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Six Jimmy John’s Workers Fired For Whistleblowing

By the IWW Jimmy Johns Workers Union

Thousands of community supporters have jammed Jimmy John’s phone lines and flooded the chain’s Facebook page with messages of outrage and support for six whistleblowers who were fired for exposing widespread coercion to work at the chain while sick. On March 25, the workers announced that they plan to escalate actions against Jimmy John’s until their demands for the right to call in sick, paid sick days, and reinstatement of the fired workers are met.

“We will not be silenced. Speaking out against the policy of forcing workers to work while sick is not only our right, it is our duty,” said Erik Forman, one of the fired sandwich workers. “The unfettered greed of franchise owner Mike Mulligan and Jimmy John himself jeopardizes the health of thousands of customers and workers almost every day. We will speak out until they realize that no one wants to eat a sandwich filled with cold and flu germs.”

Under current policy, Jimmy John’s workers are disciplined for calling in sick if they cannot find a replacement. In addition, many workers are unable to afford to take a day off if they are ill because wages at the sandwich chain hover around the federal minimum of $7.25 an hour. The result of these pressures is that sandwich-makers often have to work while sick, creating an enormous public health risk.

After franchise management rebuffed numerous employee requests to reform the sick day policy, Continued on 8

Fired Union Barista Achieves Victory In Brooklyn

By NYC Wobblies

After an aggressive nine-month campaign consisting of both legal action and increasingly more militant direct action, the New York City IWW was victorious in seeking justice for Fellow Worker Jeff Bauer, who was fired from the 7th Avenue location of Ozzie’s Coffee & Tea in Brooklyn, N.Y., on June 29, 2010.

Bauer worked at the independent Park Slope coffee shop, a neighborhood institution, for more than one year and proved himself to be a hard worker with a strong work ethic. The quality of his labor was never questioned before his union affiliation with the IWW was leaked to management when Bauer helped organize a May Day benefit event for the NYC IWW in 2010. In fact, Bauer was offered the store manager position, but turned it down on principle as it went against his political beliefs as both an anarchist and a Wobbly. When management was made aware that Bauer was organizing with the One Big Union, their response was harsh and relentless. Bauer was subjected to mistreatment, harassment and verbal abuse on a daily basis.

In June 2010, Bauer suffered a severe cut in hours when he stood up for a coworker who was physically assaulted and threatened by store manager Raphael Bernadine’s boyfriend, a former cop, on the shop floor. In response to this retaliatory attack on Bauer’s right to defend his coworker from a violent confrontation, as well as his legally-protected right to discuss workplace conditions, Bauer led a union delegation of six Wobblies and supporters into Ozzie’s Coffee & Tea. The purpose of this “March on the Boss” was to deliver a demand letter directly to the boss and officially notify him of Bauer’s affiliation with the IWW. Bauer’s list of demands included his hours be restored to

Continued on 9

To all the workers fighting against the bosses on the shop floor and on the streets, remember: this is your day. Happy May Day!
By Oliver Lanti

I was lucky enough to recently spend a month in Wisconsin organizing for the IWW. I plan to write colectively about the experience with some of the other Fellows Wobbler for the IWW and to write something less formal from my personal thoughts.

I have to say that I was more proud of my red card than when I first read that the IWW was agitating for a general strike, and that this was resonating in the broader working class. I think the IWW is the best game in town for those who want to “fan the flames” of the “discontent,” and I have the hope that ever since I joined, just after the centenary. Although our success and our successes have been limited, it seems that we are the only IWW local in Canada that has any program for building up new working-class militants through courses on “solidarity work.”

However, during the May Day protests of 2005 and 2006, the IWW was relatively uninvolved—most branches were too solidary with immigrant workers, but as an organization we had basically nothing to offer our self, militant workers, or self-organized militant workers who wanted to move forward. I have been hoping for years to see the IWW develop programs that would be able to influence future working-class struggles that will take place behind the walls of a single factory (or coffee shop). To be clear, our focus on actual workplaces and actual workers, as opposed to the completely idealistic “IWW spirit,” has even in this one local, what brought me into the IWW back in 2005.

In 2005, it was the IWW’s agitation for working-class collective action on a broad social level that brought me back after about 18 months of disengagement. Among other things, to use F W. Pierce’s idea of “Goals, Strategy, Tactics,” I’d been discouraged by feeling that the IWW was a hold (that there was no place in the IWW for the “means of production, abolish the wage system, and in harmony with the land”), and build (working-class militants and win concessions from employers through the “single factory unionism,” but, like a group of guards from South Park, we lacked a step two, a strategy that could link the goal and the tactic. We still have, don’t really, and we’re from the experience in Wisconsin it is clear that IWW is good for something collectively, just as it is clear that we never would have had a larger impact if we did after all we might have done, in the day-to-day class struggles at Starbucks, Jimmy John’s, and a myriad of other businesses.

I look forward to the debate in the IWW about what we can learn from this experience, and in particular, about how we can advance our politics. Absolutely! The IWW is neither anti-political nor non-political. The IWW is ultra-political. That is, the IWW believes that getting votes and winning office is not a fundamental goal.
A Week Of Commemoration For The Triangle Factory Fire

By Tom Keough

In the month of March, IWW members commemorated the 100th anniversary of the terrible Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire. Nobody has forgotten how the bourgeoisie was allowed to treat their employees so badly that 146 people were killed and the labor movement of that time. These events were organized and sponsored by dozens of unions, Jewish organizations, women’s groups, schools, musicians, Italian-American and Asian-American organizations, church groups, as well as many others.

Wobblies participated in several of these events. Wobblies from New York and branches of the IWW attended a re-organized evening forum at the Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT) on March 23. Entrance tickets were sold, and attendees walked by cardboards showing pictures of the fire and of the victims. Eight feet tall with cardboard women on fire leaping to their deaths—a very difficult image to forget. The entire FIT community—students, staff and administration—worked skillfully to remember this profit-driven horror in “our industry.”

The IWW Constitution preamble states, “We are the Industrial Workers of the World because we organize industrially—only by an organization formed in such a way that all its members in any one industry, or across an industry, can work whenever a strike or lockout is on in that industry, or all industries if necessary, cease work, in our industries and in our communities both to win better conditions and for the betterment of mankind.”

