

Promoting production and use of tv and radio shows pertinent to the cause of organized labor and working people

## Historic Seoul LaborMedia Conference Held

### International Labor Communication Solidarity Growing

by Steve Zeltzer, Producer *Labor Video Project*  
LaborNet-IGC Str. Ctte., UPPNET, Str. Ctte.

On Nov. 10-12 in Seoul, South Korea, activists in labor video, computer, media and labor teachers from around the world met to hold a labor telecommunications conference.

It was no accident the conference took place in Korea. The massive Korean labor upheaval and general strike held in December 1996 and January 1997 had brought not only the ignition of the Korean labor movement but an international communication network that helped back the strike. The conference also came on the heels of the LaborTECH conference held in San Francisco in July and co-sponsored by UPPNET and LaborNet-IGC. Both these organizations, as well as Laboumet-UK, actively helped publicize the Seoul conference.

The combination of the computer/communication revolution with the development of an independent labor movement in Korea has led to some historic firsts. For the first time in the history of labor, a general strike was linked up with the world working class through the use of an interactive web page and with videos on the general strike that were screened around the world. The Korean government was shaken and stunned by the global actions in solidarity with the Korean workers.

These technologies helped build an international day of solidarity on January 10, 1997 with rallies and protests at dozens of Korean embassies and consulates around the world.

The importance of international labor communication links was not lost on the Korean labor movement. The conference



Some of the international guests at Conference: (L to R) Chris Bailey, Labournet, UK; Steve Zeltzer, UPPNET/Labor Video Project, USA; Dave Ohlenroth, Labor Beat, USA; Julius Fisher, UPPNET/working tv, Canada

was sponsored not only by many labor video, computer and labor information/education organizations but also by the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions (KCTU).

The Korean Confederation of Trade Unions had been the leading force behind the general strike and had seen the need to use labor communication technology to build labor

photo: Steve Zeltzer



Panel on Technology & Exploitation: (L to R) Kubeshni Govender, South Africa; Kang Myoung Koo, Professor of Communication and Information, Seoul National University; Julius Fisher, working tv, Canada; A representative of the Ogawamachi Cine Club in Japan, with microphone

solidarity links. The KCTU was not only a sponsor of the conference but also an active participant with many of its top leaders attending sessions and hosting a reception for the international delegates.

The conference itself was held at Yonsei University which only last year had been a battleground during the general strike. Ten thousand police had surrounded the university to crush a student protest and had arrested over 1,000 students. Some of them

were still in jail along with trade unionists, including a leader of the public workers union who was framed to prevent the action of his union during the strike.

The Seoul LaborMedia conference was also held in the midst of a massive political and economic crisis. The capitalist parties were in disarray with the President of Korea resigning

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from his own party a week before the conference. The currency crisis was knocking the value of the won off 3% a day and a successful national strike had just taken place at Kia industries that forced the government to nationalize the conglomerate.

The first Seoul International Labor Film and Video Festival was scheduled to be held and some were concerned that the organizers of the conference would also be arrested since the films had not been through the censorship board.

The conference topics and planning had been discussed online prior to the conference and many of the suggestions were integrated into the conference agenda. With a team of nearly 100 students, academics, videographers and computer experts, the conference book in Korean and English was put together for distribution at the conference, the videos from around the world were captioned into Korean and all the logistical and security arrangements were organized.

I had come a week earlier and met with the Sam-mi



November 9 national labor rally of 30,000 workers sponsored by Korean Confederation of Trade Unions. LaborMedia 97 international guests were invited to the platform.

Specialty Steel hunger strikers who were fighting their discriminatory discharge by POSCO. They had a web page in English and asked for international support for their struggle. Their web page is at <http://kpd.sing-kr.org/~sami>.

I had also spoken at a rally (Nov. 8) of 8,000 workers from throughout the country who were commemorating the death of Jeon Tae Il. Over twenty years ago, in protest of the inhuman labor conditions, Jeon Tae Il had immolated himself and every year on November 9, the Korean trade union movement comes together to commemorate his life.

Theater performers, musicians, drummers and even a rap band called Mayday performed before the thousands of workers and students who had come from throughout the country to this anniversary solidarity event.

### **National Labor Rally**

The following day, November 9, a national labor rally of 30,000 workers was held and Kwon Young Ghil, president of the KCTU, announced his candidacy for president of the coun-

try. His party, which is called People Victory 21 ([vic21@hitel.net](mailto:vic21@hitel.net)), was formed after a special conference of the KCTU decided that workers needed a political alternative to the business parties. The government is refusing to register the party and unions are not allowed to participate in politics despite the role of business in politics. Many of the LaborMedia delegates joined labor representatives from around the world who were introduced from the platform to loud applause. Not surprisingly, there was not a word about the rally of the labor political campaign in the two daily English papers in Korea, *The Korean Times* and the *Korea Herald*.

photos: Dave Ohlstrom



Kwon Young Ghil holds torch to light fire at rally. He is president of the KCTU and his candidate for president in national election.

The LaborMedia conference not only faced many logistical problems but also the threat of a police raid. Under Korean law, every film or video must be sent through a censor before it can be screened.

The previous week, Suh Joon-sik, a human rights activist, had organized the Second Annual Human Rights Festival in Seoul and had been arrested for screening films without getting them approved. So there was real concern that our conference would also face the same fate.

The police and government officials called the conference organizers to find out if the films we were showing had

been approved. The conference organizers said that since the film makers were attending the conference these would be in an "educational" format. Because of the presence of over 15 international delegates, and that the Yonsei University department was a co-sponsor and, finally, the fact the KCTU was sponsoring the conference made it very difficult for the authorities to move to shut down the film and video festival.

### **Conference Discussions**

Using simultaneous translators from Korean to English, the KCTU and other sponsors gave greetings to the conference. The panels had a wide variety of topics from the role of labor video around the world to labor technology in the working class. Many of the presentations had also been translated into Korean so participants could read the documents prior to the contribution. Many of them have also been posted on the Labormedia web page at <http://kpd.sing-kr.org/labormedia>

What was clear even from the beginning of the conference is that activists and leaders of the Korean trade union movement and labor communicators are closely following labor developments internationally. An online chat room was also

set up for labor communicators around the world to discuss and participate in the conference.

Labor research and education groups such as the Korea Institute For Labor Studies and Policies (KIPC@[dollian.dacom.co.kr](mailto:dollian.dacom.co.kr)) and the International Politics & Economy Center of Korea (<http://kpnews.cpnnet.or.kr>) were already publicizing in Korea the developments of labor communication around the world as well as translating labor articles on the internet into Korean for distribution through faxes in Korea.

More and more Korean unionists are setting up computer networks for information discussion and debate. The Democratic Seoul Subway Workers Trade Union and the Hyundai Heavy Industry Workers Union both have computer user groups and there are thousands of unionists now going on line. The KCTU's officers all have e-mail and we learned from the conference that there is a continuing debate on democracy and other issues in their computer networks. In fact, according to participants, workers who were critical of various policies were using these networks to express their points of view.

In fact, the government is so worried about the democratic use of the internet that it recently banned access to Geocities for Koreans because of the Korean labor and political sites. Geocities hosts more than 1,000,000 web sites. One discussion that took place was on the question of security and the use of Pretty Good Privacy (PGP) outside the United States. This encryption software, according to Israeli participant Eric Lee, is vital in protecting labor information and communication. It is of course banned in Korea, but, according to Lee, Hyundai and other major corporations are probably already using it.

### **International Labor Video Festival**

The response to the video screening was a packed theater of students, workers and teachers. Many of the labor struggles from India, Japan, Palestine, Canada and the US had never even been heard of by Koreans. Many were stunned by the power of these images and the similarity between the Korean struggles and those around the world. UPPNET's video on the Liverpool dockers



Festival video: "Arab Women Textile Workers Fight Israeli Corporations"

international day of action "All For One" was well received. The Japanese presentation on labor video by Akira Matsubara of Video Press in Tokyo focussed on how

the visit of the Liverpool dockers brought together the struggles of not only the Japanese dockers against deregulation but also the Kokuro railway workers who have been fighting privatization of Japan Rail for over 10 years. Akira videotaped their tour and the now internationalization of this important struggle.



Festival video: "All for One" produced by UPPNET

One important workshop was on how technology is being used to further exploit the labor movement. In a paper subtitled "The Political Economy of Beepers", Korea University Professor Kang Su Sol outlined how part time and temporary workers are being further exploited through the use of beepers. They only work when they are beeped



Festival video: "Human Rights for Japanese Railway Unions"

and they have become Korea's "virtual workers". A contribution on the use of computer technology in Japan and how Japanese workers are being forced to purchase their own computers in order to keep up



Festival video: "Metro Days of Action," produced by working tv

at work showed another aspect of how computers or the lack of them by workers is causing growing fear of being left behind and marginalized from the workforce.

There was a great deal of interest in the UPS Teamsters strike and how US unions were able to successfully mobilize against the company. Additionally, many unionists were interested in the formation of the Labor Party in the United States and some were following it in the Labor Party newspaper on the web.

One important issue that was discussed was the difficulty of Koreans and others in using the internet, which is largely in English. Debate centered on how unionists could be able to communicate using new technology to overcome problems of language.

### **Korean Labor Web Sites**

One of the major achievements of Korean labor communicators was their ability to put up a large number of web pages in English about the general strike and on the struggle of the trade unions. The Social Information Networking Group (SING), the Task Group For Labor Information (TASK) and the Solidarity Committee For Progress and Democracy were all groups that were working to provide information on the internet about developments in the Korean labor movement. These organizations have also played an important role in the critical process of educating Korean workers about the use of communication technology.

Participants from South Africa, England, Canada, Japan, the Netherlands, Israel and the US were astounded at the extent of labor communication technology being developed and used by the Korean labor movement.

Another debate that took place at the conference was the issue of globalization of the world economy and how labor should respond to this. Discussion and documents during the conference pointed to the similarity of deregulation of labor, privatization and contracting out in every country of the world. The IMF itself was only weeks away from going to Korea to reorganize the Korean economy and the capitalist press was wailing about how Korea must implement "The Mexican Plan" to solve its economic problems.

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Conference participants meet informally in Yousai University cafeteria. (L to R) Chris Bailey, Labournet UK; Delegates from Hyundai; Student volunteer helps translate

photo: Steve Zeltzer

**Seoul International LaborMedia 97** (continued from p. 3)

Chris Bailey of Labournet from England argued that it would be wrong for the conference to take a position on these issues without a fuller discussion. After some debate, a compromise amendment to the closing conference document submitted by Peter Waterman said that globalization should come democratically from below and not from the top down.

This debate will obviously continue on this and many other issues and this is now possible on the internet.

During a discussion among some of the delegates, agreement was reached that there would be a Labournet-Korea established, an international labor video distribution network and exchange developed, and a plan to have international labor film and video festivals in every country around the world during May.

A delegate from Canada, Julius Fisher (*working tv*) also volunteered to see if there was enough support and finances to plan the next LaborMedia/LaborTECH conference in



photo: Steve Zeltzer

A few of the many Yousai U. and other University students who assisted with the conference are recognized for their help.

Vancouver in 1998. The delegate from the South Africa Food And Allied Workers Union, Kubeshni Gowender, also said she would work to see if there could be a similar conference in South Africa in 1999. Following the conference, Eric Lee in solidarity with the Korean workers established a web page on labor news and struggles in Korea. The page is located at [www.solinet.org/LEE/korea.html](http://www.solinet.org/LEE/korea.html)

The Seoul International LaborMedia Conference played a significant role in not only building solidarity and links with the Korean working class but also strengthening labor communication links worldwide. ♦

**Benefit from the Information and Experience Brought Together by Seoul International LaborMedia '97**

Visit <http://kpd.sing-kr.org/labormedia> and download these discussion documents on labor media by conference participants:

- *The Situation of Labor Video Movement in Korea* - revised version, by Myoung Joon Kim
- *Daily Labor News National Labor-Specialized Daily Newspaper*, by Jin, Sook-Kyung (Korea Labor Policy and Information Center)
- *Globalization, Information and the Labour Movement: What Is To Be Done?* by Peter Waterman
- *Globalization, Democracy And An International Labor Communication Strategy*, by Steve Zeltzer (Labor Video Project)
- *Globalization, Information Age and Labor Movement*, by Mahn-Soo Chae (Deputy Director of the Korean Institute for Labor Studies and Policy)
- *Maximizing the Capability And The Future Prospect of Labour Movement*, by Hwang Seung-Ha (Chunjihyup CUG)
- *Present States And Capabilities of Using On-line Newsletters in Labor Movement*, by Chang, Yeo-Kyung (Representative of SPIC)
- *Roles of Telecommunication, The Example of Telecommunication Taskgroup for General Strike (TTGS)*, by Hong Suckman (chief of central briefing room of TTGS, staff of video & information team of Solidarity for Democracy and Progress)
- *The Present Condition of The Administrative Programs of the Union and Plans for its Computerization*, by Kim Tae-Kyun (Korean Labor Policy and Information Center)
- *Towards a Global Labournet*, by Chris Bailey (Labournet UK)
- *Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow of 'The Media Today'*, by Byoung-kyu Baek, (Media Onul)

Plans are also being made for the publication of all the conference reports and documents in an English edition for distribution around the world.

# The Cartoon That Launched the First Grievance Strike Since 1930 in Broadcast

# Disney

The

## UNION BUSTERS



in

## CONTRACT '97



## Teed-off TV crew pulls plug on PGA

### Strike by technicians forces ABC to scrub Saturday's golf coverage

By David Barron, Copyright 1997 *Houston Chronicle*

Seventy-seven ABC Sports technicians staged a one-day grievance strike Saturday [Nov. 29] at Champions Golf Club, forcing the network to cancel third-round coverage of the PGA Tour Championship. [...] The 24-hour walkout...forced ABC to scrap its scheduled 2½-hour live broadcast Saturday from Champions.

The network instead replayed the third round of the 1995 Tour Championship to its affiliates, including KTRK (Channel 13. [...] Network officials were unable to cite another instance in which a broadcast of a live sports event was scrubbed because of a labor dispute.

One spokesman for the union, which has been working without a contract since March 31, said the last known grievance strike took place in 1930.

"We apologize to the PGA and advertisers and golf fans for the inconvenience," said Jim Joyce, a member of the executive board for the New York local of the National Association of Broadcast Employees and Technicians/Communications Workers of America. "However, ABC had the ability to settle this weeks ago by allowing a neutral third party to arbitrate our dispute."

Anthony Capitano, president of the New York local, called the strike at 6 a.m. Saturday to protest what he described as

ABC's refusal to accept arbitration on a two-week suspension handed down April 29 to union shop steward Mark Johnson.

Johnson was disciplined after drawing a cartoon lampooning several executives with ABC and Walt Disney Co., ABC's parent company, as cartoon characters. Disney Chairman Michael Eisner was portrayed as Scrooge McDuck, ABC President Robert Eiger as Pinocchio and two other executives as Ricky Ratt and Dopey from the Seven Dwarfs.

Capitano said Johnson, a maintenance engineer, posted the cartoon with ABC job listings and was disciplined for damaging company property. [...]

Capitano said the union local, which has about 1,300 members, most of them ABC employees, had tried repeatedly over the past six months to seek arbitration on Johnson's suspension.

Joyce said ABC Vice President Jeffrey Ruthizer, who was depicted as Ricky Ratt in the cartoon, repeatedly refused the union's requests. [...]

Pickets (ranging from cameramen and graphics and audio operators to crew members who have installed tens of thousands of feet of cable across the Champions grounds) donned red NABET T-shirts and carried picket signs outside the ABC broadcast compound. Capitano said no union members crossed the picket line. [...] He also would not rule out the possibility of other grievance strikes to protest the Johnson case and other complaints against ABC. [...]

The strike also affected broadcast of the tournament to the rest of the world by Britain's Sky TV and Japan's NHK, which use the ABC feed.

ABC's Hoover could not estimate the cost to ABC in terms of lost advertising revenue from Saturday's broadcast. Anheuser-Busch and Mercedes-Benz are the primary television sponsors of the tour championship. ♦

**Website**

**Canadian Association of Labor Media**

The Canadian Association of Labour Media is a network of union publications and editors. It was founded in 1976 by the major affiliates of the Canadian Labour Congress. It launched a regular news and graphics service for members in 1986, and incorporated as a federal, non-profit organization the next year. It now counts about 500 member publications and radio or TV programs.

