their hands tying tiny knots in carpets. Children recycling battery parts suffer nosebleeds, eye and brain damage. In the mines they are crushed, or die from black lung disease. In the U.S., children have been killed (illegally) operating machinery in supermarkets and on construction sites, or poisoned by pesticides used in the fields they work. Sadly, more and more children are again turning up in the garment sweatshops of New York, Los Angeles and San Francisco.

But what can we do? We can take direct action to alleviate the problem: 1) Call up elected officials and tell them that child labor anywhere is intolerable, that we want our labor laws enforced vigorously, and we want our trade policy to help take away incentives for children in other countries to be exploited. With NAFTA and GATT this may be harder as our own government has given up some of the economic weapons it used to be able to use to force compliance, but we should continue to raise our voices.

2) Try to be cognizant of the country of origin of the products you buy. Tell retailers that you are suspicious of imported products and challenge them to guarantee that their suppliers are not using child labor. This is yet another reason to buy union, guaranteeing decent conditions for those who make our products.

3) Talk to your own children about the conditions they labor under, monitor the amount of hours they work, and discuss their rights on the job. Don't assume they are being treated fairly. Last year Burger King in Florida was fined \$500,000 for child labor violations. Our union has an excellent pamphlet written for young workers on their rights. Call the office at 708.960.4466 and ask for one.

Editor's note: Excerpted from UFCW Action.

DID YOU KNOW...

- ☞ That the 'rock-bottom' rate that Ameritech Cellular offers to the thousands of employees who use the service, is higher than that offered to corporate customers...
- ☞ That of the \$18,000 price tag on a Ford Taurus, \$840, or 4.7% of the price goes to 'those overpaid union workers' that build the cars. 30%, or \$5400 goes to marketing and distribution...
- ☞ That management consultants are now advising their corporate clients not to use the words 're-engineering,' 'restructuring,' 'reorganization,' or 'business process redesign.' Why? Because us 'dumb puppies' have figured out that it means one thing; LAYOFFS. Managers are afraid it will hurt morale. DUH! Maybe we should have a contest to figure out what the new buzzwords will be...
- ☞ That in a recent meeting with workers, a big-shot from Ameritech said that problems meeting appointments and answering phones are because union workers are 'slugs.' Geez, it couldn't possibly have anything to do with 13,000 less people trying to do a workload that is increasing by 10%, with a system that has been screwed up by the geniuses who did the re-engineering?

Do You Know How Bad It Could Be?

by Bryan Slinkard, Steward, Unit 4

Unfortunately, I often hear "What does the union do for me?" As I have stated in previous columns, don't think for a minute that these allegedly "great" companies we work for would pay us the wages, overtime and many other benefits that we receive, unless we were union. It doesn't come out of the goodness of their heart.

Before I came to Ameritech, I worked at a company that we tried to unionize, but the effort fell short. Most people seemed ready to organize, but the union vote was defeated. Because of that, our raises were almost non-existent, our benefits were almost nothing, paid vacations were unheard of-- basically, we had no voice. After this experience, it is a relief to work in a situation where we do have a voice-- our union.

I would like to share with you what some working people go through when they try to organize. Maybe it will give all of us a better appreciation of what we have-- and what we need to fight to maintain.

1) A company manufactures sheet metal and fiberglass parts for military aircraft. It's located in Wichita, Kansas which is a "right to work" state. Within ten days after an initial meeting with fellow employees, a majority of the workers had signed a union authorization agreement. Two certified letters were mailed to the president of the company-- one stating majority status and the other explaining employee rights under the Wagner Act. After the letters were read by the president of the company, he told his secretary that he would be "hell to work with." The president of the company said he was going to lay off the union organizer because "his dad is some big shot in the union at Boeing." That afternoon, the organizer was laid off for "lack of work." One week later, he was fired for "poor work performance." This happened exactly one week after the boss became aware of the attempt to organize. Coincidental? I don't think so. The harassment by management included warnings that the union would force a strike, and that the workers would then be replaced. They threatened that what little benefits they had would be lost because negotiations would start from scratch, and the company wasn't going to agree to anything. Supervisors were friendly to workers who expressed doubts about the union, while union supporters were treated with hostility. Then two additional union supporters were "laid off." Numerous unfair labor practice charges have been filed, and the fight continues.