The IWW is a union for all workers, a union dedicated to organizing on the job, in our industries and in our communities both to win better conditions today and to build a world without bosses, a world in which production and distribution are organized by workers themselves to meet the needs of the entire population. The IWW is the only union that was organized and run by workers who were fired from the garment industry for organizing and for fighting for better conditions.

The working class and the employing class have nothing in common. There can be no peace so long as hunger and want reign in the land. The working class must inscribe on our banner the revolution and reconstruction we must achieve. We are the working class. We must organize ourselves into trade unions by opening industrially. The trades unions aid the employees to be pitted against another set of employers (a rich capitalist) and thus make the trade unions unable to organize as a class, take possession of the means of production, abolish the wage system, and live in common with their employers.

Moreover, the trade unions aid the employees so badly that 146 people were killed in the Triangle Factory Fire. Nobody has forgotten how the Triangle fire essentially has a Triangle Fire every year. The IWW is a union of all the staff at FIT. All employees so badly that 146 people were killed in the Triangle Factory Fire. Nobody has forgotten how the Triangle fire essentially has a Triangle Fire every year.

Join the IWW Today

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

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

I agree to abide by the IWW constitution.

I will work whenever a strike or lockout is on in the industry or across an industry.

I agree to the IWW money order for initiation and your first month’s dues to: IWW, Post Office Box 180055, Chicago, IL 60618, USA.

Initiation is the same as one month’s dues. Our dues are calculated according to our income, as follows: Under $2000, dues are $9 a month. If your monthly income is between $2000 and $3500, dues are $18 a month. If your monthly income is over $3500 a month, dues are $27 a month.

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Phone:
Email:
Amount Enclosed:

Membership includes a subscription to the Industrial Worker.

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Email:

Amount Enclosed:
Their Interests And Ours
By Scott Nappalos

“The employers interests are our inter-
ests. We are all in a circle with the patients
in the center,” a union president told us at
the first meeting of nurses in my moribund
hospital local. The union administrator
had been sent out from state to develop
a labor-management partnership com-
mittee and try to create a collaborative
relationship between the hospital and the
unions. At my workplace, management routinely
reminds aging workers they would fire a
third of them if they could to achieve a
“change in culture.”

The union administrator wanted us to
develop programs that would cut costs for
management and help our working condi-
tions. After exploring op-
tions management would not accept and ones
that would not help us, I half-
 jokingly suggested we fire
all the managers and run
the units ourselves.

A veteran nurse who
usually is a union rep-told us a story. A hurricane swept into our state.
All the hospitals initiated their emergency
plans. At her hospital, the director of nurs-
ing ordered everyone to go home in the
middle of the storm because she wanted
to save money, and was hoping it would be a
small storm.

The workers disobeyed and carried out
their own plan to run the hospital without
management on board. They successfully
cared for the patients in a disaster situa-
tion. No one was disciplined for refusing
to go home.

Health care is special in that we need
the services it provides. In a sense we all
have common interests in keeping
it running. At the same time having a
compromise between the two worlds.

The workers rejected it with a vengeance and
were-earthed designs. At best,
the health care system,
but emphasize discipline,
subservience and utilize
heavy threats. At the same time our coworkers
were not inherently opposed to the idea of
a partnership. We care about the patients
we see the night that they have some way of
moving forward. The union leadership had
to pitch the idea. The workers rejected it
but did not spontaneouls propose class
struggle as an alternative, or any alterna-
tive for that matter. This dynamic, being
part of our experience in work.

Workers are torn between two worlds—the
ideas and practices of the dominating
classes and our own—stunted and held
back by the constant reproduction of class
relationships all around us. As organizers,
it is our job to show that process out and
contribute to build the struggles that can
rupture that teeter-totter and facilitate
organizing drives.

My coworkers at the meeting instinc-
tively resisted the administrator’s attempts
to sell partnership. Every day we face the
humanizing behavior and a factory model
of lean production that turns our caring
labor for others into a mechanized form of
assembly labor. Our bosses routinely tell
us they want to eliminate us, and would
see us on the streets if they could. They
do not put forward any concept of working
together for the patient—instead their po-
sition is that we are the problem. Manage-
rial organization is directed at solving
the problem posed by work-
ners unwilling and unable
to conform to their engi-
nereed designs. At best,
they offer us apologies for
the health care system,
but emphasize discipline,
subservience and utilize
heavy threats.

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were not inherently opposed to the idea of
a partnership. We care about the patients
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Hey Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker: You Can’t Hide!

By Chris Garlock

"Wherever Scott Walker goes, he needs to know that we’re going to be there waiting for him," said International Federation of Professional & Technical Engineers (IFPTE) President Greg Junemann at a demonstration in Washington, D.C., against the controversial Wisconsin governor. Walker testified at the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee hearing on April 14.

Outside, two dozen demonstrators chant, “Hey, Walker, you can’t hide, we can see your corporate side” and “Tax Wall Street, not Main Street,” drawing interest from passing tourists and a speedy response from Capitol Police. Police threatened arrests and dispersed the “unpermitted demonstration” organized by National Nurses United.

Ann Louise Tetrault, a nurse from Wisconsin, was booted from her seat in the hearing by a Republican committee staffer before the hearing began, and reporter Chris Garlock of the Metro Washington AFL-CIO was ejected from the hearing entirely.

"The people of Wisconsin did not vote for his agenda," said Junemann, a Wisconsin native. "The House Republicans had planned to use the hearing to give Walker the National Right to Work Committee a national stage to attack workers’ rights, under the guise of fixing broken state budgets. More than half the Republican committee members are recipients of funds from the anti-union Koch brothers, big donors to Walker."

The plan backfired when Walker found himself the subject of tough questioning from Democratic committee members. Rep. Mark Pocan, D-Wis., and Rep. Keith Ellison, D-Minn., asked Ohio focused Walker to admit that several anti-union provision in his controversial "budget repair bill" had nothing to do with balancing the state’s budget. Rep. Elijah Cummings of Maryland slammed politicians’ efforts to use the economic downturn to "strip American workers of their rights" as "shameful."

And despite Walker’s best efforts to dodge difficult questions, he finally had to admit to Rep. Gerry Connolly of Virginia that he’d never brought up repealing collective bargaining rights during the previous round of collective bargaining between the union members. "This is not an oxymoron," Connolly responded.

"We are asking for the repeal of provisions in the budget repair bill that strip us of our right to bargain collectively," said Pocan. "We are asking for the repeal of provisions that make the middle class pay for Walker’s tax cuts for the wealthy."