CALM's website is <http://www.calm.ca>



One of many labor cartoons available on CALM's website.

**Madison, Labor Radio**

Starting January 9th *Madison Labor Radio* moves to Friday evening from 5:30-6:00 pm once a week. We have 14 minutes of news, a 5 minute feature, a cultural segment, and a 2 minute "Legal Moment", usually about something like "Your Rights Under OSHA" or What is OSHA? The rest of the time is announcements, calendar, statistic of the week, and the music between each segment.

*Madison Labor Radio* is a project of the South Central Federation of Labor (Wisconsin), Madison Teachers Inc., the School for Workers and Capital Area Uniserve South, which is the WEAC service area outside of Madison.

About 20 volunteers report, write, and edit. I am the "executive editor", meaning I make a guess at what stories we will cover that week. Norm Stockwell of WORT, Ellen laLuzerne from WEAC/Uniserve and Jennie Capelaro have been the actual producers. Several of us rotate as the readers/voices.

I can be reached at 608-262-0680. Norm Stockwell can be reached at WORT 608-256-2001.

- Frank Emspak at: [femspak@igc.apc.org](mailto:femspak@igc.apc.org)

**New Video**

**"Laugh at Your Boss" – with Cartoonists Gary Huck & Mike Konopacki**

The country's most famous labor cartoonist team (Gary Huck and Mike Konopacki) is the subject of Labor Beat's new video "Laugh at Your Boss".

Their best testimonial has actually come from a company: In negotiating a contract with United Electrical Workers, the company tried to get a clause put in it saying that no Gary Huck cartoons would be posted on the bulletin board.

Anyone who has been around the labor movement for any length of time is familiar with their work, but here's a chance to see who these guys are and hear what they have to say. Nowadays they are not only syndicating their cartoons, but are doing a regular feature on the Jim Hightower radio show. Konopacki's making cartoon animations and doing color comic books. The team has also organized a labor cartoon touring exhibit, featuring other cartoonists besides themselves, and we get a ring-side view of the show.

The video 'hangs out' with the duo as they talk about their work with other labor artists at the Jobs with Justice 10th Anniversary Convention. In addition to cartoon "show and tell", the discussion moves into areas of interest to labor media/arts activists: where is the labor movement headed today in the utilization of labor art and in countering corporate culture? Labor muralist Mike Alewitz and former writer's union national president Alec Dubro are also there for the discussion, which looks at the AFL-CIO's current strategy for labor media/arts.

In addition to the Huck & Konopacki segment, this installment of Labor Beat covers the NABET vs ABC/Disney dispute - "Bummer in Fantasyland". Included in this is the adventures of NABET's 'merry pranksters' who show up uninvited and hold union placards while ABC news reporters try to do live reports. (Total show is 28 min. Send \$25 to Labor Beat, 37 S. Ashland, Chicago, IL 60607.) ♦

**Videos on Organizing Needed**

The Labor Studies Center at Wayne State University in Detroit is looking for any decent videos useful for training classes on collective bargaining. All suggestions welcome.

Contact: [dreynolds@igc.apc.org](mailto:dreynolds@igc.apc.org)

**\* DON'T FORGET TO FILL OUT THE SUBSCRIPTION FORM ON THE LAST PAGE OF THIS NEWSLETTER**

## RESOURCES (continued)

### **New Video** **Exclusive McLibel Documentary**

"McLibel: Two Worlds Collide" is the inside story of how a single father and a part-time bar worker took on burger giants McDonald's.

Filmed over three years, the documentary follows Helen Steel and Dave Morris as they are transformed from anonymous campaigners into unlikely global heroes defending themselves in the longest trial in English history. Along the way they face infiltration by spies, secret meetings with top executives, 40,000 pages of background reading and a visit from Ronald McDonald.

The 52-minute documentary uses interviews with witnesses and reconstructions of key moments in court (directed by Ken Loach) to examine the main issues in the trial (nutrition, advertising, employment, animals, environment), as well as the implications for freedom of speech.

McLibel is not about hamburgers. It is about multinational corporations and the power they wield over our everyday lives. Worth giving up six years of your life for?

"A very brave film. The characters of Helen Steel and Dave Morris emerge triumphantly. No wonder the main TV channels dare not show it." - Ken Loach

"The trial of the century." - Mike Mansfield QC

Production company: One-Off Productions Ltd.  
Date: 1997

Full details (inc. storyboards & transcripts) about the film are now available at: [www.spanner.org/mclibel/](http://www.spanner.org/mclibel/)

The whole film will soon be available to watch live on the website.

From: One-Off Productions: [oops@spanner.org](mailto:oops@spanner.org)

### **Letter Carriers Today - TV 214**

The daily lives of letter carriers and other workers is the topic of TV 214, a tv magazine show in San Francisco. Covering local and national labor stories, the series airs monthly on Channel 53 at 7pm in San Francisco, every third Sunday of the month. In Marin County, it's on Channel 31, at 5:30pm every second Monday of the month.

On December 21, Letter Carriers Today got international, with the presentation on the Canadian postal workers strike, thanks to *working tv* in Vancouver, B.C. and their producer Julius Fisher.

For those who are interested in Letter Carriers Today - TV 214, and in acquiring VHS copies of their shows, contact:

*Letter Carriers Today - TV 214*  
National Association of Letter Carriers  
214 12th Street  
San Francisco, CA 94103

### **UPPNET National Executive Board**

President: Howard Kling, producer *Minnesota at Work*, 612-624-5020

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[labr.upynet@conf.igc.apc.org](mailto:labr.upynet@conf.igc.apc.org)

web site: <http://www.mtn.org/~jsee/upynet.html>

UPPNET News editor: Larry Duncan

### **UPPNET OBJECTIVES:**

1. To promote and expand the production and use of television and radio shows pertinent to the cause of organized labor and the issues relevant to all working people.
2. To establish and promote the general distribution and circulation of this programming.
3. To address issues regarding the media and its fair and democratic use and accessibility by labor and other constituencies generally.
4. To encourage and promote the preservation of television and radio broadcasts pertinent to labor.
5. To establish a code of ethic governing television and radio production practices and other such matters UPPNET may determine as relevant to its work.
6. To require all productions to work under a collective bargaining agreement, secure waivers or work in agreement with any television or movie industry union having jurisdiction in the area.

Visit the UPPNET website at:  
<http://www.mtn.org/jsee/upynet.html>

- *Do you think that ABC, NBC, CBS, CNN and PBS are basically neutral toward labor and impartially report the news regardless of who owns/controls them?*
- *Do you think that we can rely on corporate media to fairly report on labor stories, and that the unions don't need to re-boot their media strategy?*

*If you answered "NO!" to any of these questions, it's time you got involved with UPPNET.*

**This is your last complimentary issue. Please subscribe below and continue getting the UPPNET newsletter. Support the only organization that promotes labor television and radio.**

- **Yes. Subscribe me to one year of UPPNET News (a quarterly) for \$15.**
- **I want to join UPPNET. Annual dues are \$30, which includes a year's subscription to the newsletter.**

MAKE OUT CHECK TO UPPNET, fill out the following form, and mail to address below:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Union or Org. \_\_\_\_\_

Position, if any: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone no: \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount Enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Mail this coupon to:

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437 Mgmt & Econ Bld.  
271 19th Ave. South, Minneapolis, MN 55455**



**For a list of UPPNET Executive Board members, statement of purpose, and web site, see page 7.**

**UPPNET would like to thank Michael Straeter, UFCW 1442, for his generous support of the UPPNET Newsletter**



# UPPNET News

Official Publication of the Union Producers and Programmers Network

Spring 1998

*Promoting production and use of tv and radio shows pertinent to the cause of organized labor and working people*

## **A Call To Action On Labor Day 1998**

### **We Demand A Regular National Labor TV & Radio Program on PBS & NPR**

This coming Labor Day on Monday September 7, 1998, the Union Producers and Programmers Network (UPPNET) is calling on all unionists, locals and workers to take action to bring about a national weekly TV show on PBS and a national weekly radio program on NPR. From Pittsburgh to Detroit, Chicago and Los Angeles the PBS/NPR affiliates refuse to program regular TV and radio shows that focus on labor.

Millions of our tax dollars are provided to PBS and NPR to make sure that we have public broadcasting yet these networks also refuse to have any regular national labor programming. At the same time, the management continue to support further commercialization as well as ads and moves toward privatization of the entire public broadcasting network.

While labor is getting shortchanged, they have many many programs on business from *Wall Street Week* and the *Daily Business Report* to *Market Place*. It is time that we had regular labor programming that covers the issues that business doesn't want to talk about.

Today in Detroit, the newspaper battle rages against union busters Gannett and Knight-Ridder but Detroit TV and radio stations refuse to allow paid advertisements by the locked-

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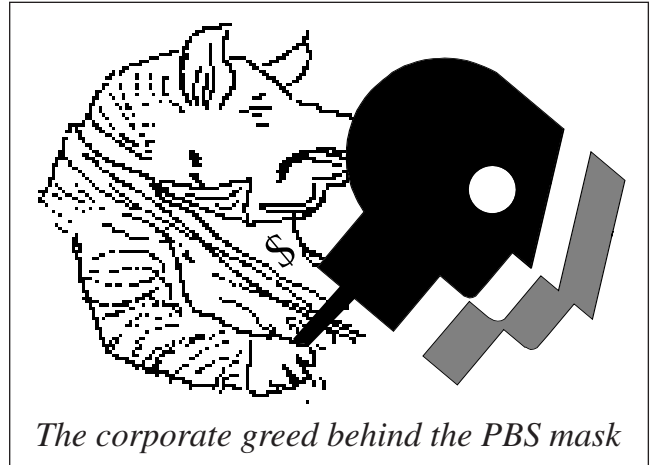
## ***UPPNET Urges Nationwide Protests for Labor Day '98***

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out unions with their point of view. This overt censorship by the media monopolies is growing by the day. There is an absence of national TV/Radio coverage on this and many other labor stories.

We believe that our democracy is under real threat! When companies like Disney which owns ABC refuses to negotiate with the NABET-CWA workers there is no coverage on any of the networks. The monopolization and deregulation of television, radio and cable threatens the rights of not only labor but all people in the United States.

Disney through ABC has bought up stations around the country and destroyed local community stations such as KDIA Radio in Oakland which used to be the bay area's only



Black community radio station. CBS, NBC, CNN, MS-NBC and the Fox Network are also opposing the right of political candidates to get free air time. Today, in the United States you have to be a multi-millionaire or even billionaire to run for more and more offices. This organized corporate attack on our democratic rights must be exposed and fought.

In order to publicize these actions, we ask that you write letters to the local and national press pointing out that PBS and NPR refuse to allow a regular labor TV show and radio show to be programmed in the United States.

We will also be organizing rallies at PBS & NPR affiliates around the country on Labor Day to let all people know that freedom for labor means the right to have radio and television programs about our issues.

Labor is not the only group that is censored out. Efforts at corporate censorship are growing daily—from the effort to silence Oprah Winfrey to many environmental issues which are censored by the media.

Please contact UPPNET if you are interested in getting more information about these issues for your union or local. Also you can copy your letter to us so that we can put them on our web site at [www.mtn.org/jsee/uppnet.html](http://www.mtn.org/jsee/uppnet.html) or email us at [jsee@csom.umn.edu](mailto:jsee@csom.umn.edu) or [uppnet@labornet.org](mailto:uppnet@labornet.org)

Let's build our campaign for labor rights on Television and Radio. "LET LABOR'S VOICE BE HEARD ON TV & RADIO" ♦

**We'd like to know about your ideas, concerns and actions being planned to protest public broadcasting's lack of labor programming. Please contact us:**

**612-624-4326 (Howard Kling, UPPNET President)  
UPPNET, c/o Labor Ed. Services, Univ. of Minnesota,  
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# You Can't Say that Anymore

by Howard Kling, UPPNET President

Free speech. Let's see: Greenpeace activists in London get sued by McDonalds Corporation for distributing a "Factsheet" of the usual environmental, nutrition and labor complaints called "What's Wrong with McDonalds?" Two of the accused have put themselves through hell for years fighting for their rights against high paid corporate lawyers.

Oprah Winfrey gets sued by the beef guys for a "just say no" remark about contaminated meat on her show after bunches of people got sick and died from the stuff.

A certain D.C. bookstore is being coerced to turn over their record of Monica Lewinski's book purchases — book purchases — to Ken Starr so he can see what she's been reading (heaven forbid she picked up *It Takes a Village*).

Longshore union activists and other supporters wind up being sued by the Pacific Maritime Association for the time honored act of putting up effective pickets to stop a cargo ship, the Neptune Jade, from being unloaded at the Oakland docks. The picket was in solidarity with striking dockworkers in Liverpool, England.

And Kate Bronfenbrenner, a Cornell U labor educator, is sued for defamation by Beverly Enterprises Inc., because she made a speech at a town meeting declaring Beverly to be "one of the nation's most notorious labor-law violators." Beverly wants at least \$225,000 from Bronfenbrenner plus the details — names and addresses of workers, for instance — of research she had conducted over more than a decade.

In Minnesota a court has found that it is illegal to distribute leaflets and information along the halls of the largest marketplace gathering in the country, the Mall of America. Meanwhile low power "microradio" stations in communities all over the U.S. are being closed down, public access television is under attack and the conglomeration and concentration of media power continues apace. Not satisfied with simply owning and controlling most effective avenues for expression and the exchange of ideas, corporations are now stepping up their attempts to shut us up altogether.

Whether or not the defendants ultimately prevail, as Oprah did, in these various defamation and libel suits, the pattern of corporate assault on free expression is as clear as their tactic of encouraging silence by exacting a high personal and financial price on those who prefer to speak. The mismatch of resources can have a powerful and chilling effect on people's willingness to step out and criticize a multi-national. How lovely for the corporations even if our Constitution winds up working. The way things are going the trendy new edition of Marx's *Communist Manifesto* will be forced off the window shelves for being a "slandorous" document. Or perhaps simply for being false advertising since the specter haunting the world is not a workers political movement at all, but an absolutely massive shift in the exchange, delivery, publication, broadcast, and discussion of ideas and information toward control, domination, homogeneity, commercialism and constraint.

The specter is a global commercial electronic media system dominated by nine super-powerful, mostly U.S. based transnational corporations, to paraphrase Robert McChesney in *Extra!* (Nov-Dec, 1997). The concentration of power over information continues in the book publishing industry where 8 or 9 multi-nationals dominate. And it is completed in the music industry where a Big Six was in control by the early 80's (check out the

1997 series, "The National Entertainment State" in *The Nation*). Some of these corporate names overlap "genres", as you might guess. Finally, right wing attacks as well as its own weaknesses have pushed the Public Broadcasting System, radio and television alike, fully into the arms of the corporations with on-air commercials and shows with corporate names. James Ledbetter claims that "if you want to see the future of American public broadcasting, go visit a shopping mall," where commercial "learning" stores now exist in partnership with PBS stations. Barney marketing is a symbol of what is to come as PBS too slides down the slope of marketable tie-ins and audience share decision making. As we know from personal observation as well as several studies, the media industry — commercial, PBS, whatever — has not ever been very favorable to workers or union messages to begin with.

Yet now in an even more comprehensive way, the whole media system "works to advance the cause of the global market and promote commercial values, while denigrating journalism and culture not conducive to the immediate bottom line or long-term corporate interests." The loss of freedom and diversity of opinion is huge. And hardly anybody else can get a word in edgewise. And if they do, these days they get sued. Not much room for union information and ideas in this setup, that's for sure.

As unions continue to succeed in organizing and attracting workers, we may well see stepped up legal activity on the part of corporations to quell public declarations and activities of all kinds. The ultimate insult and irony is that while corporations enjoy legal status as individuals under U.S. law, including requisite Constitutional liberties, workers living in this same country and enjoying the same Constitutional protections out on the street, check these liberties at the workplace door everyday. When we interview workers who have organized, they will almost universally site the need for a voice in the workplace, the need to speak up without fear of retribution as the core reason they fought so hard for a union. Sure the economics are central, but you can't get to them without being able to say what's on your mind. I don't think it would be a stretch to argue unions represent one of the greatest free speech movements of all time, a principle that emanates from the moment and impulse of organizing.