2) A company in Michigan moved from a large city to a smaller community nearby. The president of the company was praised for bringing new jobs to the community and for his financial donation towards a new community park. However, the workers he hired soon

found out that their new boss had a "take it or leave it" attitude. The workers then contacted the United Auto Workers (UAW) with complaints of poor wages, benefits, and sexual harassment. The workers approached the union with this even after they were told by the plant manager that if the employees tried to organize, the plant would be shut down. The workers came to find out that the reason the company moved in the first place was to escape the union that represented the workers at the old location. When the company president found out about the employees attempt to organize, the employees were all instructed to stop working fifteen minutes before the end of their shift on the Friday before Memorial Day. He then called them outside, and had all the employees watch as he padlocked the door and announced that the plant was "closed", there was an ad in the local newspaper seeking immediate help to fill open positions.

3) Lawyers for a certain company dragged out union jurisdiction hearings for eight days. A five month delay from the union petition to the election allowed this company's "liberal" managers to gain control with a powerful anti-union campaign. This company hung a banner that read "Wear the Union Label...Unemployed."

4) A British-owned company attempted to kill an organizing campaign by firing thirteen union supporters two weeks before the election. While the case awaited resolution by the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), the company contracted out the jobs of union supporters, threatened years of legal delays, and vowed never to hire back the fired workers.

5) Threats of plant closures are a centerpiece of employer 'union avoidance' campaigns. In one case, a company's lawyers informed the NLRB that if the Board ruled against the company, the plant would close. In spite of this threat, letters written by supporters of representation were similar to the following: "I'm for the union because I want a better life for myself and my children. I'm not scared by the company's threats-- I'm voting union." Or, "All the money spent on lawyers and scare tactics could have gone to make things better for us. I'm not scared." These are just a small sample of many examples I have.

As I said at the beginning of this article, you wouldn't want to find out what it's like to work for a non-union company. Remember that it's OUR union that has our interests at heart-- not Corporate America. Don't forget why you have a voice on the job. It certainly isn't because our employers want it.

So cherish and protect our voice, stick together and remember, "AN INJURY TO ONE IS AN INJURY TO ALL!!!"



"I keep having this nightmare that I'm one of my own employees."

Union Membership Makes Good Dollars And Sense

Workers organize unions for one basic reason: acting together, people have the power to improve their wages and working conditions in ways that would be impossible if they acted alone.

But how are our unions performing? Are unions delivering the economic goods to their members in this era of global manufacturing and rapid automation? The answer is a resounding "Yes!" according to the latest government reports.

Union members enjoy a huge advantage over non-union workers in the all-important areas of wages and fringe benefits, the US Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) reveals.

It doesn't simply pay to belong to a union, the BLS studies show. Belonging to a union pays big time.

Union members averaged \$23.26 an hour in total compensation (wages and benefits, combined) in the private sector in 1994. That compares to an average total compensation of \$16.04 an hour received by private sector, non-union employees last year. That's a whopping 45 percent difference, the BLS researchers found.

In wages and salaries alone, union members earned an average \$14.77 an hour. Non-union employees, meanwhile, received more than 26 percent less, for an average hourly wage of \$11.70.

Benefits, however, revealed the biggest union advantage.

The average union member received insurance benefits worth \$2.46 an hour, or \$5,116.80 a year, in 1994. Non-union American workers, however, received less than half as much insurance: \$1.03 an hour.

The difference grew as the BLS examined more and more benefits, including pensions, holidays, vacations, and sick leave. Union members in private sector jobs averaged \$8.51 an hour in total benefits last year, virtually twice the \$4.34 in hourly benefits of non-union workers.

The difference was even sharper in so-called "blue collar jobs," where union benefits averaged \$9.35 an hour, compared to non-union benefits of only \$3.98 an hour.