"We’re asking for the repeal of provisions in the budget repair bill that block us from making shared sacrifice and shared savings," said Ellison. "We’re asking for the repeal of provisions that take away our rights for a fair contract."

"We’re asking for the repeal of provisions that pay for Walker’s tax cuts for the wealthy and his tax breaks for big donors to Walker."

"We’re asking for the repeal of provisions that took some of the dedicated funding for schools out of the state budget," said Pocan. "We’re asking for the repeal of provisions that take away our rights for our health care."

"We’re asking for the repeal of provisions that put part-time, contract teachers in our schools," said Ellison. "We’re asking for the repeal of provisions that raise the funding for our schools and social services must be safeguarded before one cent of interest is paid to the banks and wealthy bond investors." Which has priority, they asked: profits for the wealthy, or our children’s future?"

"Which has priority, they asked: profits for banks."

Protesters took turns at the bullhorn, demanding that workers’ jobs, pensions, schools and social services must be safeguarded before one cent of interest is paid to the banks and wealthy bond investors.

"As a line of trucks waited in vain for the workers to unload the cargo, the initiative to strike and not upload the posts was spearheaded by the rank-and-file union members. The demonstration was part of nationwide labor demonstrations to protest anti-union measures against public employees in several states as well as to commemorate the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., who was killed while supporting striking sanitation workers in Memphis, Tenn., also, in Oakland, approximately 100 teachers and school assistants came out to protest Wells Fargo Bank. The teachers chanted “bail out schools, not the banks.”

The actions of the IWW in Australia in the early part of the 20th century still shape the face of unionism in the country. Before the IWW, Australian unionism, despite its many good points, had a huge downside—it was for advancing the interests of the rich rather than the many. Of course, there were good people who knew that the worker deserved better. The arrival of IWW ideology in Australia helped to organize these people into a radical force, leading to the formation of the IWW Australian Regional Organizing Committee (ROC) in 1907.

The legacy of the IWW in Australia is hugely important, as the IWW was the first union—or for that matter, group—in Australia to call for an end to racism, the right of free speech, equal rights for women and many other policies that are now part and parcel of mainstream union policy in Australia. We should note that while there sure is still a distance to travel, much of what the IWW called for back in the 1910s and 1920s is largely in place today.

Australian IWW members of the past are particularly famous for their vocal and outspoken opposition to conscription. They can be said to have led this successful struggle to stop poor workers from being sent overseas to fight other poor workers who were defending their homelands while the wealthy on both sides just got richer.

The IWW continues to occupy a mythological place in Australian union history as the militant social justice avant-garde of the Australian labor movement. It is to the memory of fellow Workers past that Australian Wobbly Monty Miller, confusing him to a filthy cell, despite Monty being in his mid-80s.

The good news is that the Australian government lost a second push to introduce conscription after they had locked up all the leading Wobbly leaders— an indication of how much the Wobblies had influenced the conscription debate and other social justice matters in the broader community. So, despite the Australian government’s attempts to run out of town the Australian Wobbly tonight on against injustices in their country. The IWW Local 10 demonstrates on April 4.

Corrections To The Correction

By the Industrial Worker

In the “Correction: The Real Matilda Rabinowitz,” which appeared on page 5 of the April 2011 issue of the Industrial Worker (IW), we mistakenly said that Matilda’s grandson is, in fact, Matilda’s grandson. The IW apologizes greatly for this error.
May Day Special

Celebrating May Day Throughout The World:

By Autumn Gonzalez and Nicholas DeFillipis

May Day has its origins in the long, ferocious struggle for an eight-hour work day. The concept of a celebratory work stoppage to achieve this goal started in Australia on April 21, 1856. Although the Australian workers originally planned this to be a one-time event, annual proletarian celebrations gained popularity in Australia and quickly caught on across the globe. May Day as we know it burst on to the labor and political scene in 1889 when the Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Unions (which became the American Federation of Labor) passed a resolution proclaiming that eight hours would constitute a legal work day after May 1, 1886. The resolution called for a general strike to achieve this goal, gaining the support of over 250,000 workers by April 1886.

On May 1, 1886, more than 300,000 workers across the United States walked off their jobs. In Chicago alone, 40,000 workers struck. The struggle continued beyond May 1, with the number of strikers in Chicago swelling to 100,000 by May 3. This culminated in police repression of the strike, causing clashes between workers and cops that led to the Haymarket Massacre. In 1889, the International Workers’ Congress, attended by 400 delegations from across the world, called for May Day as a day of international demonstrations for an eight-hour work day. It was a huge success, and workers in the United States, most of Europe, Chile, Peru and Cuba took to the streets. The next year, Brazil, Ireland and Russia celebrated their first May Day. In 1905, Mexican, Costa Rican and Ecuadorian workers held their first May Day celebrations, followed by Chinese workers in 1909 and Indian workers in 1927.

Since its inception in 1905, the IWW has been the most vocal at celebrating May Day. "May Day is a time to honor the struggles of workers in the past, present and future," says John Hall. The IWW holds a May Day rally every year at the San Francisco International Airport. "It’s a time to celebrate the free expression of our voices," adds Carol Mader. The IWW also holds a May Day parade every year in San Francisco, which draws thousands of people.

On May 1, 1886, more than 250,000 workers across the United States walked off their jobs. This was the first of many May Day protests that have taken place in the United States. The protest was in response to the long workdays and low wages that workers were forced to endure. The protest was a success, and it became the beginning of the modern labor movement.

May Day has since become a day of commemorations and celebrations around the world. In Italy, May Day is celebrated with a parade through the streets of Rome, while in South Africa, May Day is celebrated with a march through the streets of Johannesburg. In Sweden, May Day is celebrated with a huge festival in Stockholm.

May Day is a day of solidarity and resistance. It is a day to remember the struggles of workers past and present, and to continue the fight for a better future. May Day is a day to celebrate the power of the working class, and to remember that together, we can make a better world.
A Look Back And A Look Ahead

Continued from previous page

Although the bill managed to pass in the House, it had the unintended effect of mobilizing immigrant communities and allies around the nation, centered around the actions on May 1. The call for a day-long boycott and strike was heeded by Latinos, with major marches bringing as many as 100,000 people into the streets in many major cities. The huge turnout brought much-deserved attention to the issue of immigrant rights, sparking national debate on immigration policy, reform and racism. The push for a border fence and criminalization of undocumented immigrants was defeated for a time, as workers, immigrants, students, churches, unions and entire communities raised their voices and withheld their work in protest on May Day.