But all too often, the free speech principle is not applied or carried much beyond the initial period of organizing. It certainly is seldom raised in the general political arena. But given the enormous concentrations of media power and the willingness of corporations to use the civil courts to stifle public attacks by union supporters and others, the union movement in the U.S. ought to reconsider and take its place in the fight to re-establish effective and public free speech and expression. Such a fight would be a tremendous contribution to the well being of the country. And absolutely essential to the continued ability to organize unions and counter corporate power wherever it looms large.

It seems time for the union movement to put free speech and the state of the media industry in the United States on the map, to focus some attention on excessive media concentration, the closing down of the various, more community-oriented outlets, and the attack on and commercialization of public broadcasting. It may seem tricky to be about the business of getting good press while attacking the multi-nationals that own that press, but the higher principle of free expression we hold dear cannot be allowed to atrophy under pressure from conglomeration and corporate assault. If we continue to let that happen — we're in for it. Remember the bill of rights, they used to teach it in school. ♦

# Film Rejection Highlights PBS Bias

**Union funding 'problematic'; corporate dollars A-OK**

By Janine Jackson

The Public Broadcasting Service last year refused to air *Out At Work*, a film about workplace discrimination against gays and lesbians, because it was partially funded by unions. The rejection was an unsettling example of the obstacles labor advocates face in participating in media discussion. PBS's defense of the funding double standard—which penalizes not just labor unions, but anyone who wants to hear vigorous economic debate—is the latest indication of that network's seeming disdain for the journalistic mission it's charged with. *Out At Work* is a straightforward, compassionate look at the lives of three workers facing bias on the job, ranging from harassment and unequal health care coverage to outright firing based solely on sexual orientation—a practice shockingly legal in 39 states. The producers, independent filmmakers Kelly Anderson and Tami Gold, hoped the film would reach a wide audience as part of the public broadcasting series *P.O.V.*

But having submitted the film for review, *P.O.V.* executive producer Lisa Heller received a letter from Sandra Heberer, PBS's director of news and information programming, saying that, while it found *Out At Work* to be "compelling television responsibly done," PBS would not distribute the film. The reason? It "fails to comport with our normal underwriting guidelines," which "prohibit funding that might lead to an assumption that individual underwriters might have exercised editorial control over program content—even if, as is clear in this case, those underwriters did not."

The funders labeled "problematic" were various trade unions, including the United Auto Workers (UAW), United Steelworkers of America and the Service Employees International Union, along with ASTRAEA, the National Lesbian Action Foundation. "Each of these," PBS said, "could be fairly perceived to have a direct or immediate interest in the subject of the film."

PBS emphasized that they did not believe that any of the cited groups had any actual influence on the film's content. Nor were the amounts overwhelming: None of the contributions was more than \$5,000, and most were around \$1,000. The core of the issue was, in Heberer's words, the "perception problem."

## **Vested Interests**

This is not the first time PBS has invoked elusive "guidelines" on underwriting to buttress unpopular decisions. In 1993, the network rejected an Academy Award-winning documentary about domestic violence, *Defending Our Lives*, because one of the producers was the leader of a battered women's support group, and therefore had a "direct vested interest in the subject matter of the program." The rules "protect the integrity of public television programming," explained Mary Jane McKinven, then PBS's director of news and public affairs, in a letter to the film's producer.

But then as now, the reference to unbendable rules rang hollow to critics who have been tracking creeping commercial encroachment on public broadcasting for years. If indeed such a standard existed at PBS, what could possibly explain the network's broadcast of, for example, *James Reston: The Man Millions Read?* That flattering documentary about the New York Times' most famous pundit, aired on PBS in 1993, was funded by and produced "in association with" the *New York Times*. The director and producer, Susan Dryfoos, is a member of the

Sulzberger family that owns the paper and the daughter of a former Times publisher. Surely here was a "perception problem" of spectacular proportions? FAIR put the question in a May 1994 letter to McKinven, and the response was telling. The Reston documentary was acceptable, McKinven wrote, because it "was a co-production of [public TV station] WVIA/Scranton and the *New York Times*, but WVIA held editorial control." Also, "PBS determined the film was solid, not uncritical of Reston, and not a commercial on the *Times*' behalf."

Debate over PBS funding policy can get tangled up with minutiae about budget percentages and co-producer vs. funder distinctions, but this is the key admission. It shows that, at certain times, for some institutions, PBS allows other considerations, like tone or editorial control, to mitigate worry about conflicts of interest. But is *Out At Work* a "commercial" for the UAW? Did the Service Employees hold "editorial control"? Allowed in the Reston case to override the "perception problem," such questions appear not even to have been asked in the case of *Out At Work*.

## **Built-In Bias**

It isn't just that PBS applies rules about bias more stringently when unions are involved, but that evidently labor groups are seen as inherently biased—their involvement sending up automatic red flags—in a way that other institutions (namely corporations) clearly are not. It's hard to see how equitably applied standards about perceptions of sponsor influence would allow for such public TV staples as *Wall Street Week*, *Adam Smith's Money World* and *Nightly Business Report*. Don't the investment, insurance and brokerage firms that sponsor these programs have an "interest" in reporting on the stock market? Is it mere happy coincidence that these shows feature a style of coverage that doesn't challenge the equation of corporate profits with economic well-being? PBS president Ervin Duggan has tried to argue, in a 1994 letter to FAIR, that public TV's business shows "provide information important to all Americans, regardless of their economic cir-

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*How is it that unions have an unacceptably close interest in labor issues, but corporations do not have an unacceptably close interest in business issues? That's a question PBS has never been able to answer.*

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cumstances, and have no 'agenda' but to explain the issues and events they explore." But an in-depth 1993 study (*Extra!*, 9/10/93) found that business and financial shows had the narrowest range of sources of any public affairs programming on public TV: Fully 50 percent of sources were corporate representatives, compared with only 2 percent representing public interest groups, including labor.

Asked about that corporate-backed business show lineup, PBS hedges: "It is not forbidden for an underwriter to have any interest whatsoever in the subject matter of a program," McKinven wrote to FAIR, "but rather to have such a close interest that the program would appear to serve the funder's commercial or political interests." A show like *Wall Street Week*

(continued on p. 4)

### **PBS Bias** (cont. from p. 3)

“deals with myriad industries and business/financial issues, including issues that may relate to those of the underwriters—but not to such an extent that its editorial independence would be compromised.” But there is a long track record of people trying to get even historical dramas related to workers on PBS being warned against backing from unions, any unions (*Extra!*, Summer/90). Asked by media critic James Ledbetter whether the *Out At Work* rejection meant “labor unions could never fund a PBS-distributed documentary about workplace issues,” PBS publicist Harry Forbes said, “I think that’s probably true.” (*The Nation*, 6/30/97) How is it that unions have an unacceptably close interest in labor issues, but corporations do not have an unacceptably close interest in business issues? That’s a question PBS has never been able to answer.

And on the topic of “political interests”: What exactly does it mean to say that a lesbian-rights organization has a “problematic” interest in a film about discrimination? Does PBS feel the group may have biased the filmmakers in favor of human rights? And don’t right-wing foundations like Olin, Bradley and Scaife have an obvious political agenda? That doesn’t stop PBS from allowing their money to fund conservative public TV programming (*Extra!*, 6/92).

#### **If PBS Doesn’t Do It. . . .**

Mainstream commercial media leave little doubt of their embrace of the weak government, “free market,” “free trade” dogma popular with corporate leaders. As commercial outlets zealously report every uptick in the Dow, scratching their heads over polls showing U.S. workers more anxious than ever, the need for a non-commercial arena for economic debate is acutely felt.

That’s just the kind of space, free from commercial concerns, that public broadcasting was established to provide. So it’s especially galling that while PBS stonewalls critics calling on them to engage such debate, they continue to promote themselves as courting controversial and cutting-edge work. The network’s current slogan is, “If PBS Doesn’t Do It, Who Will?” But the bad-faith exclusion of *Out At Work* provides further fuel for a growing body of media activists who are asking a different question: If PBS won’t do it, why not create a network that will? ♦

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## **NPR Censors Anti-War Views**

National Public Radio’s *All Things Considered* did a 90 minute program on February 17 on the military buildup against Iraq. By far most of the speakers invited on the show supported bombing. Only one anti-war advocate, Sara Flounders of the International Action Center, was allowed to participate as a panelist. But listeners to the nationally broadcast show still didn’t get a chance to hear her.

“She was given one minute to speak”, reports the International Action Center, “and then was the only speaker cut off. NPR has now actually deleted her one minute comment from the official transcript of the 90 minute pro-war program..”

The International Action Center ([www.iacenter.org](http://www.iacenter.org)) is asking folks to protest this action to NPR. ♦

National Public Radio’s e-mail is [atc@npr.org](mailto:atc@npr.org)  
NPR’s phone number is: (202) 414-2000.

## **Who Owns the Public Airwaves? Oregon Unions Make Contact with Public Radio Brick Wall**

By Wes Brain

When the Oregon Public Employees Union Local 84 sent Jefferson Public Radio (JPR; Southern Oregon’s NPR station) a nicely written “request letter” (8/8/97) asking JPR to consider broadcasting National Radio Project’s *Making Contact*, a progressive and FREE once-a-week program, they never could have imagined what would happen next.

Finally, nearly four months later, JPR answered, but gave a “public response.” A February editorial appeared in JPR’s newsletter, the Jefferson Monthly, and it was extremely frightening. JPR would not take pressure from a “special interest group” like a union, an organization they compared with the National Rifle Association and the National Association of Manufacturers! Union members and the local community were furious.

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Manufacturers*

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What followed were letters-to-the editor of local newspapers and letters to JPR, some dropping membership. Then JPR officially stated, “the decision has been made, JPR will not broadcast *Making Contact*.” Just days before, JPR’s executive director had given a speech to the local chapter of The League of Women Voters titled: Democracy and the Information Age!

Other events have set the stage for this public airwaves fight in Southern Oregon. To the west is Coos Bay, on the Southwestern Oregon coast. There the Coos Bay City Council has recently taken to censoring public access television (BAYTV). *Who is Afraid of Virginia Wolf*, a video of the play performed at the local community college, was “yanked from broadcasting.” This followed with censorship of a public access tv show that “exposed the Coos Bay censorship!”

Next is Southern Oregon’s PBS station, KSYS channel 8, which refused for 4 months to air *Fear and Favor in the Newsroom*. Then, with three days noticed, KSYS decided to appease all the requests by broadcasting it on cable channel 33, not their regular channel!

“Who owns the public airwaves (PBS, NPR, and Public Access TV)?” will be the subject of discussion the afternoon of May 16, 1998, at Southern Oregon University, Ashland, Oregon, when the Chomsky Action Projects sponsors the forum: “Alternative Media.” For those who would like more information about the forum please call: Wynn Ferguson at 541-482-5379. ♦

## **Television movie review**

# **Blackout or Left Out? Air Traffic Controller Reviews NBC Movie**

By Don Brown, Air Traffic Controller, Atlanta Center

The recent made-for-TV [NBC] movie, *Blackout Effect*, has generated much interest and discussion about the Air Traffic Control system and controllers. It has been interesting to note how much of the discussion has centered on the technology as opposed to the people. With all the emphasis on 30-year-old scopes, TCAS, flight data recorders, and vacuum tubes (not to mention ray guns), it's often overlooked that it's the people behind this technology that make, or break, the Air Traffic Control System.

As far as the details of air traffic control shown in the film, I thought the makers of this movie did an outstanding job. Sure there were some errors, but when you consider how daunting a task it is to present the technical aspects of ATC to

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*In that NATCA has been at the forefront in making public the very problems that the movie based its story line on, I was very disappointed that NATCA wasn't even mentioned by name.*

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the general public, I thought it was by far the best effort I've seen in any film. I can only assume that having NATCA's very own Bob Marks as a technical consultant was partly responsible for this. Good phraseology, nobody flying at "30,000 feet", and there was even a hand off. When you consider that most movies show the tower working an aircraft over the middle of the ocean, this film will hopefully set a precedent that future film makers will attempt to match.

Where I thought the movie fell short was in its portrayal of the people and how they interact with the system. Someone obviously put a lot of effort into studying individuals. You could see many mannerisms of controllers that were picked up, from the nervous knees to the pencil twirling. Denis Arndt did a good job of portraying an Air Traffic Manager as did Eric Stoltz in portraying an NTSB investigator. And while I can't fault Charles Martin Smith's acting in the role of Henry Drake, the development of his character falls apart.

In the beginning of the movie, Henry Drake is portrayed as the classic union trouble maker, refusing to cut his lunch break even 1 minute short. In one of the most haunting lines of the movie, Ms. Garfield, an NTSB investigator, condemns Blake with the derisive comment; "According to them, he looks for problems." I can just hear that coming from the FAA. Excuse me, but aren't we *supposed* to look for problems? But I digress.

As soon as Blake's in trouble, the role of the union sud-

denly disappears. I found the absence of the union in general, and NATCA specifically, troubling. If a mid-air like this were to happen in real life (God forbid), the controller would be surrounded by the union. From the facility representative to the Critical Incident Response Team, the controller involved would have every resource at NATCA's disposal available to him.

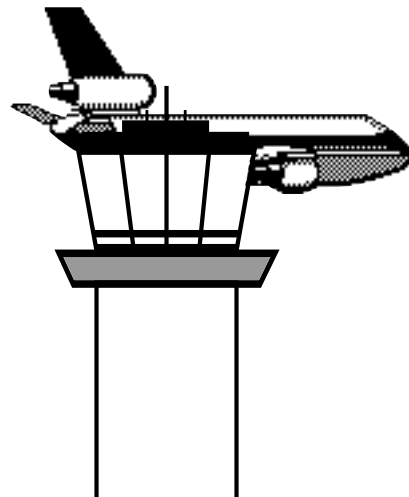
In that NATCA has been at the forefront in making public the very problems that the movie based its story line on, I was very disappointed that NATCA wasn't even mentioned by name. In addition, our brothers in PASS were left out. The NTSB wouldn't have to search blindly, trying to figure out what went wrong with a radar scope. The members of PASS know where the bones are buried and would be all too glad to show them where the problems are.

In conclusion, I thought the movie was a milestone in technical accuracy and deserves a lot of credit. It was entertaining and was eerily accurate in many ways. I was very impressed with how many issues they were able to work in, from vacuum tubes to the 3 billion dollars spent in a failed effort to upgrade the ATC system. I do think the makers of the film missed an opportunity to show how vital unions are in protecting individuals and the freedom that gives individuals to bring the systems deficiencies to public light. Besides, it would have been fun to watch the FAA manager squirm when the NATCA representative started asking him questions at the investigation hearing.

And one last thing: the ray gun. I think we can all agree that the movie would have been more credible without it. If it will help you get past it so that you can see the positive aspects of the movie...

Think of it as an allegory, a symbol, if you will, of the one thing that almost destroyed the Air Traffic Control System: President Ronald Reagan (ray-gun).

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<http://www.NATCAVoice.org>



# ABC Wins Oscar for Greed

One Oscar winner you did not see get a presentation when the Academy Awards ceremonies were telecast by ABC-TV on March 23.

Drum roll . . . And the winner is . . . ABC for “most greed and worst treatment of its employees.”

That “special” statuette was “presented” by members of NABET-CWA, who have been in negotiations with the Disney-owned company for more than a year to replace a contract that expired last March 31.

The presentation came in the form of an advertisement in *Daily Variety* magazine, the trade publication that is read by everyone in Hollywood and even those who’d like to be there.

The ad accused Disney-ABC of stooping to a new low by “using the Academy Awards broadcast as a weapon against its own employees.”

The ad noted that the Academy and the network have effectively turned over the show’s production to subcontractors and “that means the dedicated NABET union crew that’s become part of the Academy Awards tradition won’t be there this year. It’s one more petty act of intimidation and harassment by Disney-ABC that will drive workers and the company further apart.”