Female union members earn, on average, 38 percent more per week than non-union women (\$522 versus \$377).

We can calculate the dollar value of union membership the same way we measure the quality of a bank account, or any other form of investment: by figuring what we put in and what we get back in return.

The average union member pays \$31 per-month in union dues, or roughly two hours in wages a month.

In 1994, the average union member's contract provided total compensation (wages and benefits, combined) worth \$21.56 an hour.

Wages accounted for \$15.17 an hour of the total. Fringe benefits (including pensions, medical and life insurance, paid vacations, holidays and sick leave) totaled \$6.39 an hour.

In other words \$31 a month in union dues yielded \$1,022.40 month in fringe benefits.

That's a 3,298 percent return on the dollar, on fringe benefits alone! Try matching that rate of return on Wall Street, or at your neighborhood Savings and Loan.

None of the figures cited here include the value of safety and health protection, seniority, and other valuable union rights that are hard to express in dollars and cents.

And how do you place a price on dignity? What is the value of being treated like a man or woman, with rights and abilities that management must respect, as a matter of contract and federal law?

Only by acting together can we secure our rights to a decent living in this world. That's why workers will always need and join unions.

The Taft-Hartley Act

by Robert Wechsler

Given the conservative nature of the recently-elected Congress and the rash of anti-worker legislation being considered in its committees, it is appropriate to turn back to a similar period in American history when business and Congress made a holy alliance against labor. The time is the late 1940s, the Democratic President Harry Truman, and the legislation is the Taft-Hartley Act.

No single act of Congress did more to weaken the economic and legal powers of labor unions in America than the Taft-Hartley Act (officially called the Labor Management Relations Act) which was passed by Congress in June, 1947. President Truman, whose veto of the bill was overridden by a conservative Congress, accurately predicted that the bill "would reverse the basic direction of our national labor policy."

The story of how the Taft-Hartley bill became law begins with the end of World War II. Returning veterans expected to see wage increases when they assumed their old jobs. Further pressure was put on wages when the federal government removed wartime price controls in 1946. Prices for basic goods shot up 25 percent in two weeks and working people demanded increases in wages to cover this drop in their real income.

Predictably, a strike wave followed. The federal government estimated that industry generally could maintain its prewar profits and raise wages 24 percent without raising prices. But corporations refused to grant any wage increases without passing the costs off to the consumers. In September 1946, corporate profits rose to their highest level in history-- 20 percent higher than in the best war year.

With the outbreak of strikes, the public blamed unions for the higher consumer prices. The price gouging policies of corporations and their refusal to bargain in good faith at the negotiating table was ignored. All the press could see were strikes. Newspaper ads placed by corporations masquerading as "public interest" groups fueled these misconceptions.

The 1946 election brought out such a low turnout of voters (including labor voters) that the Republicans, led by conservatives, gained control of both houses of a Congress for the first time in 14 years. Reaction set in quickly as politicians fought each other to see whose bill could intimidate labor more. The 1946 Hobbs Act limited unions' economic sanctions in a strike situation. States passed laws in 1946-47 which prohibited union security agreements, outlawed the union shop, restricted picketing, and provided for easy use of injunctions to break strikes.

What did Taft-Hartley do? It changed the way in which unions could represent their members by altering union security agreements.

The closed shop (a prehire union shop agreement) was outlawed except in a few industries under specific circumstances. Section 14b allowed states to prohibit any union security so that in 21 states today, it is illegal for an employer to recognize the union shop. These state laws have been dubbed "Right-to-Work" laws, but in reality they deny basic union protection to any group which may want it. Unions may exist in the shop or on the property, but they must defend all employees even though no worker is compelled to join the union. Statistics bear out the fact that workers in these 21 compulsory open shop states earn less on average than in the other 29 states.

Employees are limited in their ability to organize into unions. By contrast, their employers are allowed to make "captive audience" speeches on company time where employee attendance is mandatory. Under the guise of "free speech," employers have a free hand intimidating their employees.