As the Iraq War has continued on, the International Longshore Workers Union (ILWU) used May Day 2008 to show solidarity with both the people of Iraq and with the working-class youth of the military. The ILWU, much like the IWW, has a long tradition of standing up against unjust wars and taking aggressive direct action to further their goals; the ILWU helped organize the group Labor for Peace, and during the 1930s, ILWU members blocked shipment of supplies to fascist movements in Europe and Asia. In that spirit of solidarity and action, on May 1, 2008, the union shut down West Coast ports to protest the war. Iraqi port workers, also union members, shut down their port for an hour in concert with the action and sent a message of solidarity to their brothers and sisters in the ILWU.

May Day protests in 2010 centered around the House of Representatives and action on Bill 1070 and other anti-immigrant legislation. Similarly, in 2006, thousands marched in cities around the United States, coming together against bills that target Latino and immigrant communities.

On May Day 2010, the Unified Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) launched a general strike that lasted for six days, involving upwards of 600,000 workers. The strikers demanded the resignation of the prime minister, who was widely viewed as a puppet of the expansionist Indian government to Nepal’s south. Seventy-thousand strikers surrounded the national capital of Kathmandu on May 4. Pro-government groups and the police clashed with the Maoist strikers, but overall it was a peaceful strike. Although the strike was eventually called off and did not lead to the resignation of the prime minister, it was a great advancement for the anti-capitalist struggle in Nepal.

During the infamous Greek May Day of 2010, hyped by trade unions, left-wing political parties and anarchists, at least 20,000 people marched through Athens to combat the unpopular austerity measures of tax increases, wage cuts and pension reductions demanded by the European Union in exchange for a bailout of the economically-troubled Greek state. Chants of “Hands off our rights, IMF and EU Commission out!” echoed throughout Greece as protesters clashed with police, smashed windows and started fires in fits of justifiable indignation.

Clearly, recent events in Wisconsin and Ohio, and the assault on collective bargaining rights for employees everywhere, are on our minds this May Day. Workers, students, small business owners and members of the community have marched into the streets and reclaimed the public space of their state houses. We have all been reminded that, yes, there is the possibility for large-scale protest and dissent in this country. Workers everywhere have watched people rise up in Egypt and throughout the Middle East, against insurmountable odds and at great personal risk. The world has seen first-hand the power of a people’s action to topple even the most entrenched regimes. The movement toward a better world begins with small steps. When we talk openly about current struggles internationally and at home, we can educate each other on the power of workplace and community solidarity, and organize for action!

May Day Mix Tape
By Jon Hochschartner

They say familiarity breeds contempt. That’s certainly how I feel about the protest songs of the Woodstock generation. So in honor of May Day, the international workers’ holiday, I’d like to present 10 of the best protest songs from my lifetime.

10. “Fight the Power” by Public Enemy — There’s probably never been a more obnoxiously shameful sellout than Flavor Flav, but Public Enemy’s influence is undeniable. So they’re here.

9. “The New World Order” by Defiance, Ohio — Despite a misleading title, which often relates to right-wing conspiracy theory, this is a joyful lampooning of the myth of American exceptionalism.

8. “When the President Talks to God” by Bright Eyes — You can hear so much of the collective frustration with Bush’s fundamentalist arrogance distilled in Conor Oberst’s voice.

7. “Changes” by 2pac — Less than 15 years ago, Tupac Shakur declared the obvious: “We ain’t ready to see a black president.” Yet I hardly think the election of Barack Obama would mollify him. Indeed, were Shakur to release the song today, its famous opening would no doubt stay the same: “I see no changes!”

6. “Take the Power Back” by Rage Against the Machine — If Howard Zinn could rap, he might sound a little like this. Here, RATM takes on cultural bias in mainstream accounts of history. Zack de la Rocha rhymes: “The present curriculum, I put my fist in them / Eurocentric, every last one of them!"

5. “Fuck tha Police” by N.W.A — Once upon a time, Ice Cube, now the star of family-friendly fare such as “Are We There Yet?,” was thought a grave threat by white America. Here, in what was a harbinger of justifiable indignation.

4. “Keep Ya Head Up” by 2pac — Shakur was not great feminist, and perhaps that’s what made this song more necessary, more moving. He takes on sexism, domestic violence, and reproductive rights in what is arguably the rapper’s greatest song, political or otherwise.

May Day Special

Thousands march on the streets in Greece, May Day 2010.

MAYDAY
Greetings from the Workers Solidarity Alliance
For Direct Action and Self-Management, ORGANIZE!

www.workerssolidarity.org

Photo: cedarlounge.wordpress.com

Photo: thejosevilson.com
Micah Buckley-Farlee was born with a severe medical condition that results in the spontaneous partial collapse of his lungs. On a Saturday night last year, while working his shift at a Minneapolis Jimmy John’s, Buckley-Farlee began suffering severe chest pains.

“I went to my manager and said, ‘Hey, I need to go to the hospital, I think my lung is collapsing,’” Buckley-Farlee said.

His manager’s response: Find someone to work out the remainder of the shift or you’re fired.

Fortunately for Buckley-Farlee, one of his co-workers was willing to work on short notice that night. But several current and former workers at area franchises say the incident raises concerns about the health of Jimmy John’s workers—and the safety of the sandwiches they’re paid to make.

“Workers are disciplined for calling in sick,” said David Boehnke, who was fired from his job at a downtown Minneapolis Jimmy John’s after raising concerns about employees working while sick. “The new attendance policy mandates discipline for workers who call in sick or can’t find substitutes.”

Boehnke, who is active in the upstart IWW Jimmy-Johns Workers Union, joined 30 other workers and supporters in raising awareness of the franchise’s sick-days policy—or lack thereof—on March 31 by playfully “quarantining” a Jimmy John’s store in Cedar-Riverside with a picket line.

Six Jimmy John’s Workers Fired For Whistleblowing

Continued from 1

The supporters included representatives of two statewide unions that represent workers in the health care field, the Minnesota Nurses Association (MNA) and SEIU Healthcare Minnesota. “Because I work union and because I have a contract, I can call in sick. There are no consequences for me to do that,” said Barb Martin, a nurse at Fairview University Hospital. “I’m here today on behalf of the MNA to support the workers at Jimmy John’s who are trying to gain the right to call in sick when they are sick. “I really don’t want you making me a sandwich when you have the flu or strep throat.”