Even *Business Week* magazine might agree with the NABET-CWA assessment. The influential publication recently judged Disney’s board of directors as the worst in the nation.

NABET-CWA’s Oscar for greed was actually only one of a number of events and mobilization activities that NABET-CWA members have staged in recent weeks as part of an escalating campaign to win a fair contract at ABC for 2,700 NABET-CWA workers.

From: [guildnet-1@acs.ryerson.ca](mailto:guildnet-1@acs.ryerson.ca) the Wire Service Guild discussion list and [union@wsg.org](mailto:union@wsg.org)

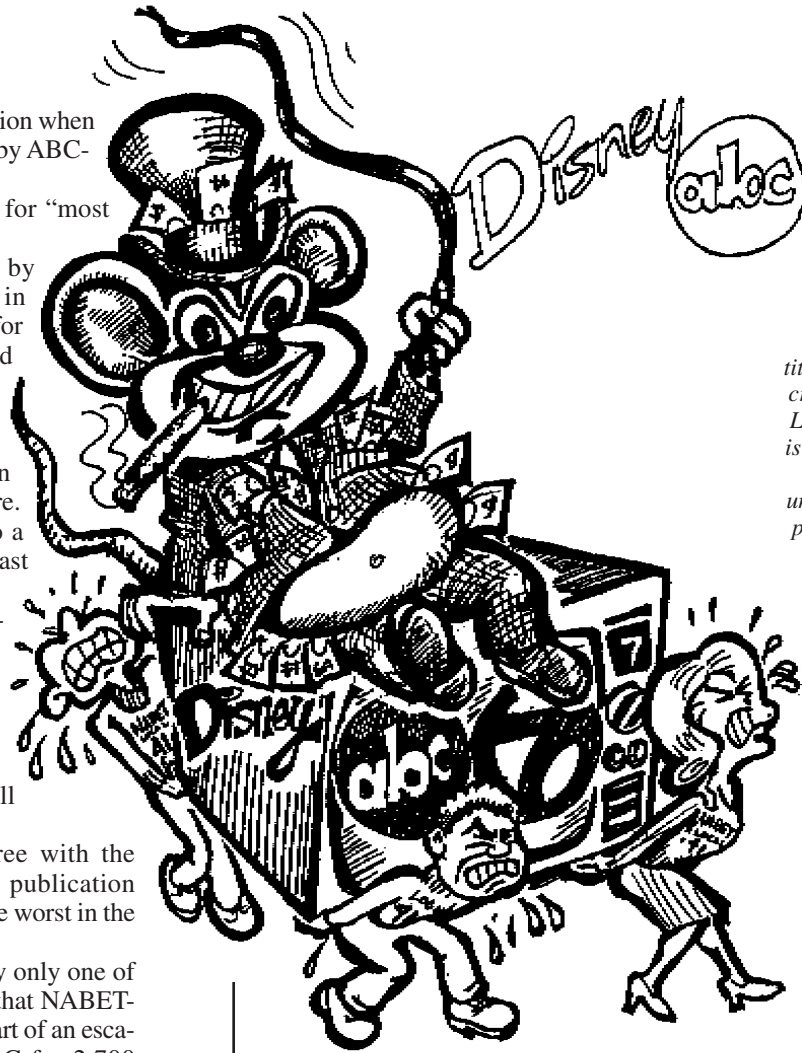
## NABET Members Take Comp Day – ABC Shows Don’t Air

Because they have been forced to work a full year without a contract, NABET members staged street protests in Chicago, San Francisco and New York on March 31.

NABET workers who were eligible for compensatory days in New York took the day off, and as an “unintended consequence” forced ABC-TV to cancel the live broadcast of Barbara Walters talk show *The View*. Also suffering broadcast problems was the soap *One Life to Live*.

In fact, one third of the 960 workforce in New York took the comp day off.

In a letter dated March 25 from Jeff Ruthizer, ABC-TV’s Vice President of Labor Relations, the company admitted that over 300 employees had request the comp day off. “The use of a payback day to attempt to shutdown, or severely hamper, the Company’s operations is clearly not what was contemplated by the parties when the clause was negotiated,” Ruthizer blubbered.



“WLS-TV is Bad News For Its Workers!”, is the title of this cartoon created by NABET Local 41. WLS-TV is the ABC affiliate in Chicago. The union is asking the public to “turn off Channel 7!”

### New Labor Show in Kalamazoo, MI Interested in Labor Videos

Coordinator/producer of a new labor show on Kalamazoo CAC looking for labor videos. The K’zoo show will put on a new 1 hr. show every week. The intent is to have at least 1/2 hr. of original locally produced material in every show. But also to use a liberal amount of imported material as roll-ins for our studio shoots and to fill the 2nd half of the show.

Contact: John Speier, [acclaimv@net-link.net](mailto:acclaimv@net-link.net)

### Alaskan Needs Labor Videos

I am involved with the Alaska AFL-CIO as a volunteer. One of our projects is the creation of an Alaska labor history video for use in educating union members as well as school children. I am looking for video material on the early days of the AFL and George Meany.

Ms. Berit Eriksson, 3705 Arctic Blvd. #1179  
Anchorage, AK. 99503

# Defiant Pirates Ply The Radio Airwaves

## Pretrial Ruling Prevents FCC Crackdown

By Mary Curtius, *Times Staffwrite, LA Times*, March 5, 1998

BERKELEY—The nerve center of a nationwide and rapidly growing renegade radio broadcasting movement lies here, in the cluttered and dimly lit home of a frail, soft-spoken radio technician.

Stephen Dunifer, founder of Free Radio Berkeley, is regarded by many micro-broadcasters as the primary technical and inspirational force behind a movement that is defying the federal government's regulation of the airwaves.

But FCC officials say that Dunifer is a pirate, leading a movement that poses a threat to public safety.

For 3 years, the FCC has been trying to silence Dunifer in a legal battle that micro-broadcasters are watching closely. The agency also has cracked down on other micro-broadcasters, raiding the homes and stations of some, pressing criminal and civil charges against others.

A federal judge in Oakland, however, refused the agency's request for an injunction against Dunifer's station in November, and ruled that the court has jurisdiction to decide the constitutional issues he raised. A trial is expected later this year.

Dunifer says that he cannot wait for a trial on the free speech issues he and other broadcasters say are inherent in their battle with the FCC.

"People have come to the conclusion that they don't have a voice," says Dunifer, 46, whose radical roots date to the antiwar movement of the 1960's. "They know that corporations have a stranglehold on the free flow of information. There is an incredible contextual framework for this movement. I put it in the historical context of various struggles for liberation and self-determination."

Micro-broadcasters generally use 1 watt to 95 watts of power to air their FM signals. The FCC will not license any station below 100 watts, and it can cost more than \$100,000 for a broadcast license for a 100-watt station. Broadcasting without an FCC license is a violation of federal law. Still, the FCC estimates that there are 300-1,000 unlicensed stations broadcasting everything from Christian sermons to rock 'n' roll in towns and cities nationwide.

## Labor Radio Station Busted

I was the founder of a (unlicensed) community radio station that gave a platform for a number of issues, including labor. I am a member of the National Writer's Union, which is affiliated with the UAW. On October 28, the FCC came and busted us, despite far-reaching support in the community, including a resolution passed in favor of the station by the Boston City Council.

I am working to educate people about what's happening in the media and offer my services to you in your struggle, including helping you start an inexpensive, low-power radio station. Let me know if you would like more details about what we've done here in Boston, I'd be happy to help in any way I can.

Steve Provizer ([improviz@gis.net](mailto:improviz@gis.net))

Radio Free Allston—106.1, "A Voice For Community",  
23 Winslow Rd, Brookline, MA 02146, 617-232-3174

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UPPNET News editor: Larry Duncan, [lduncan@igc.org](mailto:lduncan@igc.org)

## UPPNET OBJECTIVES:

1. To promote and expand the production and use of television and radio shows pertinent to the cause of organized labor and the issues relevant to all working people.
2. To establish and promote the general distribution and circulation of this programming.
3. To address issues regarding the media and its fair and democratic use and accessibility by labor and other constituencies generally.
4. To encourage and promote the preservation of television and radio broadcasts pertinent to labor.
5. To establish a code of ethic governing television and radio production practices and other such matters UPPNET may determine as relevant to its work.
6. To require all productions to work under a collective bargaining agreement, secure waivers or work in agreement with any television or movie industry union having jurisdiction in the area.

Visit the UPPNET website at:

<http://www.mtn.org/jsee/uppnet.html>

**New video:**

**Union Busting from Both Side of the Aisle**

Have you ever wondered why 65 million hard-earned dollars has not bought one piece of pro-labor legislation in Congress or one Executive Order worth a dime? Have you ever suspected that "friends" in politics is only a short term relationship? Then see "Union Busting from Both Side of the Aisle."

Big Bucks at McCormick Place, the Chicago Federation of Labor, Springfield legislators, and Construction unions are the components of this new video. Covers Illinois House and Senate members stating their impressions of Chicago Federation of Labor sponsored HB 18 that would have nixed two established local unions and zapped existing collective bargaining agreements. The precedent this would have set caused great confusion in the minds of legislators with the strange end result of Senate Republicans saving the day. Unions are fearful of labor bodies, and historical opponents are the heroes in the topsy-turvy world of Illinois politics. Is this what they mean by "political action"?

Produced by Martin Conlisk for *Labor Beat*, and developed by the Chicagoland Regional Union Workforce (CRUW), the viewer is left wondering: are "labor" bodies wasting member's money when they spend it on politicians?

"Union Busting From Both Sides of the Aisle", 16-min. is \$25, *Labor Beat*, 37 S. Ashland, Chicago, IL 60607. More information: [HHChi@aol.com](mailto:HHChi@aol.com)

**New video:**

**Toxins & Cancers in The Workplace  
From Silicon Valley to California Painters & The Corporate Info Threat to Medical & Science in The Workplace**

The growing dangers in the workplace from Silicon Valley to the painting industry are examined in this critical program. Also takes a look at the growing effort by corporations to control and censor information on health and safety in the workplace. How is corporate control of information and medicine a threat to your health and safety on the job?

Guests appearing on the show are: Dr. Joseph Ladou, Director, UCSF International Center For Occupational Medicine\*; Roland Sheppard, Former Business Agent, Painters Local 4 JoLani Hironaka, Santa Clara Center For Occupational Safety & Health Dr. Larry Rose, Medical Unit, CAL OSHA\* (\*For Identification Only)

To order a copy, send \$30 (includes shipping and handling) to: The Labor Video Project, P.O.Box 425584, San Francisco, CA 94142, (415) 282-1908 Fax (415) 695-1369, [lvpsf@labornet.org](mailto:lvpsf@labornet.org). Website: [www.igc.apc.org/lvpsf/](http://www.igc.apc.org/lvpsf/)

**When you watch commercial tv, do you ever wonder: 'Is anybody out there opposing that pro-corporate drivel?' Well, there is. Subscribe and/or join us in the fight for independent pro-worker media.**

- **Yes. Subscribe me to one year of *UPPNET News* (a quarterly) for \$15.**
- **I want to join UPPNET. Annual dues are \$30, which includes a year's subscription to the newsletter.**

MAKE OUT CHECK TO UPPNET, fill out the following form, and mail to address below:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Union or Org. \_\_\_\_\_

Position, if any: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone no: \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount Enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Mail this coupon to:

**UPPNET, c/o Labor Ed. Services, Univ. of Minnesota  
437 Mgmt & Econ Bld.  
271 19th Ave. South, Minneapolis, MN 55455**



**For a list of UPPNET Executive Board members, statement of purpose, and web site, see page 7.**

**UPPNET would like to thank Michael Straeter, UFCW 1442, for his generous support of the UPPNET Newsletter**



# UPPNET News

Official Publication of the Union Producers and Programmers Network

Summer 1998

Promoting production and use of tv and radio shows pertinent to the cause of organized labor and working people

## Campaign to Change PBS/NPR Anti-Labor Stance Grows

In our previous issue (Spring, 1998) UPPNET announced its campaign to draw attention to PBS (Public Broadcasting system) and NPR (National Public Radio) bias against scheduling programs which are of interest to working people and which promote unions. (PBS has no problem with putting on shows like *Wall Street Week* and the *Daily Business Report*).

Since then, UPPNET has gathered signatures in a petition campaign (ask us for copies of the petition), received numerous letters and e-mail from around the country, and got resolutions passed by labor bodies (see articles on this page).

UPPNET is also encouraging unions, their supporters, and labor media activists to organize where they can demonstrations and other actions on this upcoming Labor Day which target their local PBS and/or NPR affiliate, and call for a change in their policies.

For your convenience, we reprint the text of the UPPNET statement on p.6 of this issue. And on page 2 are a selection of letters of support to UPPNET from around the country. ♦

## Oregon AFL-CIO-CLC Joins Protest Movement

### Regular Labor Programming on PBS & NPR

*WHEREAS, powerful mainstream media, with its huge corporate backing, largely shapes the views of our voting populace, and*

*WHEREAS, mainstream media has business news every single day but almost NO LABOR NEWS, and*

*WHEREAS, public media which we call the Public Broadcasting System (PBS) and National Public Radio (NPR) is moving more and more towards becoming "mainstream media", therefore be it*

*RESOLVED that Oregon's AFL-CIO-CLC commits to supporting and working with the Union Producers and Programmers Network (UPPNET) in their campaign: WE DEMAND A REGULAR NATIONAL LABOR TV AND RADIO PROGRAM ON PBS AND NPR, and be it further*

*RESOLVED that Oregon's AFL-CIO-CLC and its members circulate petitions supporting labor programming, and be it finally*

*RESOLVED that the Oregon's AFL-CIO-CLC requests that national AFL-CIO support regular national labor tv and radio programming through public broadcasting media. ♦*

## San Francisco Labor Council Enters Fight

### Sends Resolution To '98 Cal. Fed. Convention

[The following resolution was passed last week by the San Francisco Labor Council for submission to the July 20-22 California AFL-CIO convention.]

### For A Regular Weekly National TV Show on PBS & Radio Show On NPR

*WHEREAS, labor represents a vital sector of the U.S., and, WHEREAS, PBS and NPR receive public funding and tax deferments because of their educational role, and,*

*WHEREAS, PBS and NPR have regular shows on the corporate and business community, but no regular labor shows, and,*

*WHEREAS, labor is now under political attack by corporate America and the major media monopolies,*

*THEREFORE, be it resolved that we call on National PBS and NPR to establish a regular weekly labor show for television and radio which will provide a labor perspective and serve as an educational vehicle for all people in the US, and,*

*WE CALL on all trade unionists and affiliated organizations to send letters to the media and the management of all PBS/NPR stations on Labor Day 1998 with these demands and we support public protests at all PBS/NPR affiliates in California on Labor Day 1998 calling on the establishment of such regular labor programming on these public broadcasting stations. ♦*



Although Public Broadcasting was originally set up by Congress to provide an outlet for viewpoints that had no access to commercial broadcasting, PBS has excluded many of those voices while favoring those very views which dominate corporate media.

**If you plan protests against PBS/NPR on or around Labor Day, please contact UPPNET at: 612-624-4326 (Howard Kling) or [uppnet@labornet.org](mailto:uppnet@labornet.org)**

# Readers Answer UPPNET Call To Action on PBS Policies

In our Spring '98 issue, we published a call to action to protest the bias against working class and pro-labor programming on PBS and National Public Radio. Presented below are a some of the letters we received supporting our campaign. If you would like to learn more about our campaign, contact UPPNET at 612-624-4326 (Howard Kling, UPPNET President); or write to UPPNET, c/o Labor Ed. Services, Univ. of Minnesota, 321 19th Ave. South, No. 3-300, Minneapolis, MN 55455. Or you can e-mail to [jsee@csom.umn.edu](mailto:jsee@csom.umn.edu) or [uppnet@labornet.org](mailto:uppnet@labornet.org) • Information on the campaign can be found at our website: [www.mtn.org/jsee/uppnet.html](http://www.mtn.org/jsee/uppnet.html)

## Madison, WI

Please send more information. We are interested in getting involved in this effort. Here in Madison, we are producing a 1/2 hr per week labor news show. It is on 5:30-6:00 pm Fridays and we have a substantial listenership. For some time we have been arguing with the state network that it is appropriate for labor to have some time on the state system—to no avail.