The Act also outlines a series of what it terms "unfair labor practices" by unions which restrain unions in bargaining and organizing. Furthermore, Taft-Hartley sets up guidelines on what constitutes a group of workers who can be organized. Employers have often challenged the composition of these groups or have charged unions

with unfair labor practices in order to delay organizing drives for years. Under advice from professional management consultants (union-busters), corporations pay millions of dollars to use delaying tactics in order to break a union's momentum. Willing to risk fines-- if they are ever assessed-- employers fire union organizers and sympathizers in order to defeat any organizing drive.

Taft-Hartley limits the right of employees to picket. Secondary picketing and boycotts are prohibited. Picket lines can be set up only at the primary work site and with certain restrictions such as at certain gates. So-called "neutral" employers such as subcontractors at a building site often cannot be picketed. Such limitations have undercut the economic power of the building trade unions.

Unions can be sued in district court for breaches of contract, illegal boycotts, and strikes. Supervisors are denied full union protection under the law. The Act establishes a mandatory 80-day "cooling off" period in a strike situation which the President deems will: "imperil the national safety and health."

The passage of the Taft-Hartley Act has stimulated the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) to play a more restrictive role in the relationship between labor and management. Since 1947, the Board and the courts have been deciding issues which should be decided by unions and employers at the bargaining table. Union organizing and bargaining in the South and West have been limited because state laws under 14b have made the open shop compulsory.

Today, the delicate balance between labor and management, unhinged by the Taft-Hartley Act, is being subverted even further by politicians, employers, and even the courts.

Editor's Note: Robert Wechsler, editor of the New York Labor History News Service, is the Education Director of the Transport Workers Union of America, AFL-CIO.

NATIONAL BOYCOTTS SANCTIONED BY THE AFL-CIO

ACME BOOT COMPANY

Western-style boots: Acme, Dan Post, Dingo brands

DECKERS CORPORATION

Sandals: Deckers, Sensi & Teva brands

HOWE K. SIPES CO.

Athletic apparel (chiefly baseball & softball uniforms, satin & wool jackets) Label: Howe Athletic Apparel

F.L. THORPE & CO.

"Original Black Hills Gold Jewelry"

ACE DRILL CORP.

Wire, jobber & letter drills, routers & steel bars

BROWN & SHARPE MFG. CO.

Measuring, cutting & machine tools & pumps

LOUISIANA-PACIFIC CORP.

Brand name wood products: L-P Wolmanized, Cedartone, Waferwood, Fibrepine, Oro-Bond, Redex, Sidex, Ketchikan, Pabco, Xonolite

ROME CABLE CORP.

Cables used in construction & mining

SOUTHWIRE CO.

Commercial & industrial wire & cable; Do-it-yourself brand Homewire

LAKWOOD ENGINEERING & MFG.

Electric fans & heaters for homes

SILO, INC.

Retailers of appliances & electronics

TELESCOPE CASUAL FURNITURE

Manufacturers of director's chairs, patio, lawn & casual furniture

BRUCE CHURCH, INC.

Iceberg lettuce: Red Coach, Friendly, Green Valley Farms & Lucky labels

CALIFORNIA TABLE GRAPES

Grapes that do not bear the UFW label on their carton

COOK FAMILY FOODS, LTD.

Hams & ham steaks: Cook's, Blue Bird, Fire Side, Lancaster, Nottingham, Shaws, Sherwood, Super Tru, TV's labels

DIAMOND WALNUT CO.

Diamond brand canned & bagged walnuts & walnut pieces

MOHAWK LIQUEUR CORP.

Mohawk label gin, rum, peppermint schnapps & cordials

TYSON/HOLLY FARMS CHICKEN

Chicken & processed poultry products

ALITALIA AIRLINES

Air transport for passengers & freight

BRIDGESTONE/FIRESTONE, INC.

Tires. Tire brands include: Bridgestone, Firestone, Dayton, Triumph, Road King, Roadhandler

GO-MART GAS

Gasoline sold at Go-Mart convenience stores & truck stops

KAWASAKI ROLLING STOCK, U.S.A.