But according to Boehnke, that’s exactly what he did for three days straight during a bout of strep throat last year.

“We’re making minimum wage, and that just means we can’t afford to not be at work and make the money we need to pay our bills, pay for our kids, pay for our livelihoods,” Boehnke said.

Kent Wilcox, a vice president of SEIU Healthcare Minnesota and an employee in a St. Paul hospital, called out Jimmy John’s for putting profits before product safety.

“When I heard Jimmy John’s corporate leadership was forcing people to work sick, I knew I had to be here,” Wilcox said. “Unfortunately, I was not surprised that another corporation is putting their dirty greed ahead of their customers’ and their employees’ health, safety and welfare.”

Workers at the 10 Jimmy John’s franchises owned by Mike and Rob Muligan took part in an organizing election last year, but the results were tainted by employer interference, according to a ruling of the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), which nullified the election results.

While they re-organized support for another election campaign, Jimmy John’s Workers Union supporters focused on the issue of working sick—distributing fliers to patrons warning them of the franchise’s policy of punishing workers for calling in sick.

That activity got six workers fired in March, although the union has filed charges with the NLRB to get the workers reinstated.

This story originally appeared on April 7, 2011 in Workday Minnesota. It was reprinted in accordance with Workday Minnesota’s non-commercial use policy.
When Azulai refused to reinstate Bauer, "I will stick with it until the bitter end. IWW operates, that when we start a campaign we stick with it until the bitter end. Gross and comrade Daniel Gross, via a phone call. During this same phone conversation Azulai told Fellow Worker Gross that "this will all blow over, it always does." Gross informed Azulai that that's not how the IWW operates, that when we start a campaign we stick with it until the bitter end. When Azulai refused to reinstate Bauer, Gross helped Bauer file an Unfair Labor Practice (ULP) complaint with the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB). At the same time, the NYC IWW launched an aggressive campaign of direct action that ranged from union-wide phone and email zaps to increasingly more spirited pickets and demonstrations in front of the store.

Six months later, on Dec. 23, 2010, Region 29 of the NLRB found merit with Bauer's claims and issued a complaint against Ozzie's Coffee & Tea. A hearing date was set to take place on Feb. 8, 2011, in front of an administrative law judge. This was later postponed due to the beginning of heated settlement talks between Azulai's lawyer, Eric M. Bann, and Bauer's legal representation, Benjamin N. Dickson and Quisquella Addison, legal interns from the Labor and Employment Law Clinic of the Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law. After a boisterous “punk percussion protest” involving whistles, pots and pans, noise-makers and the radical marching band Rude Mechanical Orchestra, Ozzie's Coffee & Tea finally caved to increasingly militant union pressure and rising legal fees. In mid-March, Ozzie's signed a settlement in Bauer's favor, worth $15,500.

"The right to form a labor union is fundamental; campaign victories like Jeff's are critical to making that right real. This win is a great testament to the power of creative and determined worker-led campaigns," said Gross.

"FW Bauer's victory is a great inspiration to every Wobbly barista out there. He has been a driving force of solidarity behind the Starbucks Workers Union for many years. He has stood with us, so we stood with him. That is solidarity unionism." The SWU toasts his hard-fought victory," added NYC IWW member Liberte Locke. According to the terms of the NLRB settlement, Bauer is to be made whole for all lost wages, estimated tips and overtime pay in the amount of $15,400 by May 29, 2011, nearly a year after he was fired for organizing. An additional $300 is attached to a side agreement. Ozzie's co-owners Melissa and Alon Azulai have agreed to pay Bauer in three monthly installments. In addition to making Bauer whole for lost wages, management is required by the NLRB to conspicuously display a notice stating that they "will not discharge, issue warnings to, reduce the work hours of, or otherwise discriminate against, any employee for engaging in activities on behalf of Industrial Workers of the World, or any other labor organizations, or for engaging in protected concerted activities."

"Ozzie's violated my legally protected right to join, form or assist a union," Bauer said. "They harassed me, retaliated against me, reduced my hours, demoted me and terminated me for engaging in protected concerted activity."

"I'm happy that this is almost all behind me. I can move on knowing that at least one boss will think twice before interfering with a worker's right to organize for respect and dignity on the job and for a safe, non-hostile work environment," he added.

Bauer is now employed as a proud, dual union card-carrying janitor at the College of Staten Island, and is a Wobbly for life.

For more information, visit http://www.wobblycity.org.

Fired Union Barista Achieves Victory In Brooklyn

A May Day greeting to all of our brothers and sisters in the building trades. To all those who work every day and build our communities we send greetings. To all those who labor for their families to their own detriment we offer an additional hand to ease the load. To all those who work eight to ten hours a day working tall in sweat we offer a sympathetic ear and shoulder. To all those who struggle in darkness we offer the light of the One Big Union and Industrial Democracy. To those who would deny us our rights we offer a warning. May the poor take courage and the rich take care. Our day will come.

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Solidarity Forever: A History of WW Musicians

By John Pietaro

Of all U.S. radical organizations, the IWW is perhaps that which has most fully realized the notion of the revolutionary cultural worker. Many of its early organizers were writers, musicians or visual artists (often simultaneously) who successfully used the arts as a tool in organizing workers across the globe. The Left’s focus on folk arts as a representation of cultural nationalism has been a foremost tool in outreach since the turn of the 20th century. This fusion into a “culture of the people” became a major point of identification by the proponents of the masses and was the natural outgrowth of the use of songs by workers and others in trying situations. Folk song collectors grew in prominence during the first decades of the 20th century, producing a “folk revival,” which had blossomed by the 1940s. Ironically, in the United States, the political Left (primarily the Socialist and Communist parties) did not acknowledge the important role folk arts for decades, though this cultural reservoir has once again become a focal point of reference. This is particularly true in the IWW.