So I am interested in supporting your effort. I am sure that our labor radio collective, which includes the South Central Federation of Labor, the School for Workers, WEAC NEA and others would be interested in supporting the call and the objectives as well.

Frank Emspak  
[emspakf@workers.uwex.edu](mailto:emspakf@workers.uwex.edu)



## Independent Filmmaker

Just had a chance to read the recent issue—very well done.

As a filmmaker (“Poletown Lives”) I have experienced the liberalness of POV and can relate to the folks who did “Out at Work”.

The NPR censorship story was useful too. confirmed all my suspicions. I think it has more to do with a not so subtle pro-zionist policy that seems to permeate all the news, particularly on the middle east, however, rather than an anti antiwar position.

Howard King’s article on “You can’t say that.” is something I’ve been aware of for some time, but it is good to see it laid out in a good summary, something I want to pass around to others. I thought, however, that the influence of the internet offers some hope on this question of media domination. since the internet bypasses the media moguls and their for-profit decisionmaking there is a greater exchange of unadulterated information between people. I have a theory on this that is too long for this email, but this particular characteristic of the internet is likely to have far reaching consequences. The less people are tied into the “reality” of the traditional media the more free they are to think for themselves and come to different conclusions. Just as you have come to certain conclusions despite the media you were exposed to, so too do others. People distrust the media but often can’t articulate why. But they are somewhat aware they are being manipulated. For example, when the Clinton/intern scandal erupted, the people apparently were not stampeded and in fact increased support for him despite the very heavy anti-Clinton media barrage. I think this needs to be analyzed more. Anyway, keep up the good work.

George Corsetti

## Binghamton, NY

To those that are concerned: I am concerned also. I am writing a letter responding to the misrepresentation and slow transformation of public radio into an plaything of corporate america. I need to know what’s really going on, not what “they” want us to know. I am so scared of “they” for they have so much power of my learning and life. It seems like “they’re” getting to everyone and whoever “they” haven’t gotten to, I will join with to resist “them”.

Abby Gash  
Binghamton, NY



## Cong. Bernie Sanders worker

Thanks for the info regarding the effort to get labor programming on NPR/PBS (in the recent *UPPNET News*).

I work for Congressman Bernie Sanders and work closely with organized labor in Vermont. Bernie feels very strongly about this issue—and we can help advance work on the issue here in Vermont.

Please keep me informed of the work regarding this issue. Thank you.

Philip Fiermonte  
c/o Congressman Bernie Sanders  
1 Church St. 2nd Fl.  
Burlington, VT 05401  
802-862-0697



## Pennsylvania

I am writing to protest the fact that both NPR and PBS consistently refuse to broadcast labor programs. Given the fact that working people’s taxes dollars go to fund NPR and PBS, which then turns around and broadcasts hours upon hours of pro-corporate programs, and refuses to broadcast anything critical of corporations that are cheating their workers out of a decent standard of living, this is simply a case of taxation without representation and anti-working class bias.

Is it any wonder working class people don’t volunteer to become members of PBS or NPR!? Why should we when you continually ignore us!

Sharon Vance



## ABC in Detroit Uses Anti-Union 'Commentator' on UAW Strike

by Larry Duncan, *UPPNET Newsletter*

Dorin Levin, an ex-striker at the Detroit Free Press who crossed the picket line, was used by Channel 7 (ABC) in Detroit to comment on the UAW's strike against GM. But WXYZ-TV didn't think it was necessary to tell its viewers.

According to Bill Hanson, a striking union member formerly at the *Free Press* who worked for their features department, Dorin Levin was, before the newspaper strike, a *Free Press* business writer, and a Newspaper Guild member. "He went out with the rest of us," Hanson recalls, "for about two or three weeks before he and some other people orchestrated an insurgency within the Guild, and started making secret talks with management about what they could do bring people back. Anyway, He crossed the picket line pretty quickly. It was a matter of weeks, not months, before he went back."

Levin, also according to Hanson, led an illegal effort to decertify the Guild in the newsroom at the *Free Press*. Although that effort failed, Dorin Levin has established, by his actions, that he has very strong anti-union beliefs.

Levin had been writing about the UAW strike against the GM in Flint in his columns. Then he appeared on Channel 7 news as a guest commentator on the auto strike. No one from the *Detroit Journal* (the pro-union newspaper) was invited to appear as a commentator. Guy Gordon, WXYZ-TV's news anchor, gave about 3-4 minutes for Levin to give his perspective on the UAW-GM dispute.

"At no time," Hanson said "did the anchor Guy Gordon mention, nor did any graphics under Levin mention, that he crossed the newspaper picket line and is still actively involved in a labor situation, and has very clear views about unions."

"It was a horrible omission that they owed to their audience, not to identify fully who Dorin Levin is, what his background is. There was no way Dorin could be objective about the strike, not when he's still involved in one and has shown his colors clearly that he doesn't think unions have any place in the business world."

WXYZ-TV has issued no apology or explanation to complaints that were phoned in about their actions.

"This sort of thing happens all too regularly, and doesn't surprise anybody. It's a sorry state of affairs for journalism. This shows how low Journalism has sunk in America today." ♦

## TV Stations Reject Anti-Prop. 226 Spot

Backers say ad attacks 2 of their big 1998 donors

By Ilana DeBare, *SF Chronicle* Staff Writer

Saturday, May 9—More than a dozen television stations have declined to air a political ad opposed to Proposition 226—the initiative that would make it more difficult for unions to use member dues for political purposes—after backers said the ad included unfair personal attacks on two of their big donors.

Lawyers for the Proposition 226 campaign sent letters to TV station managers around the state last week, warning that federal law might require them to give free air time to Indiana insurance executive J. Patrick Rooney and conservative lobbyist Grover Norquist to respond to the ad. Many stations responded by taking the ad off the air—somewhere between 12 and 24 stations, depending on whether the numbers were being tallied by foes or supporters of the initiative.

Proposition 226 backers said the only Bay Area station that pulled the ad was KGO-TV. KGO officials did not return phone calls yesterday. "We were pretty successful in getting it off all the stations in L.A., three out of four in Sacramento, and even little stations in (places like) Chico," said Sheri Sadler, media buyer for the Proposition 226 campaign.

The measure would require labor unions to get written consent once a year from individual union members in order to spend any of their dues money on politics. Its supporters include Governor Pete Wilson, as well as some prominent national conservatives such as Rooney and Norquist. Opponents include labor unions and groups such as the League of Women Voters. The ad in dispute was one of a series by opponents that tries to tarnish the initiative by attacking its backers.

It described Rooney as "an out-of-state insurance tycoon whose company was forced to refund millions for unfair practices." It described Norquist as "a Washington, D.C., foreign lobbyist whose organization gave \$400,000 to fund 226." To get the ad pulled, Proposition 226 opponents didn't have to prove that the assertions were factually wrong or libelous. Federal law requires stations to give free response time even in the case of accurate claims if they include an attack upon the "honesty, character, or integrity" of an individual who isn't running for office.

The stations' decision to drop the ad did not result in any loss of advertising time for Proposition 226 opponents, who simply told the stations to run a different ad in its place. But it did briefly throw the Proposition 226 opponents' media strategy off stride. And it cast a spotlight on the high-stakes nature of TV advertising in today's political campaigns. With diminishing TV news coverage of politics, ads often provide the only information that voters get about initiatives. So partisans no longer just put together their own ads: They develop strategies for hampering their opponents' ad campaigns. "It's part of the strategy, where the two sides go to their attorney and say, 'How do we get this off the air,'" said Bob Stern, co-director of the nonprofit Center for Governmental Studies in Los Angeles. ♦

# The Democracy Channel

By Daniel Zoll, July 8, 1998 SF Bay Guardian

*As media ownership falls into fewer and fewer hands, public access cable is more important than ever. Will the city finally fund it properly?*

SINCE IT BEGAN its Thursday-night run in 1983, Steve Zeltzer's public access television show *Labor on the Job* has outlasted many a better-known competitor. And Zeltzer faces challenges Seinfeld and Cosby never had to contend with: equipment held together with duct tape, a dingy studio, and a production budget of almost nothing. Last week the audio mysteriously went out in the beginning of his show.

Zeltzer's show is one of the few places on television you will find labor news. In fact, San Francisco's public access station, cable channel 53, is the only local station that carries any regular programming focusing on labor. The city's public television affiliate, KQED, has no regular labor show—and almost no local programming at all.

Channel 53, Zeltzer says, is "the only vehicle for the people of San Francisco to have any voice on television."

As AT&T's recently announced plans to purchase Telecommunications Inc. show, media ownership is becoming concentrated in fewer and fewer hands. So public access cable, Zeltzer says, is more important now than ever. But San Francisco has historically failed to provide adequate funding for public access TV or to require its cable operator to do so. As a result, Zeltzer and other public access producers are calling on the city to increase funding at least to the level provided by other cities of comparable size. The Board of Supervisors is expected to vote on such an increase later this month.

The city's cable-franchise contract requires the cable operator to run a public access channel. But TCI and its predecessor, Viacom, have long spent the bare minimum on the station, frustrating independent producers and viewers.

For years media activists have complained that the station has been poorly managed and underfunded and have asked the city to transfer control of the station to an independent nonprofit. In 1996 TCI agreed to transfer control of the channel to the nonprofit San Francisco Community Television Corporation (SFCTC) and provide \$450,000 a year in funding for public, educational, and government (PEG) programming to the city—but the city has not yet executed the transfer. As of July 1, San Francisco had forfeited \$675,000 from TCI that was payable upon transfer of the station.

Even after the station is transferred and TCI's funding kicks in, SFCTC CEO Zane Blaney says, the nonprofit still won't have funding comparable to other cities of similar size. For one thing, public access will likely be required to split the annual grant with education and government channels.

SFCTC has requested an annual budget of \$1.3 million to run public access. TCI refuses to say how much it currently spends to operate public access on a shoestring, but Blaney estimates that the company has only been spending about \$200,000 a year. Unless the city provides additional funding, Blaney says, public access will have a tough time surviving, much less thriving.

Not all of the additional money for public access would have to come from the city's General Fund. Under San Francisco's cable franchise, TCI can't sell the city's cable system to AT&T without the city's approval. Activists are calling on the supervisors to demand more money for PEG as a condition of that transfer.

A recent study by Sacramento-based cable consultant Buske Group shows that SFCTC's funding request is in line with public access funding in other cities. For example, Montgomery County, Md., which has nearly the same population as San Francisco, spends nearly \$2 million a year on public access. Boston, which has a smaller population and fewer cable subscribers, spends about \$900,000 to give its citizens a voice on television.

The city's Telecommunications Commission is set to hold a special meeting this month to consider PEG funding. Public access advocates expect the commission to vote to request more funding from the Board of Supervisors, but they can't predict how much.

Channel 53's greatest champion on the commission is Bonnie Engel, who says it is time for the city to show its commitment to public access.

"Because San Francisco has so many artists and community activists, the city's public access channel has an opportunity to be extremely lively and interesting," Engel told us. "We're going to be able to originate some of the best programming in the U.S. from here."

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## The Liberal Media

A new survey of 141 journalists indicates that the Washington press corps is more conservative than the general public on a range of economic issues from taxes to trade to health care to Social Security.

The survey—conducted for *FAIR* by Professor David Croteau of Virginia Commonwealth University—reveals that while most national journalists identify themselves as "centrists," their views on bread-and-butter issues are often to the right of public opinion.

In a questionnaire targeted primarily at America's most powerful news outlets, journalists were asked policy questions modeled on ones mainstream polling firms had previously asked of the general public. Among the findings:

**STATE OF THE ECONOMY:** The Washington press corps is far more bullish than the public: Only 5% of the surveyed journalists said that economic conditions today in the U.S. are "fair" or "poor"—compared to 34% of the general public who chose "only fair" or "poor" in a recent nationwide poll. Most of the journalists declared household incomes at \$100,000 or more, with 31% at \$150,000 or more. (The median U.S. household income is roughly \$36,000.)

**CORPORATE POWER:** Washington journalists are more conservative than the public on the question of concentrated corporate power. Asked whether "a few large corporations" have "too much power," journalists were much more evenly divided than the public, with 57% to 43% responding affirmatively. Nationwide polls have consistently found the public to be quite one-sided on the question, with 77% (vs. 18%) responding in the affirmative in a 1995 poll.

(You can read the full report at <http://www.fair.org/reports/journalist-survey.html>) ♦

## Making A Movie about Truckdrivers

I am working with a small video producer who is making a movie on truck drivers. They mainly are interested in truckers' work lives. Can anyone suggest to me video distributors they can contact who might be interested in this kind of work? Please respond privately at the e-mail address below. Thanks.

Michael H. Belzer, Ph.D., University of Michigan  
Institute of Labor and Industrial Relations  
1111 E. Catherine Street, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48109-2054  
voice: (313) 647-9474, fax: (313) 763-0913  
[Belzer@umich.edu](mailto:Belzer@umich.edu)

## Puerto Rico Telephone/ GM Strike Audio Tape

WGDR's labor radio program "Which Side Are You On?", sponsored by the Vermont Labor Party, has produced a 1 hour and 30 minute program of interviews:

1. Carmelo Ruiz of Claridad on the Puerto Rican Labor Movement and the strike against privatization of the telephone company.
2. Sam Farber on the Flawed Legacy of Che Guevara
3. Ron Lare, Ford worker, on the GM strike

Tapes are available for \$3 to cover costs. Make payable to:

Vermont Labor Party  
mail to: Hal Leyshon, RR#5 - 2147, Montpelier, VT 05602  
[hleyshon@igc.apc.org](mailto:hleyshon@igc.apc.org)

## Laborvision Covers Busch Beer Dispute

Laborvision, the labor cable tv series in St. Louis, is covering the the Teamsters struggle with Anheuser-Busch. The public access TV show is broadcast by TCI and Charter Communications cable networks in the St. Louis area. Laborvision airs at 8:00 p.m on TCI in the city and Jefferson County and 7:30 p.m. on Charter in St. Louis County. (Check your local listings for the channel in your area.) In the city, the show airs on Channel 21. In parts of St. Louis County, it airs on Channel 6.

Meanwhile, an Anheuser-Busch commercial on the Learning Channel has been cancelled:

## History of Beer Reportedly Canceled

The Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) - Anheuser-Busch was all set to televise an upbeat program about the history of beer on the *Learning Channel*. Then the head of the cable channel pulled the plug.

Johnathan Rodgers, the president of *Discovery Networks*, which oversees the *Learning Channel*, has decided not to air the 30-minute "An American History of Beer," *The Wall Street*

## SAWSJ Labor Teach-In on The Air And over The WEB

*WBAI Pacifica Radio's* "Building Bridges: Your Community and Labor Report" will be preparing a 58-minute radio show on the SAWSJ Labor Teach-in, [SAWSJ is: Scholars, Artists and Writers for Social Justice -Ed.] "Democracy and the Right to Organize," was held in Washington, D.C., April 24-26. The program was broadcast in the New York City area in May. Building Bridges is produced by Mimi Rosenberg and Ken Nash. About 25 stations around the country took the broadcast, according to Nash.

Building Bridges has also received a grant from the AFL-CIO to subsidize 40 public and college radio stations to receive a copy of the tape for broadcast and to uplink the show over the NPR satellite. The *Pacifica Network* will make tapes available to radio stations through the *Pacifica Archives* and will uplink the show to its affiliates through its Ku band satellite uplink. There are thus several ways for college and public radio stations to receive the program for broadcast. Individuals may also purchase the tape from the *Pacifica Archives*.

If you want to get the message out about what happened at this conference—about "Democracy and the Right to Organize" and about SAWSJ—here's a perfect opportunity. When you get home, contact your college or public radio stations and lobby them to get the tape of the conference and put it on their air. Then spread the word that SAWSJ is on the air in your area. Spread the word also that it is on real audio on the Building Bridges home page [www.igc.apc.org/wbai-labor/](http://www.igc.apc.org/wbai-labor/) which will also be linked to the SAWSJ and *Pacifica* sites. ♦

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*Journal* reported today. A company spokeswoman said he made the decision as soon as he learned the show was planned.