Railroad cars

MICHELIN

Michelin brand tires

RON JAWORSKI'S STADIUM HOLIDAY INN, Philadelphia, PA

BELL ATLANTIC/NYNEX MOBILE SYSTEMS

Mobile telephone services

BLACK ENTERTAINMENT TELEVISION (BET)

BET cable television, Action pay-per-view, Bet on Jazz

R.J. REYNOLDS TOBACCO CO.

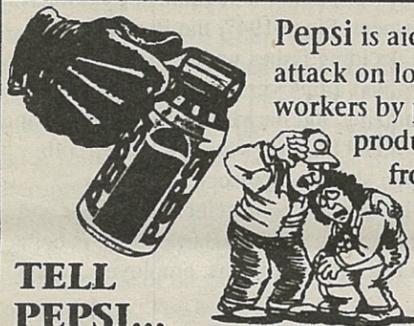
Cigarettes: Camel, Winston, Salem, Doral, Vantage, More, Now, Real, Bright, Century, Sterling, YSL/Ritz **Smoking tobaccos:** Prince Albert, George Washington, Carter Hall, Apple, Madeira Mixture, Royal Comfort **Little cigars:** Winchester

AFL-CIO Endorses Pepsi Charge; UPIU Calls Unionists to Action

The AFL-CIO Executive Council voted unanimously to endorse a campaign by the United Paperworkers International Union (UPIU) to challenge PepsiCo to sever its ties to A.E. Staley Mfg. Co. The resolution calls for a national **Action on Pepsi** in support of 762 UPIU members Staley has locked out of its corn-processing plant in Decatur, IL, since June 27, 1993. Pepsi buys up to 30 percent of Staley's corn sweetener for the beverage giant's soft drinks.

The AFL-CIO resolution calls for its affiliated unions "to render all appropriate assistance to UPIU in this dispute and urges all affiliates and state and central labor councils to participate in UPIU-designated actions." These actions include distributing leaflets at sports and other events sponsored by Pepsi, and also at Pepsi subsidiaries Taco Bell, Pizza Hut, and Kentucky Fried Chicken restaurants.

"We're gratified by the Executive Council's action," stated UPIU Local 7837 President Dave Watts. "Staley will end this lockout when it loses customers like Pepsi. With the entire labor movement behind us, we will convince Pepsi that its image will be damaged beyond repair if it keeps financing Staley's attack on working-class families."



Pepsi is aiding the attack on locked-out workers by purchasing products from Staley Mfg.

TELL PEPSI...

DUMP STALEY

CALL: 1-800-433-2652

United Mine Workers President Richard L. Trumka brought the Staley resolution to the Executive Council in his role as chairman of the AFL-CIO Strategic Approaches Committee. The committee report to the Council urges the president of every national and international union to write the Pepsi chief urging Pepsi to dump Staley. The report recommends these letters "put Pepsi on notice that if it continues to purchase Staley products, union members throughout the nation will be told that Pepsi has refused to eliminate scab products from its soft drinks."

On July 9 and 10, the Staley workers rejected a company proposal which in many ways was worse than the concession-laden offer union members rejected before the contract expiration in September 1992. Immediately after the July 1995 rejection, Staley workers announced plans to escalate their campaign against Pepsi. A similar campaign led to Miller Beer's decision last fall to drop Staley as a supplier.

The proposal workers recently rejected would have imposed 12-hour shifts rotating from days to nights every six days. Staley had originally proposed a 30-day rotating schedule. Staley's demands would also weaken the grievance procedure and seniority rights, cut the union safety committee's right to inspect the plant, and grant management unlimited power to subcontract every worker's job.

"Staley has inflicted a lot of suffering on our members and their families, but this rejection proves we still have our dignity," Watts declared. "We're anxious to return to work, but we won't surrender on Staley's terms."