Accounts of Wobbly musicians have been recorded as early as 1906, just one year after the IWW’s founding. The Spoken Word branch was approached by highly active Socialist Party orator/organizer Jack Walsh, who developed a plan to aid the Wobblies’ somewhat structured organizing attempts. Though Walsh was able to create a considerable crowd in the depressed tenement district of the city, he was encountered paroquial disrup-
tions by the missionaries of the Salvation Army and one of their particularly pious brass bands. Not to be outdone by the saccharine, Walsh and the Spokesfolk Wobblies soon had its own powerhouse Industrial Workers Band. Blaring on cornets and marching to the thunder-
ous pulse of drums and tambourines, the Wobbly band were said to have devastated all pious brass bands. As the band’s popularity grew, Walsh and the Spokesfolk Wobblies had a freedom...
From The Working Class Workers Band To Utah Phillips

Continued from previous page of a “wharf rat,” the first accounts of his cultural work date back to 1906. Hill was then living in San Francisco and chronicled The Great Earthquake for his hometown paper. Later, living in New York, he worked as a reporter by day and played piano in downtown saloons by night. But much more to the point:

Wobbly Arts

Photo: marxists.org

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While Joe Hill continues to put a
Lessons From Latin American Social Movements

Dangl, Benjamin. Dancing With Dyna-

By John Maclean

Benjamin Dangl introduces his "Danc-
ing With Dynami: Social Movements And
site: Lessons From Latin America" with some words from Pedro Cabellero, a Paraguayan worker activist: “No one listens to us, so we have to take matters into our own hands. The legal route isn’t working, so we have to take up our own legal route, which does work.” This is sound advice for people in the United States too, a land in which the rule of law is often not well-adapted to peace activists; closing off traditional avenues to change, and allowing legal remedies, to undertake developments in the real world. Dangl writes that in situations like this, “survival trumps the law,” the state becomes “irrelevant,” and what we need is to move together, daring to go beyond the boundary.

He begins with chapters on Bolivia and Ecuador, both countries in the South America with the most progressive movements. In Bolivia, the Movement Toward Socialism (MAS) broke through out of the traditional left, and in Ecuador, Pachakutik was founded for political coalition-building out of the Confederation of Indigenous Nations of Ecuador (CONAIE). In both situations, constitutions were re-written, but only piecemeal. Not so that workers or elements could participate in the draft. In Bolivia, some commentators, who came through the resource wars, say MAS attempted to domesticate hard-won movement “capacities,” and in Ecuador, political leaders, on securing office, “sought alliances with the country’s elite” and reverted to a pattern of “cooption and repression” with their indigenous-supporters. In both lands, a local reliance on destructive extractive resource technologies, and predatory foreign corporations, are a direct threat to communities.

In 2001, a precipitous economic decline in Argentina saw people banding together to “create a new society out of the wreckage of the old.” As things worsened, the unemployed began to block streets, a desperate gambit for having their grievances heard. And the state, eager to transform “protest into politics,” many of whom are “mobilized” and other self-organized initiatives throughout Argentina.

During the 2010 electoral breakthrough of the Frente Amplio (PAI), as President Jose Mujica sang ‘folk songs outlawed during military rule’ with a jubilant crowd. And Eduardo Galeano commented that it was a time of “celebration but also of compromise.” The FA got together in the city of Montevideo, and how when it ended in 2010, people, fighting against destructive mining practices in the interior. In the mid-1980s, with the passing of the Brazilians into a “return to class separation” and the “logic of the state and political parties” was left to work its magic. Some found the election and election to be more comforting than the “day-to-day creative initiatives of assembly, the piqueteros, the occupied centers and factories, indigenous communities, and other self-organized initiatives throughout Argentina.”

There is much in this book for people in the United States to heed. The final chapter of “Dancing With Dynami” contains an overview of recent struggles in the United States; the author writes of the window to Put your vote to work, one natural medicine factory, 1,600 government-recognized settlements, numerous health clinics, 1,800 primary care centers, 130 schools, 200,000 students, and a literacy program in which 30,000 adults participate.

During the election of former Catholic bishop Fernando Lugo in 2008, remains a company state for the US, which is based on black-market cocaine traffickers, and transnational corporations. The monstrous legacies of the election are now being raised, in which 30,000,000 people, and a river. The area is populated by the displaced of Paraguay, and has “risen up to manage its own destiny, pressure the government for funding and support, fight poverty, and build community from the ground up.” Dangl attended a meeting of the Community Defense (CODECO) in which the neighborhood associations participated, and as he later walked through the area he saw “small aqueducts, sewers, and bridges, and the urban gardens, and livelihood, how the people realigned all this from the river, with no help from a state which only dominates and attacks.

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How Corporate PR Is Killing Health Care


By John Maclean

Wendell Potter begins his book, Deadly Spin: An Insurance Company Insider Speaks Out on How Corporate PR Is Killing Health Care And Deceiving Americans, by recognizing the 43,000 people who die every year in the United States because they lack health insurance. To the many who mistakenly believe that the United States is the most prosperous nation in the world, or that Obama is spearheading a government takeover of our health, he can only remind us that he did his job well in support of industry profits. Potter writes that “the dark arts of PR” can turn a criminal into the benefactor of humanity. He says that the Obama administration was “played like a Stradivarius” by Karen Ignani of American Health Insurance Plans (AHIP), who rose to her position after a stint with the AFL-CIO in the 1990s. The first part of the AHIP strategy is the “charm offensive,” which positions the industry publicly as a good faith reform partner, while the second undertakes a covert campaign of fear mongering, lies, and misinformation, with the intent of “killing any reform that might hinder profits.” Wendell Potter knows all this because he helped to put the strategy together during his 20 years of service to the health insurance cartel.

Potter surveys some early, and more, recent, PR efforts from U.S. history. In 1938, Lee, considered one of the originators of “crisis management,” worked with coal operators throughout the early 1900s, and was taken on by John D. Rockefeller, Jr. in the aftermath of the Ludlow massacre. One of his recommendations to Rockefeller was to walk around with a pocket full of dimes, and be seen giving them out to children. Edward Bernays worked with George M. Cohan, who died every year, in the United States, and condemned “the reactionary selfish social interests and their PR accomplices, and their failures, health insurance companies called Coalition for Affordable Quality Health care.” Potter claims that this record describes as a ploy “for pushing risks, and costs, formerly borne by institutions onto customers,” and their CEOs embarked on per- formance tests of Wall Street, finding ways to “point the finger of blame at their cus-

Potter writes that in the United States we “forfeited” the advancement of our healthcare system, and essentially left it to profiteers. The longstanding strategies employed to scuttle serious reform efforts can be seen clearly in the American Medi-

Potter claims that this record provided the talking points for future fear-based campaigns against the United States even the likes of Sarah Palin quoting from the disc. The pattern of thoughtful, practi-

Potter refers himself as having had a spiritual experi-

Potter cites an author as saying—sadly out there, and always be charming. Finally,

Potter asserts the efforts of the Institute for Propaganda Analysis (IPA), between 1937 and 1942, and the threat to democracy it saw in the face of a growing PR industry and other forms of domestic propaganda. The organiza-

In 2007, while visiting his boyhood home in Tennessee, Potter found in nearby Dickson, a town that the United States had joined the third world. Remote Area Medical (RAM), founded by Stan Brock of the Animal-Wildlife-Wildlife, was conducting its eighth annual medical expedition to this isolated border area.