The beer history was created by Omnicom Group's DDB Needham, the advertising agency that also created the Budweiser frogs. It was to be aired without charge to the brewer, the *Journal* reported.

The show, which was scheduled to air July 11 and 12, would have opened with a message from Anheuser-Busch chairman and chief executive officer August Busch III. A Budweiser logo over a black-and-white photo of men posing next to barrels of beer also would have appeared.

Anheuser-Busch issued a statement saying it was "in discussions with the *Learning Channel* "to ensure that the show airs with a clear notice that it was produced and paid for by the St. Louis-based brewer.

Before the program was pulled, Steve Cheskin, the Learning Channel's vice president in charge of programming, told the paper that the show was good for both business and education.

"Clearly, Anheuser-Busch is a good advertiser and somebody we'd like to do business with," Cheskin said. "But we would not take this program unless we thought it was acceptable." ♦

From: C. D. Stelzer [cdsteler@mail.stlnet.com](mailto:cdsteler@mail.stlnet.com)

## **New Video**

# **Crossborder Mural Project**

Steve Dalber, a *Labor Beat* producer, has finished a 35-minute video about the creation of two labor murals, one in Mexico City and the other in Chicago. Working with the artists and the two unions involved in the undertaking, Dalber engages his own skills as a professional photographer to affectionately document these murals and the processes bringing them about.

In April 1997, Mike Alewitz painted a mural at the auditorium of the Frente Autentico Trabajador (FAT) in Mexico City. Later in the year, Mexican muralist Daniel Manrique Arias and three young muralists painted a mural at the United Electrical (UE) hall in Chicago.

This ambitious cultural project of the Strategic Organizing

Alliance between the UE and FAT gives visual expression to the idea of international solidarity.

Muralist Alewitz features Mexico hero Emiliano Zapata and Albert and Lucy Parsons. Albert Parsons was framed up as one of the Haymarket victims. Lucy was also a leader of working class movement. The mural is entitled "Sindicalismo Sin Fronteras/Unions Without Borders."

Manrique is a major voice in Mexican art, and the foremost exponent of the neighborhood based movement Tepito Arte Aca. His mural is entitled "Hands in Solidarity—Hands of Freedom/Manos Solidarias-Manos Libres."

To order a copy of "Crossborder Mural Project" (35 min), send \$30 (includes shipping and handling) to:

Steve Dalber  
5012 N. California  
Chicago, IL 60625  
[sdalber@ccc.edu](mailto:sdalber@ccc.edu)

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## **UPPNET Statement on PBS/NPR**

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### **A Call To Action On Labor Day 1998**

# **We Demand A Regular National Labor TV & Radio Program on PBS & NPR**

This coming Labor Day on Monday September 7, 1998, the Union Producers and Programmers Network (UPPNET) is calling on all unionists, locals and workers to take action to bring about a national weekly TV show on PBS and a national weekly radio program on NPR. From Pittsburgh to Detroit, Chicago and Los Angeles the PBS/NPR affiliates refuse to program regular TV and radio shows that focus on labor.

Millions of our tax dollars are provided to PBS and NPR to make sure that we have public broadcasting yet these networks also refuse to have any regular national labor programming. At the same time, the management continue to support further commercialization as well as ads and moves toward privatization of the entire public broadcasting network.

While labor is getting shortchanged, they have many many programs on business from *Wall Street Week* and the *Daily Business Report to Market Place*. It is time that we had regular labor programming that covers the issues that business doesn't want to talk about.

Today in Detroit, the newspaper battle rages against union busters Gannett and Knight-Ridder but Detroit TV and radio stations refuse to allow paid advertisements by the locked-out unions with their point of view. This overt censorship by the media monopolies is growing by the day. There is an absence of national TV/Radio coverage on this and many other labor stories.

We believe that our democracy is under real threat! When companies like Disney which owns ABC refuses to negotiate with the NABET-CWA workers there is no coverage on any of the networks. The monopolization and deregulation of television, radio and cable threatens the rights of not only labor

but all people in the United States.

Disney through ABC has bought up stations around the country and destroyed local community stations such as KDIA Radio in Oakland which used to be the bay area's only Black community radio station. CBS, NBC, CNN, MS-NBC and the Fox Network are also opposing the right of political candidates to get free air time. Today, in the United States you have to be a multi-millionaire or even billionaire to run for more and more offices. This organized corporate attack on our democratic rights must be exposed and fought.

In order to publicize these actions, we ask that you write letters to the local and national press pointing out that PBS and NPR refuse to allow a regular labor TV show and radio show to be programmed in the United States.

We will also be organizing rallies at PBS & NPR affiliates around the country on Labor Day to let all people know that freedom for labor means the right to have radio and television programs about our issues.

Labor is not the only group that is censored out. Efforts at corporate censorship are growing daily—from the effort to silence Oprah Winfrey to many environmental issues which are censored by the media.

Please contact UPPNET if you are interested in getting more information about these issues for your union or local. Also you can copy your letter to us so that we can put them on our web site at [www.mtn.org/jsee/uppnet.html](http://www.mtn.org/jsee/uppnet.html) or email us at [jsee@csom.umn.edu](mailto:jsee@csom.umn.edu) or [uppnet@labornet.org](mailto:uppnet@labornet.org)

Let's build our campaign for labor rights on Television and Radio. "LET LABOR'S VOICE BE HEARD ON TV & RADIO" ♦

**We'd like to know about your ideas, concerns and actions being planned to protest public broadcasting's lack of labor programming. Please contact us:**

**612-624-4326 (Howard Kling, UPPNET President)  
UPPNET, c/o Labor Ed. Services, Univ. of Minnesota  
321 19th Ave. South, No. 3-300  
Minneapolis, MN 55455  
[jsee@csom.umn.edu](mailto:jsee@csom.umn.edu) or [uppnet@labornet.org](mailto:uppnet@labornet.org)  
<http://www.mtn.org/jsee/uppnet.html>**

# RESOURCES

## VIDEO ACTIVISTS WEBSITES

**Union Producers and Programmers Network (UPPNET):**

<http://www.mtn.org/jsee/uppnet.html>

**Labor X:**

<http://www.ashp.cuny.edu/Laborx.html/>

**Labor Video Project San Francisco:**

<http://www.igc.org/lvpsf/>

**Labor Beat:**

<http://web.wva.com/~bgfolder/lb/>

**Working tv:**

<http://www.workingtv.com>

**Los Angeles Alternative Media Network:**

<http://home.labridge.com/~laamn/>

**Direct Action Media Network:**

<http://www.tao.ca/earth/damn/>

**Undercurrents video magazine (UK):**

<http://www.undercurrents.org>

**Freespeech TV:**

<http://www.freespeech.org/>

**Grassroots News Network:**

<http://www.geocities.com/Hollywood/Studio/1082/>

**People's Video Network:**

<http://www.peoplesvideo.org/>

**Camnet (video clips):**

<http://home.earthlink.net/~camnet/>

**i-Contact:**

<http://gifford.co.uk/~bedwards/video/>

**Insitute for Alternative Journalism:**

<http://www.alternet.org/>

**A-infos email news service:**

<http://www.ainfos.ca/>

**Bay Area Video Coalition (BAVC):**

<http://www.bavc.org/>

**Film Arts Foundation:**

<http://www.filmarts.org/>

**Artists Television Access:**

<http://www.filmarts.org/>

## UPPNET National Executive Board

President: Howard Kling, producer *Minnesota at Work*,  
612-624-5020, [hkling@csom.umn.edu](mailto:hkling@csom.umn.edu)

Vice Presidents:

Judy Ancel, producer *Heartland Labor Forum*  
Kansas City, MO, 816-235-1470,

[AncelJ@smtgate.umkc.edu](mailto:AncelJ@smtgate.umkc.edu)

Carl Bryant, producer *Letter Carriers Today TV 214*,  
San Francisco, 415-885-0375

Leo Canty, producer *First Tuesday*, Connecticut,  
860-257-9782, [unionleo@aol.com](mailto:unionleo@aol.com)

Fred Carroll, former pres. UPPNET, producer, *Lifestyles of All the Rest of Us*, Los Angeles, 310-395-9977

Larry Duncan, co-producer *Labor Beat*, Chicago,  
312-226-3330, [lduncan@igc.apc.org](mailto:lduncan@igc.apc.org)

Simin Farkhondeh, producer/director *Labor at the Crossroads*,  
New York, 212-966-4248, x216, [sfarkhon@email.gc.cuny.edu](mailto:sfarkhon@email.gc.cuny.edu)

Bill Fiore, producer *Bay to Borders*, Northern California,  
415-871-3550, [ufcw101@igc.apc.org](mailto:ufcw101@igc.apc.org)

Julius Fisher, producer *working tv*, Vancouver, Canada,  
604-253-6222, [julius\\_fisher@bc.sympatico.ca](mailto:julius_fisher@bc.sympatico.ca)

Ken Nash, Co-producer *Building Bridges: Your Community and Labor Report*, WBAI Radio, New York,  
212-815-1699, [knash@igc.apc.org](mailto:knash@igc.apc.org)

John See, 612-624-5020, producer, *Minnesota at Work*,  
612-624-6039, [jsee@csom.umn.edu](mailto:jsee@csom.umn.edu)

Steve Zeltzer, producer *Labor on The Job*,  
San Francisco, 415-641-4440, [lvpsf@igc.apc.org](mailto:lvpsf@igc.apc.org)

For more information about UPPNET:

UPPNET: c/o Labor Education Services

University of Minnesota

321 19th Ave. South, No. 3-300

Minneapolis, MN 55455

612-624-4326

e-mail address: [uppnet@labornet.org](mailto:uppnet@labornet.org)

UPPNET conference at:

[labr.uppnet@conf.igc.apc.org](mailto:labr.uppnet@conf.igc.apc.org)

web site: <http://www.mtn.org/~jsee/uppnet.html>

*UPPNET Newsletter* editor: Larry Duncan, [lduncan@igc.org](mailto:lduncan@igc.org)

## UPPNET OBJECTIVES:

1. To promote and expand the production and use of television and radio shows pertinent to the cause of organized labor and the issues relevant to all working people.
2. To establish and promote the general distribution and circulation of this programming.
3. To address issues regarding the media and its fair and democratic use and accessibility by labor and other constituencies generally.
4. To encourage and promote the preservation of television and radio broadcasts pertinent to labor.
5. To establish a code of ethic governing television and radio production practices and other such matters UPPNET may determine as relevant to its work.
6. To require all productions to work under a collective bargaining agreement, secure waivers or work in agreement with any television or movie industry union having jurisdiction in the area.

Visit the UPPNET website at:

<http://www.mtn.org/jsee/uppnet.html>

# Aussie TV Ads For Wharfies

By Michael Perry, *Reuters*

SYDNEY, May 1—Aiming directly for the hearts and minds of Australians, trade unions launched a TV advertisement on Friday declaring the sacking of 1,400 dockers un-Australian and accusing the government of dividing the country. It featured Hazel Hawke, the former wife of Bob Hawke who was Labor prime minister between 1983-1991...

One photograph shows a beefy security guard wearing a black balaclava sitting inside a large crate on a dock. "How can

the sacking of 2,000 people be a cause to celebrate?" asks Hawke in the advertisement, referring to the government's support for the sackings.

With images of Prime Minister John Howard and Workplace Relations Minister Peter Reith on screen, Hawke declares: "Your job is your right, not a political game. Divide and conquer is not our way, we must have government for all of us."

The advertisement was to air for a week from Friday in Sydney, Melbourne and the capital Canberra...

"Union-bashing is just not on in this country and it comes from ignorance and creates division," Hawke said at the launch of the unions' ad campaign.

## JOIN US IN PROMOTING PRO-LABOR, PRO-WORKER PROGRAMMING IN THE MEDIA

- Yes. Subscribe me to one year of UPPNET News (a quarterly) for \$15.**
- I want to join UPPNET. Annual dues are \$30, which includes a year's subscription to the newsletter.**

Fill out the following form, and mail to address below:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Union or Org. \_\_\_\_\_

Position, if any: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone no: \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

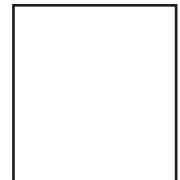
Amount Enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Mail this coupon (make check to UPPNET) to:  
**UPPNET, c/o Labor Ed. Services, Univ. of Minnesota  
321 19th Ave. South, No. 3-300  
Minneapolis, MN 55455**

Labor Donated



**UPPNET**  
c/o Labor Ed. Services  
Univ. of Minnesota  
321 19th Ave. South, No. 3-300  
Minneapolis, MN 55455





# UPPNET News

Official Publication of the Union Producers and Programmers Network

Fall 1998

Promoting production and use of tv and radio shows pertinent to the cause of organized labor and working people

## UPPNET Builds Support for Labor Programming on PBS/NPR

The effort to build support for regular labor programming on PBS and NPR gathered increasing support this past Labor Day. Over 1000 trade unionists and communication activists signed petitions calling on more labor programming on PBS and NPR. Linda Chavez Thomson, Vice President of the AFL-CIO was one of the endorsers as well as Stan Smith, Secretary Treasurer of the San Francisco Building and Construction Trades.

The campaign also led to labor day protests at the PBS/NPR station in San Francisco and in Medford, Oregon as well as letters to local newspapers. And at their September state convention, the Minnesota AFL-CIO passed a resolution in support of UPPNET's call for labor programming on PBS. These are important first steps in raising the issue of censorship of regular labor programming on PBS/NPR.

This coming October, 1999 in Los Angeles there will be another annual AFL-CIO convention and we hope to make this an issue of priority for the AFL-CIO. Please join us in this campaign outside the labor movement and inside it. ♦

## Labor advocates picket KQED

September 9, 1998, *San Francisco Bay Guardian*  
by A. Clay Thompson

Some 20 Bay Area activists picketed KQED on Labor Day, calling on the public broadcaster to cover issues of concern to working people.

"Working people need regular coverage of their concerns. KQED and NPR [National Public Radio] have a responsibility to provide it," said Steven Zeltzer of the Labor Video Project. Zeltzer made an unsuccessful bid for the KQED board of directors last year.

The protest was part of a statewide campaign by labor advocates targeting public television and radio stations.

KQED-TV Channel 9 broadcasts the *Nightly Business Report* each weeknight and the *Wall Street Week* every Friday night, but the station can't find time for a regular show geared toward working folks. Corporate broadcasters also rarely pay attention to labor—which leaves public-access cable as the only venue for labor programming. San Francisco, traditionally a hotbed of labor activism, now boasts four labor public-access shows.

*Continued on p. 2*

## Labor Media Mix in Tijuana Han-Young Campaign

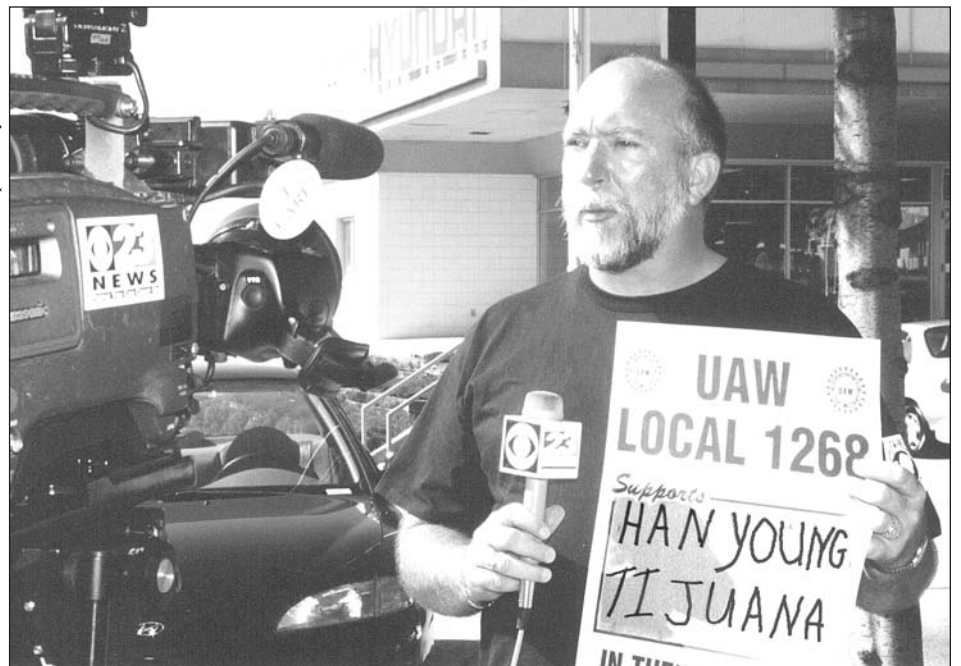
On Oct. 10, responding to a union press release, the CBS affiliate in Rockford, Illinois sent a single reporter with a camera to cover a group of UAW members having a protest in front of an area Hyundai dealership. He set up his camera and handed the microphone to UAW Local 1268 President Dave Woody. The reporter proceeded to tape an extensive interview on why these autoworkers, from the Belvidere, Illinois Chrysler plant, were demonstrating in support of autoworkers at the Han Young auto parts plant in Tijuana, Mexico. The interview, however, was not shown on the evening or late news, and the story itself got only fifteen seconds.