Illinois Lifts Staley Tax Breaks

by James B. Park

After pressure from the Paperworkers, Illinois officials have lifted some of the tax breaks received by A.E. Staley, which seems bent on destroying jobs rather than producing them, as envisioned by the state.

Meanwhile, Staley workers have enlisted the aid of pigs, chickens and rock'n'roll, as they extended their Action on Pepsi Weekend to encompass the Labor Day holiday.

Gathered around two feeding pigs, dozens of locked-out UPIU members called for an end to tax breaks that Staley receives in return for a promise, which it failed to keep, to retain jobs. Staley is "feeding at the public trough and gobbling up goodies just as fast as they can get them in their little piggy snouts," said Art Dhermy of UPIU Local 7837.

Three multinational corporations involved in labor disputes-- Staley, Caterpillar Inc. and Bridgestone/Firestone-- all have plants in a 9.3 square-mile "enterprise zone" in Decatur, IL, where they receive property tax abatements and credits against their state income tax on the value of new construction or machinery renovation.

The tax deals have cost the city of Decatur nearly \$4 million a year in property taxes each year for the past nine years.

Staley received tax breaks worth more than \$500,000 in 1993 alone, Dhermy said, while employment at the plant declined by 690 jobs, or 48 percent, since it began getting the enterprise zone abatements.

Property taxes on five pieces of Staley property were reduced by 30 percent in 1986, Dhermy said, from \$12 million to \$8.4 million. Another \$183,000 was knocked off in 1991, he said.

Last October, in the middle of its lockout of 760 UPIU members, Staley received a new sales tax exemption on the purchase of machinery. The company was required to show that the investment would save jobs. But, in reality, Staley is using the exemption for new equipment that will help automate the facility and eliminate jobs, the union said.

In 1992, Staley received a 100 percent tax exemption on its \$1 million-a-month utility bill so long as it employed at least 1,000 people. Both deals run for five years and will save the company more than \$5.5

million.

In a cruel and ironic twist, Staley tried to justify keeping the tax breaks by arguing that it still employs more than 1,000 people, including 569 of the locked out workers, who haven't been paid in more than two years! But the state would not accept that argument.

Some 760 UPIU Members, formerly Allied Industrial Workers, were locked out on June 27, 1993. Staley, a subsidiary of the London-based conglomerate Tate and Lyle, demanded that workers agree to unlimited subcontracting, the loss of several hundred bargaining unit jobs, 12-hour rotating shifts with no premium pay and the gutting of seniority protections. When the union balked, the workers were locked out and replaced by scabs.

Workers have been without a contract since Sept. 30, 1992, and have lost more than \$24 million in wages. The workers rejected the company's latest proposal after the union negotiating committee and executive board condemned the company for continuing to demand the right to unlimited subcontracting as well as the 12-hour rotating shifts.

Since the lockout, one Staley worker, 37-year-old James Lindsey of Terre Haute, IN, was killed after a grain bin exploded July 30. Lindsey was hospitalized with second and third degree burns over much of his body and died about a week later. Before the explosion, Staley had refused to let the union conduct a safety inspection, but after Lindsey's death, the company recanted and allowed the local's safety officer to tour the plant.

The Staley dispute is drawing national media attention as well. "Crackers, the Corporate Crime-Fighting Chicken" from Fox Television's "TV Nation" show, visited Staley's plant and a Caterpillar plant in Decatur.

According to press reports, the seven-foot, 200 pound chicken crossed company property and walked up to the gate at Staley followed by a TV film crew. He was stopped by Staley security guards, who themselves were carrying video cameras. The chicken was threatened with arrest and left, but not before shaking and rattling the gate.

-AFL-CIO News

Local 336 First Annual Solidarity Golf Outing

October 8th

See page 2 for details!

AT PRESS TIME!

Dan Lane, a Staley Road Warrior locked-out since June, 1993 began a "Fast For Justice" on September 1st. Brother Lane, father of five, has pledged to go all the way on water and juice. This typifies the life and death struggle in the "War Zone." We must turn the heat up in every way possible. Support the Staley workers, call Pepsi TODAY!

Bank Shots