In 1988, the American Medical Association (AMA) founded its anti-trust powers to combat the trend. The organiza-

While going to live and who’s going to die.”

The insure CIGNA. Hilda Sarkisyan, the young woman’s mother, has made it her profession to educate people. But is the insurance cartel, believing that it “allows insurance compa-

For Potter, cigarette companies are central to all of this, particularly Philip Morris (PM). President Obama, who has warned that it makes the Food and Drug Administration a “de-facto research and development department for cigarette manufacturers.” This product kills more than 430,000 people a year. Henceforth ERISA has preempted state law, and is “used as a weapon” to prevent states from implementing Medicare for All before the private health care. The health insurers and other companies are opposed to changes in this law, and some of the health insurers have created a front group, the National Coalition on Benefits, to beat back states’ efforts. Remote Area Medical (RAM), founded by Stan Brock of the Animal-Wildlife-Wildlife, was conducting its eighth annual medical expedition to this isolated border area.

The pattern of thoughtful, practical efforts to put together fake surveys; and

Once again the use of “doublespeak” to sign on; write letters and opinion pieces, create a front group, and get third parties to sign into law the Patient Protection and Af-

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The pattern of thoughtful, practical efforts to put together fake surveys; and
THE TIME TO ACT HAS COME

OUR WORLD is in the midst of a Great Awakening unlike anything we’ve seen here in many years. The beast that is Organized Labor is under attack and workers are fighting back. Help us take this opportunity by the horns; donate to IWW organizing in Wisconsin, Iowa, Ohio, Indiana, Tennessee, Nebraska, Michigan, New Hampshire, Colorado, Idaho, Tennessee and all other places effected by capitalism-in-crisis austerity measures against working people.

“Abolish the Wages System”

GENERAL STRIKE

Industrial Workers of the World

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International Labor Struggles
A Look At Three Figures From The IWW In South Africa

Andrew Dunbar (1879-1964)

Andrew Dunbar was general-secretary of the IWW in Johannesburg, established in June 1910. A fiery Scots immigrant who arrived in 1906, he worked in the Natal railways as a blacksmith, leading a mass strike in 1909. This cost him his job, and he went to work on the Johannesburg tramways. These were the IWW’s stronghold, with a powerful presence amongst the white workers, and led to big strikes in 1911. In 1912, Dunbar was ousted from the IWW, which faded away soon afterwards.

In 1914, he was in the War on War League, which set up the revolutionary syndicalist International Socialist League (ISL) in September the next year. The ISL campaigned for One Big Union, and fought against the oppressive laws applied to African workers, the majority of the working class, including indenture, pass controls, housing in closed barracks, etc. It also opposed the discrimination being applied against Indians and other minorities.

In June 1917, Dunbar was part of an ISL team running study groups in a downtown Johannesburg amongst African workers, advocating civil disobedience and One Big Union against African oppression and capitalism. This led to the Industrial Workers of Africa, an African union modeled on the IWW. As interest in the Russian Revolution rose, Dunbar and others formed Africa’s first Communist Party in October 1919—on a basically syndicalist platform; he was general-secretary. In 1921, this merged into the official Communist Party of South Africa (CPSA), but Dunbar headed a syndicalist faction. Later expelled from the CPSA, he faded into anonymity.

Thibedi William Thibedi (1888-1960)

The son of a Wesleyan minister, Thibedi William Thibedi was one of the most important African syndicalists in 1910s South Africa. Hailing from the small town of Vereeniging, he trained as a school teacher and worked at a church school in Johannesburg. Around 1916, he joined the ISL and became its first major African leader.

In September 1917, Thibedi was involved in organizing an ISL-sponsored conference that led to the formation of a “Solidarity Committee,” intended to reform the orthodox trade unions. These generally excluded people of color (except in Cape Town), tended toward craft unionism, and were prone to binding no-strike agreements. Thibedi served on the Committee—which was not however a success.

In 1918, Thibedi was involved in the Industrial Workers of Africa in Johannesburg, arguing for One Big Union, united on class lines across the races; and mass action. Along with other figures in the union, he also promoted these views in the leftwing of the African nationalist South African Native National Congress (SANNC). When a failed general strike in July 1918 led to a crackdown on the ISL, industrial Workers of Africa and SANNC, it fell to Thibedi to revive the union in Johannesburg. The union drew its members from across the African working class, and was a more general membership branch than an industrial body.

Thibedi put his syndicalist background to work when he ran the party’s night school in Johannesburg, and became a full-time organizer and unionist. When the CPSA expelled him in 1929, the communist-led Federation of Non-European Trade Unions forced his reinstatement; he was expelled again in 1931. Later, Thibedi flirted with Trotskyism before drifting away into anonymity.

Bernard Lazarus Emanuel Sigamoney (1888-1965)

Bernard Lazarus Emanuel Sigamoney was the grandson of indentured Indian farm laborers, Pariah Christians, who arrived in South Africa in 1877. His family managed to secure him an education, and he worked as a teacher at a church school in Johannesburg, and became a full-time teacher at Estcourt Indian High School and then St. Aidans’ Boys’ School.

During World War I, Sigamoney became increasingly involved in politics, addressing public meetings on the growing food shortages in Durban. He soon encountered the local ISL, which founded an Indian Workers’ Industrial Union on IWW lines in March 1917. Sigamoney joined the ISL, and was the union’s first secretary. The union claimed members among Durban’s large Indian population, notably on the docks, in garment work and laundries, painting, hotels, catering and tobacco workers. There were efforts to unite it with the Industrial Workers of Africa. Meanwhile, Sigamoney and other ISL figures supported the independent Tobacco Workers’ Union, and its big strike in October 1920, and the 1921 strike of Indian furniture workers.