Local 1268 members, of course, didn't have any fantasies about the impartiality of their CBS affiliate, so their media outreach involved other strategies too.

One member of the local, Haldon Sutton, has been writing extensively about this struggle for the Rockford labor paper.

Hal Sutton also contacted two Chicago-area labor media shows, *Labor Beat* and

photos by Haldon Sutton



UAW Local 1268's President David Woody gives a long interview to CBS affiliate WIFR-TV reporter/cameraman. But this story about the failure of NAFTA and local autoworkers' cross-borders solidarity action was only given 15 seconds in the actual newscast.

*Continued on p. 2*

Continued from p. 1, col. 1

*Labor Express*. *Labor Beat* co-producer William Jenkins videotaped an earlier protest at a Hyundai dealership on Michigan Avenue in Chicago, as well as the actions of UAW Local 1268 when it presented the Mexican Consul with petitions containing 500 signatures protesting the treatment of the Han Young workers. Jenkins, who also came out for the Rockford demo, will soon finish a cable-tv show about how workers in Northern Illinois are organizing support for their brothers and sisters in far-off Tijuana.

Larry Duncan, a reporter for the radio show *Labor Express*, also got a long interview from President Woody, and that was aired on the next broadcast on WLWU-FM (88.7) in Chicago.

When *Labor Beat* puts on its cable-tv show about the Han Young solidarity campaign, it will also benefit greatly from footage provided by *Labor Link TV* in San Diego.

Fred Lonidier, *LLTV* producer, has done an extensive amount of videotaping on this story, and produced a short piece showing the infamous, fraudulent union election vote fiddled by Han Young management.

*LLTV* has worked over the years with the San Diego Support Committee for Maquiladora Workers, providing them with important footage, some of it anonymously donated via the workers in Tijuana. Some of *LLTV*'s footage and vignettes on company excesses at Han Young have found their way into court cases and Congressional hearings on the NAFTA debate.

One strategy that Lonidier has found successful was to send down to Tijuana a Hi-8 camera. "They pass that thing around," Fred comments, "and every once in a while someone from the Support Committee hands me a tape. I'm collecting this footage." The fact that the Maquiladora workers have that Hi-8 also helps them directly. "It means they're 'armed' with a camera, and can keep the goons at bay," he explains.

*Labor Link TV* has accumulated an impressive archive of footage and edited segments on the Han Young/Maquila story, and you can reach them by e-mail: [ir156@sdcc3.ucsd.edu](mailto:ir156@sdcc3.ucsd.edu)

Another good source of Han Young/Maquila related footage is *Labor Video Project*, e-mail: [lvpsf@igc.org](mailto:lvpsf@igc.org)

You can learn more about the Han Young struggle on the UAW website: [www.uaw.org](http://www.uaw.org)

*Labor Beat* can be reached at [lduncan@igc.org](mailto:lduncan@igc.org)

*Labor Express* at: [wheimbach@igc.org](mailto:wheimbach@igc.org) ♦



UAW 1268's Dave Woody tells *Labor Express* reporter Larry Duncan about how NAFTA side agreements for labor have failed.

Continued from p. 1, col. 2

At the 1998 convention of the California AFL-CIO, the two million-strong union passed a resolution urging the Public Broadcasting System (PBS) and NPR to establish weekly TV and radio programming geared toward labor. The resolution encourages unionists to protest the lack of public broadcast labor programming because "labor is now under political attack by corporate America and the major media monopolies."

In response to questions about its labor programming, KQED provided the Bay Guardian with a list of nine labor-oriented shows airing on the TV and radio station this month. KQED spokesperson David Shaw told us, "We're always looking for new programming. If anyone has labor-related programming they'd like to see on the air, we'd like to review it." [Try them out and see what happens. -Ed.]

While September's television lineup includes documentaries on the 1946 Oakland General Strike and the farm-workers movement, the station aired only one labor-focused show in August.

The picket was supported by the Save KQED (Again!) campaign, which is running a five-person slate of progressive activists for election to the KQED board. The board's annual elections run from Oct. 17 through Nov. 13. Save KQED (Again!) candidates, including former Berkeley mayor Gus Newport, former Oakland city council member Wilson Riles Jr., and current Alameda County Central Labor Council executive Owen Marron, say they aim to push for stronger labor coverage if elected. ♦

## Videotaping Protected Activity Is Unfair Labor Practice

Reporting in *Recent Developments in Labor and Employment Law*, Willamette Law Online notes: "Following a series of labor disputes [National Steel & Shipbuilding v. NLRB (DC Cir 10/02/98) [www.ll.georgetown.edu/Fed-Ct/Circuit/dc/opinions/97-1689a.html](http://www.ll.georgetown.edu/Fed-Ct/Circuit/dc/opinions/97-1689a.html)] and the employer's unilateral implementation of its final offer, the union organized daily rallies in front of one of the employer's gates. The employer (1) mounted a video camera atop a nearby building to tape the rallies; (2) gave an industrial relations employee a camera to use from a nearby security shack, with instructions to tape any harassment or violence (but this employee never had occasion to use the camera); and (3) installed a permanent camera with a microphone atop the nearby building, then moved the microphone to another location, and then removed the microphone (but the microphone never was operational).

"The NLRB ordered the employer to cease using or conveying the impression it was using video or audio devices to monitor protected activities, and the DC Circuit enforced the order. The employer's actions had a tendency to intimidate employees, regardless of the actual impact. The employer's normal security cameras already covered the gate, so the minimal added security provided by the videotaping was outweighed by the tendency to coerce. The employer lacked a reasonable and objective expectation that misconduct was likely."

[www.willamette.edu/law/wlo/laborlaw](http://www.willamette.edu/law/wlo/laborlaw) – Willamette University College of Law, Editor: Ross Runkel, Professor of Law [rrunkel@willamette.edu](mailto:rrunkel@willamette.edu) ♦

# FSTV Asks for Help

Dear Friend of *Free Speech TV*,

I'm writing to ask you--as someone who cares about human rights and who understands the power of the media--to lend a hand in an important grassroots advocacy campaign. Won't you please make ONE PHONE CALL this week and ask a friend to do the same?



What do you get out of it? Hopefully the opportunity for you, your friends, and your neighbors to see four compelling human rights documentaries on your local public television station. And a chance for all of us to work together to resolve on-going rights abuses at home and abroad.

Although your public television station has been offered these programs for free, it's likely that the programmers won't schedule them unless they hear from "viewers like you." They need to be reminded that there is an audience out there who want to see this type of work. Honestly, your five minute call could make the difference between whether the public gets to see these works or not.

## Background: Just Solutions: Campaigning for Human Rights

December 10, 1998 marks the 50th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. To commemorate this occasion, FSTV, the Human Rights Watch International Film Festival, and KBDI-TV are presenting *Just Solutions: Campaigning for Human Rights*. This 18 hour series of compelling independent documentaries will air on FSTV's cable affiliates in December and January. For more information about the series, check out [www.freespeech.org/fstv](http://www.freespeech.org/fstv).

In addition, as part of *Just Solutions: Campaigning for Human Rights*, we are offering four one-hour programs to all public television stations--for free--for broadcasts beginning in December:

- *Dirty Secrets*: Jennifer, Everardo, and the CIA in Guatemala: Jennifer Harbury, a U.S. citizen, courageously searches for her missing husband—a Mayan rebel in Guatemala—only to uncover decades of CIA cover-ups and complicity in brutal human rights abuses.
- *Poverty Outlaw*: the women of the Kensington Welfare Rights Union, their descent into poverty, and their efforts to claw their way out, doing whatever it takes for their families to survive.
- *The Last Graduation*: The Rise and Fall of College Programs in Prison: prisons are a growth industry in the U.S., but recent "get tough" legislation has cut off one of the few effective tools for rehabilitation and education.
- *A Pig's Tale*: short-sighted U.S. economic intervention in Haiti eradicates the Creole pig, a staple in the island's economy and cultural life, paving the way for poverty, hunger, and ultimately, revolution.

For more information about these programs, and to watch or listen to preview clips in RealMedia, visit [www.freespeech.org/fstv/Publictvlineup.htm](http://www.freespeech.org/fstv/Publictvlineup.htm).

## Here's What You Can Do:

1. Call the programming department of your local public television station(s). See [www.pbs.org/stations](http://www.pbs.org/stations) for the phone number. Ask the programmer when these four works have been scheduled for broadcast. If they haven't been scheduled yet, encourage the station to do so, preferably in December or January, in commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the

UDHR. Explain that you, your friends, and your family want to see this type of work, and that you personally want to help spread the word about these special human rights broadcasts.

2. The station should have already recorded the programs from our satellite feed. However, if it hasn't, we will gladly provide it with tapes of the program. The programmer should contact Joy Silverman at 323-665-7040 or [jsprod@aol.com](mailto:jsprod@aol.com) for information about the programs, tapes, and available rights.

3. We find that this strategy is most effective when the tone of the conversation is amiable, rather than confrontational. Stations are more likely to air a program if they feel they have allies out there who will help them promote their broadcasts.

4. Ask your friends to do the same. As you know, our grassroots strength is in our numbers

5. Let us know what the programmer said. You can reach us at [programming@fstv.org](mailto:programming@fstv.org) or 303-442-8445. In appreciation of your effort, we will send you a free copy of the Just Solutions Human Rights Advocacy Kit, which contains more information about the series, as well as useful tips for getting involved in numerous human rights campaigns being coordinated by organizations such as Prison Activist Resource Center, Food First, Lambi Fund For Haiti, and Witness For Peace. Be sure to give us your snailmail address.

Thanks much for your help in keeping the "public" in "public broadcasting" and for making this human rights campaign a success. I hope you'll tune into *Just Solutions: Campaigning for Human Rights* this winter.

Best, Jon Stout, *Program Director* ♦

## New Korean Film: *A Single Spark*

Park's new film, is serious and moving. Jeon Tae-il – a real figure – was a poor kid in Seoul, growing up in the 1960s. He sold cheap umbrellas on the street, then got a job in the booming textile industry. Appalled by the atrocious conditions which prevailed, he attempted to organize workers into unions. He also tried vainly to get the ferociously anticommunist, US-backed South Korean dictatorship to enforce its own labor laws. On November 13, 1970 the 22-year-old Jeon, holding the book of labor statutes in his hands, doused himself with gasoline. He held a lit match to the book and burned himself to death, shouting, "Comply with labor laws!", "We are not machines!"

The film has two time frames. We see Jeon Tae-il through the eyes of (the fictional) Kim Yong-su, an intellectual and opponent of the government in 1975 – Korea's so-called Dark Age – who is researching and writing a book on the martyr of the textile workers. Kim is on the run from the police; his pregnant girlfriend, a factory worker, is arrested and imprisoned.

Kim befriends Jeon Tae-il's mother, who explains how her son became radicalized. South Korea was in the throes of economic growth in the 1960s. The government insisted that an export-led economy was the path to prosperity. Workers were expected to make every sacrifice for the "national good." Jeon went to work in Seoul's Pyung-Hwa Market, an industrial building housing numerous clothing industry sweatshops.

Young workers, mostly female, worked 15 hours a day in cramped and unventilated attics. Jeon would run to work rather than take the bus in order to buy food for his fellow workers.

For more information: (415) 641-4440, [lvpsf@igc.org](mailto:lvpsf@igc.org) ♦

## **Call for Papers:** **Labor Online: Jan. 15-16, 1999**

*UPPNET members should think seriously about attending this conference, which will have national trade union participation, and address issues on radio and video. Plans are under way for an UPPNET meeting during the conference.*

This is a call for papers, panels, and proposals for a national conference on Labor Online: Building Union Power through Interactive Technologies, to be held January 15-16, 1999 at the Graduate Center for Worker Education, Brooklyn College, City University of New York.

The Internet is increasingly instrumental for trade unions and the labor movement, enabling new forms of communications and action. How can the labor movement develop the use of Internet and interactive technologies to build local and global forces to advance the interests of working people? Will global high technology offer anything beyond layoffs, intensification of exploitation and corporate domination of the information revolution? Labor Online, the first East Coast conference to explore these and other important issues facing unions and working people, invites proposals, presentations, papers, panels and workshops that will focus on the following areas, among others: • Software Applications for Unions • Best and Worst Sites: Labor/Capital • Labor and Community Online Coalitions—Issues of Race, Gender and Cultural Barriers on the Net—Internet: Education, Mobilization, Organization, Networking—Distance Learning • Developing a Labor Channel • Unionizing Multimedia and Interactive Technologies—Labor History on the Net • Union & Family Services on the Net

Sponsors include (partial listing): 1199; SEIU Adult Education Program; American Social History Project; Brooklyn College Graduate Center for Worker Education; New York State School of Industrial & Labor Relations Cornell University (Metro Campus); Labor Net—Institute for Global Communications; Queens College Labor Education Program; Labor at the Crossroads

To submit a proposal, Visit the Web Site:  
[WWW.laboronline.org](http://WWW.laboronline.org) Or Call (212)966-4014

Conference Organizing Committee  
99 Hudson Street  
New York, N.Y. 10013 ♦

## **New Video** **Degrees of Shame**

In 1960 Edward R. Murrow made a television documentary about the plight of migrant farm workers. *Harvest of Shame* examined the working conditions and economic realities of those least respected but absolutely vital workers in the agricultural industry, the harvesters.

To Barbara Wolf, a Cincinnati-based video documentarist, the economic situation and working conditions of adjunct professors suggested an information economy parallel to migrant farm workers. As with migrant farm workers, hiring of adjuncts is often done at the last minute, the extremely low pay is based on the number of courses taught, there are no benefits, there is no job security, and many adjuncts teach at more than one institution (often in different cities) trying to piece together a living.

*Degrees of Shame – Part-Time Faculty: Migrant Workers of the Information Economy* is available to adjuncts for \$15, other individuals for \$20, and to institutions for \$50. If a purchase order is used, add \$10 for handling. For more information, or to order your video:

Barbara Wolf Video Work, 1709 Pomona Court, Cincinnati, OH 45206. Phone/Fax (513) 861-2462 ♦

## **Needs Video On Mock Collective Bargaining Sessions**

Does anyone know where I can find video tapes containing simulated collective bargaining sessions? I'd like this material for some workshops I'm planning for our members.

Dan Bahr, New York State United Teachers  
[dan1946@unix.asb.com](mailto:dan1946@unix.asb.com) ♦

## **A Proposal from Chris Bailey** **Expand Labor Computer Communications**

Faced by major problems arising from the effects of globalisation, there is great need for labor to expand its use of computer communications.

The Labo(u)rNets have played an important role in building an international rank and file labor network, which, on several occasions, has proved its worth in organizing international labor solidarity. They have received widespread recognition for their work. The Labo(u)rNets arose from within APC, starting with US LaborNet in 1990.

They should be seen as a valuable asset for advertising the reasons why international labor should associate with APC.

The Labo(u)rNets recognize these advantages. We believe the Biwater campaign, where the APC came to the defense of LabourNet in the UK and the South African Municipal Workers' Union against attempts by a transnational to impose censorship, showed this at its best. We could not have got such support from commercial ISPs.

Building on this positive relationship, we ask for the APC and its affiliates to support our development and building of Labo(u)rNets, wherever the APC has members.

We also ask for the APC to support the organizing of an APC/Labo(u)rNet Conference in London next year. This conference would aim to bring together labor movement activists and organizations involved in computer communications both from within and from outside the APC. We request that APC work to get its members to attend the conference, so as to encourage an exchange of ideas between labor computer communications activists and APC affiliates. The aim should be to build a stronger and more powerful use of the Internet by the trade union movement and to, at the same time, show the advantages to the labor movement of working with APC.

We request that the APC work jointly with the Labo(u)rNets to build financial support for the conference so that assistance can be given to delegates from distant countries unable to afford the cost of travel.

We also want to set up a committee of Labo(u)rNet representatives and supporters to work together with APC representatives in the planning and development of the conference."

Proposed by Chris Bailey (on behalf of LabourNet)  
[chrisbailey@labournet.org.uk](mailto:chrisbailey@labournet.org.uk) ♦

## ***Guest Essay:***

# **Work's Mediated Past Makes Future Slim, Grim, Null And Void**

By Bill Knight

*(Bill Knight is Professor of Journalism at Western Illinois University. The essay below was presented at the recent conference "The Future of Work: US/German Perspectives" sponsored by the U. of Ill. Institute of Labor and Industrial Relations and the Goethe-Institut Chicago.)*

The future of work will be affected by its past. The value of work, the working class, and the working life derives in part from people's awareness of work's heritage. To appreciate work's consequences, admire its merits, respect its virtues—and need—we must remember our roots, our worth—our history, and our depth today.

How do we learn and enjoy our past? Increasingly, it's not by oral traditions or the printed word, but by mediated messages conveying a popular culture less grassroots borne than packaged, top-down, for consumption benefiting media conglomerates. Indeed, contemporary pop culture and the media are of and for each other.

Contemporary popular culture seems adrift, commercialized, and distracting. Indeed, with ubiquitous fast-food drive-throughs, media is the other half of today's version of ancient Rome's bread-and-circus policy of repression or pacification through satisfaction and distraction.

Maybe it's cyclical. In Europe in 1931, joblessness hurt millions and fascism was on the rise. But in Paris, filmmaker Jean Cocteau made and released a movie—*Sang d'un Poete*—that soberly addressed the subject of masturbation. While the Great Depression gripped the continent—the planet—and while countless people suffered, intellectuals praised this piece of media as ambitious art.

Today, media—both entertainment and information sources—also play Nero as the world burns. Accidentally mimicking Cocteau's topic, media toy with themselves or seriously show subjects less important, less meaningful than what's affecting people. Modern media seem to use their resources to seize on any stimulant to fill the voracious vacuum of time and pages available around which they sell time and space.

Objecting to distraction isn't not to say that all expression must adhere to some agenda, but surely there's some balancing point between propaganda on the one hand and, on the other, pure, art-for-art's-sake (or cash-for-cash's-sake) emptiness.

Media in general and films in particular can make the mundane grand, the person and poignant and "merely" meaningful literally bigger than life, epic, powerful. Or, media can dismiss, overlook or ignore outright people or places or times whose drama, humor or horror doesn't fit neatly into the template that media corporations use to market their images or plots or myths. It's a tough squeeze between possibilities and realities, between disappointment and rejection.

Considering "Popular Culture and the Working Life" begs for media literacy. Media images are not real, not role models, not very useful. At most, they sometimes reflect, not instruct us.

Producer Patrice O'Neill, with the syndicated public TV show *We Do The Work*, adds, "You've got to go back 10-15 years to find Hollywood movies where workers are the heroes, as in *Norma Rae* or *Silkwood*."

Besides those two movies, there are a few decent American

films addressing or acknowledging workers, but they're the exceptions that prove the rule. Those exceptions? *Matewan*, *Black Fury*, *The Killing Floor*, *Salt of The Earth*, TV's old *Homefront* and new *Trinity*, even Disney's *Newsies* has its moments. Also, of course (although British), are *Brassed Off* and *The Full Monty*. Exceptions, all. The rule? Workers don't matter.

Consider a few recent popular movies and their lost promise. *Good Will Hunting* starred Matt Damon as a working-class college-age kid who happens to be a genius. After forced therapy, he gives up his anti-authoritarian attitude, rejects his friends and chases a girl to the sunny refinement of Stanford. Somehow, the working class ends up being about vulgarity, abuse, anti-intellectualism and lack of intimacy. "It's just a love story," you say.

Indeed, so's *As Good As It Gets*, with Helen Hunt as a single, working mom who happens to be bright and longs for independence and intimacy. Indirectly assisted by psychotropic drugs, she accepts financial help from a rich patron, and finds love by an almost magical leap to a higher economic class. "It's Cinderella," you say.

Maybe. And 1996's *Mother Trucker: The Diana Kilmury Story* could've been *Beauty and The Beast*. Instead, this biography of the real-life Teamsters activist (starring Barbara Williams and Nicholas Campbell) stresses the struggle between entrenched Teamster leaders and dissidents rather than the conflict of interests between drivers and employers. (At least there was no psychiatrist.)

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Where are real working people? In cinema they're about as common as real African-Americans, ordinary women, functional families, good cops, human doctors and compassionate lawyers: Missing. For moviegoers, such stereotypical effects are getting worse, adds consumer advocate Ralph Nader, who writes, "increasingly, the sensual—broadly defined—is replacing the mental. Just look at today's popular, rapid-motion, narrativeless, movies with the popular movies around mid-century."

Indeed, compare the jobless shown in *The Grapes of Wrath* with the jobless in *Falling Down*, which shows them as crazy, crooked or violent instead of exploited, troubled, but true to their kin and to decent values. In an insightful tract about media's view of labor, *Through Jaundiced Eyes*, William Puette writes that labor in media, particularly film, "has been both unrepresentative and virulently negative... [showing labor to be] by nature violent and mired in corruption."

We call each method of communications a “medium.” (It’s said that’s because none is rare or well-done.) As a medium, each is a conveyance. Whether radio or TV, newspapers or magazines, the World Wide Web or cinema, a medium sends messages. In that sense, media have traits in common with cable TV or conversation. Each transmits data—images or statements—that can be useful and practical and entertaining...or misleading, trivial or dishonest. Hell, maybe media and movies—which generally package and sanitize or obscure and ignore the working life—can’t do any better. Whether film in particular or media in general, however, the process is about neither information nor communication—that happens in libraries or from telephones. What we really mean is imagery: superficial appearances. Media has become a mercantile process of selling people to advertisers—that’s the ultimate transaction that’s occurring.

“Network programming is created to sell advertisers’ products,” according to the progressive First Run/Icarus Films Co. “American television is primarily an entertainment medium which shouldn’t peddle politics or morals to its huge audience. [Advertisers] want the networks to create conflict-free, optimistic, and bland ‘realities’ that won’t raise anxieties or doubts about American life or values.

“The...viewer’s world is freed of religious, political and ethnic differences. Emotions and personalities leave no room for ideals or politics. Even shows like *The Simpsons* which attempt some social satire work within boundaries that call for conflict resolutions by each episode’s end.”

Cinema? Motion pictures are expensive gimmicks to initially bring people into huge “restaurants” with overpriced, bad food—multiplexes selling \$5 popcorn tubs—before they drift to video, cable and TV.

Asked whether the movie industry should accept responsibility for its films, director John Sayles (*Matewan*) responded, “Using responsibility in the same sentence as the movie industry... just doesn’t fit. It’s not high on their list of priorities. There was no idea at the beginning of the movie industry that it was anything other than an industry.”

Corporate studios don’t want consumers to see images of the working life. They don’t see dignity, they see drudgery. Yet they don’t want stories of sweatshops or carpal-tunnel injuries, or consequences of layoffs or a labor force drifting toward temporary employment. So they depict a world of drones and clones, a future of robots and automation, or elites where work is absent or unattractive.

Does anyone seriously believe that an industry that made three films about Joey Buttafucio and none about labor leader and presidential candidate Eugene Debs cares about working people except as a collective source of revenue? Or that such media are even appropriate vehicles to educate or inform or even to let ourselves enjoy positives about society’s diversity—especially in class?

“The people who make movies don’t find us very interesting,” auto assembler Randy Westbrook told *Solidarity* magazine. The comedy *Gung Ho*, for instance, “didn’t work. It was terrible. it gave everyone the wrong impression. You could deal with work as a movie...the human-ness of real work, the things people really talk about... There may not be any big moments of heroics. But you could translate moments of tension that exist in the plants.” Sadly, Hollywood is missing such opportunities.

O’Neill, of *We Do The Work*, says, “Working people’s lives are a gold mine that [Hollywood] has failed to fall into.

Hollywood has to understand that today it’s missing wonderful stories. It’s missing an audience that seldom sees itself reflected.”

Unfortunately, too many of us have become dependent on mass communications for images, opinion and history—and that doesn’t mean the *History Channel*. We—and our children—absorb facts that aren’t true, judgments that are unfair, perspectives that are biased against our own interests—all through sitcoms and dramas, action/adventure series and talk shows, soaps and news magazines, TV and movies.

All these facts and judgments, points of view and attitudes of past events frame viewers’ sense of what’s gone before. All these twisted, inaccurate, unfair depictions of previous decades add up to a working knowledge (really, an unworkable ignorance) of history.

As Madison, Wisconsin editorial writer William Evjue—in the early 1950s—wrote, “The media of communications on which people most depend for facts and information—the press, the movies, radio and television—have been used to reduce the people to conformity and dumb acquiescence. The press, movies, radio and television bear a large share of the responsibility for the climate of fear and hysteria which has enveloped our country and which has become such a threat to our freedom.”

Most of us go to films to escape daily life, not for reminders—even pleasant ones. We want to escape to worlds where villains are vanquished; where solutions—at least resolutions—happen to problems or conflicts; where hard work, fidelity and truth are rewarded. Why? Because Good doesn’t always triumph over Evil in the World.

But escape can become that unhealthy distraction, too—misdirection away from awareness and action, civility or civic involvement. The tough squeeze becomes one between what is and what could be, and what’s not and what shouldn’t be. Unfortunately, movies have come to function as a “night school” of sorts, generating a semblance of historical consciousness. For some, Hollywood History is the only history.

Historian Eric Foner says that “Many more people learn their history from watching *Malcolm X* than from reading about Malcolm X. And JFK—God knows how many people now think Jim Garrison had the assassination all figured out.”

There’s something sad—and inefficient, and ultimately harmful—in relying almost exclusively on popular culture as packaged by corporate media to inform ourselves.

Filmmakers shouldn’t be blamed, exactly, for social phenomena, whether violence or intelligence. They operate in a limited, limiting framework. Some and their employers marginalize working people and the working life because there’s no audience for serious themes; people want immediate gratification. Well, that’s blaming the victim, since attention spans were shortened and shaped in part by media. Further, ignoring (or manipulating) moviegoers shows a lack of imagination, which can’t conceive of making a dramatic, heroic story, so. Oddly, when filmmaker Kathryn Bigelow in 1995 said “Films don’t cause violence, people do; violence defines our existence; to shield oneself is more dangerous than trying to reflect it,” she revealed that it’s easier—more acceptable—to use violence than to use pictures and stories of working people.

If only our filmmakers and poets, writers and editors, broadcasters and producers all would leave their comfortable, privileged isolations and find the rich, vital stories that lie in the genuine popular culture, and those shaping the world. Media need hard-working, compelling storytellers, not lazy, transparent talking heads mimicking stand-up comics. ♦

## Push For PBS To Program “Globalization & Human Rights”

On October 29, 10:00 p.m. ET, PBS will feed to its network “Globalization and Human Rights”, a new special from Globalvision, the people who produced “Rights and Wrongs” with Charlayne Hunter-Gault for years. It is supposed to air on Oct. 29 but your station may try to weasel out of showing it. “Put their feet to the fire if they try,” suggests Aaron Barnhart of the *Kansas City Star*. “Globalvision does superb work and the note of caution they sound on the human toll of economic progress deserves to be heard and seen.”

At the Program Release notes, Globalization and Human Rights takes viewers on a journey that starts in the Swiss Alps at a summit for corporate decision-makers and travels deep into the gold mines of South Africa. From there, the program visits the controversial Shell oil fields of Nigeria and Nike shoe factories in Asia—all the while exploring an emerging conflict in the new world order between those making macroeconomic decisions and those struggling to cope with the impact of those decisions. It also documents the response of workers and labor organizations, citizens groups and human rights activists to the rapidly changing world order, and features exclusive footage of the world’s first Global March Against Child Labor as an example of “Globalization from Below.”

This program will make an excellent primer for the 50th Anniversary of UDHR with its sharp focus on the current frontier of economic and social rights under siege by global economic tumult, the New World Disorder. For more information: [pharis.harvey@erols.com](mailto:pharis.harvey@erols.com) ♦

## 3 New Korean Labor Videos

“Korean General Strike, Urgent Report #2” 1997 This 60 minute award winning documentary is an exciting account of the Korean General Strike of January 1997. Presented at the Berlin Film Festival, the documentary which is captioned tells the story of the strike and includes music and collages. Produced by Labor News Production. Price \$30.00 Plus \$5.00 Shipping

“Fired Workers Fight For Their Right” 1997 This powerful documentary shows the conditions of fired workers in Korea and the collective effort to force the companies and the Korean government to get their jobs back. Included is an occupation of the government labor law offices. Captioned in English and produced by the Fired Workers Committee. Price \$50.00 plus \$5.00 Shipping

“Our Four Seasons” 1998 69 Minutes A new documentary on the long struggle of the Sammi Specialty Steel workers in Masan, Korea and their fight for their jobs. This details their many struggles and the lessons they learned. Captioned in English and produced by Labor News Production in Seoul with footage by the strikers themselves. Price \$30.00 Plus \$5.00 Shipping. Send Check or Money Order To

The Labor Video Project , P.O.Box 425584, San Francisco, CA 94142, (415) 282-1908 [lvpsf@labornet.org](mailto:lvpsf@labornet.org) ♦

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OPEU District 4 Productions is very thankful for access to the only free radio station in all of Southern Oregon. Be sure and listen to: *Making Contact*, Sundays at 10 am, KSOC—Radio Free Ashland, RVTV cable channel 31. ♦

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## UPPNET OBJECTIVES:

1. To promote and expand the production and use of television and radio shows pertinent to the cause of organized labor and the issues relevant to all working people.
2. To establish and promote the general distribution and circulation of this programming.
3. To address issues regarding the media and its fair and democratic use and accessibility by labor and other constituencies generally.
4. To encourage and promote the preservation of television and radio broadcasts pertinent to labor.
5. To establish a code of ethic governing television and radio production practices and other such matters UPPNET may determine as relevant to its work.
6. To require all productions to work under a collective bargaining agreement, secure waivers or work in agreement with any television or movie industry union having jurisdiction in the area.

Visit the UPPNET website at:  
<http://www.mtn.org/jsee/uppnet.html>

# Oregon Union Puts *Making Contact* on The Air

National Radio Project's *Making Contact* will now be broadcast in the Rogue Valley thanks to "KSOC, Radio Free Ashland", the new student & community station at Southern Oregon University.

Starting November 8, every Sunday morning at 10:00 am listeners may tune in to *Making Contact*. They can make this contact on Rogue Valley Television's (RVTV) community access cable channel 31. Thanks to RVTV, KSOC—Radio Free Ashland became a reality Oct. 1 when they gave OPEU District 4 Productions their very first broadcast (KSOC can be contacted at 541-552-8762).

OPEU District 4 Productions will host *Making Contact*, the 29 minute weekly program committed to investigative journalism and in-depth critical analysis which goes beyond breaking news.

*Making Contact* focuses on the human realities of politics, the connections between local and global events, and creative possibilities for people to engage in hopeful democratic change.

The highly talented *Making Contact* staff, including David Barsamian and Norman Solomon, take to heart these words: "I have come to believe over and over again that what is most important to me must be spoken, make verbal and shared, even at the risk of having it bruised and misunderstood...For it is not difference which immobilizes us most but silence."  
—Audre Lorde

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