Sigamoney did not join the CPSA. Instead, he left radical politics, going to Britain in December 1922 to study as an Anglican pastor, and returning to work for St. Anthony’s Indian Mission in Johannesburg in 1927. He was viewed as a麻烦 maker by the authorities, partly because he associated with the Industrial and Commercial Workers Union, a union influenced by both the IWW and Marcus Garvey, as well as the SANNC. Sigamoney’s remaining years were focused on work in the church, in promoting Indian sport, and in promoting the civil rights of people of color.

Conclusion

The multiracial IWW tradition in South Africa threw up some remarkable militants. These three men—one white, one African, one Indian—exemplified the high moral character and dedication it evoked, and its staunch and unwavering opposition to the country’s barbaric racial capitalism.
May Day: A Celebration Of International Solidarity

By Matt Antos

I’m really not a protest person, mostly due to a mild phobia of large crowds and new people. Since becoming active in left-wing struggles in 2007, I’ve been to around four rallies or marches. With the exception of a rally in protest of the bombing of international development workers and solidarity activists by Israeli commandos on board the Mavi Marmara bound for Gaza last year or only seen to Winnipeg’s annual May Day march.

Is there any other reason why? May Day is International Workers Day, the day that working people themselves decided to honor our struggles and accomplishments from the past year. It’s the day to remember the Haymarket Anarchists who fought for our right to have eight hours of work, eight hours of rest and eight hours of recreation. Most importantly, it is a day to remember and celebrate that we are not alone in this struggle: working people are supporting each other in the same situation, fighting back together, and that our solidarity with them is what binds us.

This is not to say that we have not experienced the amazing experiences of my fellow SICs. I have never tasted sweet pecan pie in South Africa or pulled witness to the daily humiliation of the military occupation in Palestine. Heck, the furthest out of Canada that I’ve ever been is Fargo, North Dakota.

But international solidarity isn’t just about visiting other nations, meeting and learning about people’s lives and loves and struggles. As important as that is, international solidarity is also something you do at home. It’s writing a protest letter or passing a branch motion. It’s tying up the phone lines at Jimmy John’s for a lunch period despite never actually eating there. International solidarity is volunteering to be an ISC liaison in your branch, or just participating because you’re passionate about building solidarity with other nations and unions.

Participating in May Day is an act of international solidarity, in its most genuine and simplest form. It is affirming that between ‘two classes a struggle must go on until the workers of the world organize as a class, take possession of the means of production, abolish the wage system, and live in harmony with the Earth.’ International solidarity is an action anyone can do, and if we are going to be a more just world, everybody should do their part and march in or organize a May Day rally wherever they live.

If you are interested in becoming involved, ISC calls happen third Monday of the month. For more information, email solidarity@iww.org.

IWW Statement Of Solidarity To The Peoples Of Japan And The Freeters Union

By the ISC

Over 20,000 people have died and hundreds of thousands more made homeless as a result of the earthquake and tsunami that devastated Japan on March 11. On top of that, the Japanese are facing a potential nuclear disaster, and radiation leak. As is often the case, working people are on the front line of these disasters and the aftermath, many risking their lives to stave off nuclear catastrophe. The Industrial Workers of the Word stand in solidarity with all of the Japanese people, and our comrades in the Freeters Union in particular. We urge our members to do whatever is needed to support our Japanese fellow workers.

Donate To The Catastrophe Aid and Solidarity Fund for General Freeters Union in Japan

By the FAU-IWA

While the massive destruction wrought by the earthquake and tsunami on March 11, and given the threat of a nuclear disaster caused by the destroyed nuclear power plant in Fukushima I, the FAU-IWA launched a solidarity and aid fund for precarious workers in Japan called the “Freeters Solidarity Fund.” As an anarcho-syndicalist grassroots trade union, our first concern is the many precarious workers (Freeters), who were excluded entirely from the disaster, often forced into appalling working and living conditions. It calls for donations for the relief and solidarity fund whose resources are to be used in close consultation with the “Freeters Zonen Roso,” a self-organized group of precarious workers in Japan.

Donations can be sent to:
FAU, FAU Konto 60122020, Postbank (BLZ 00110 00), unter the codeword “Freeters”.

Every little contribution is welcome as an expression of living class solidarity.

IWW Statement of Support For Friends of the Palestinian Workers Group

By Michael Dranove

By John Kalwaic

Pogroms Follow Killing Of Settler Family

By John Kalwaic

As part of the recent wave of protests in the Middle East, people and rich companies have occurred in the small Gulf nation of Bahrain. What started in Tunisia and Egypt has reached parts of the United States, by the earthquake and tsunami on March 11, Israeli settlers have begun pogroms against Palestinians living near the illegal settlement of Itamar, where the killings took place. Itamar is one of hundreds of illegal settlements located in the occupied West Bank.

Reports of violence against Palestinian increased dramatically following news of the killings. Al Jazeera reports that in the occupied city of Hebron in the West Bank, a Palestinian man was stabbed, a shop was set on fire, two Palestinian girls, ages 5 and 11, were intentionally hit by cars. In the city of Nablus, burning Molotov cocktails were thrown at cars and pedestrians. Two Palestinian children were hospitalized after a group of settlers firebombed a Palestinian home. Israeli soldiers and settlers also uprooted 500 olive trees belonging to Palestinians near Bethlehem.

The pogroms were launched without any proof that any Palestinians were responsible for the killings. Rumors are circulating that Thai workers might be responsible for the killings, with the Palestinian news agency Ma’an reporting that Thai workers had been rounded up by Israeli police for questioning. This has not stopped the Israeli army from rounding up dozens of Palestinians across the West Bank. Israeli soldiers entered the village of Awarta, south of Nablus, at night and arrested 40 men and boys, fingerprinting them and taking their DNA.

The Palestinian territories have been divided into untenable customs by Israeli checkpoints and settlements, which is exactly what the Israeli army has decreed, it’s the day to remember and celebrate that we are not alone in this struggle: working people are supporting each other in the same situation, fighting back together, and that our solidarity with them is what binds us.

The law in Bahrain is explained using thugs as a way to challenge the dictatorship of the Sheik Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa. King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia, who has a majority Shi’a Muslim population, is enabling a Sunni fundamentalist movement. Secretary General of the IWW, who is the only experienced in smaller protests and riots. Persian Gulf states where workers have at least the right to organize and strike. Workers do not have rights in Saudi Arabia, and in the United Arab Emirates, even state-controlled unions are against labor action. Bahraini authorities have used thugs as a way to challenge the dictatorship of the Shi’ism of the Bahraini people. King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia, which has already experienced smaller protests and riots.

A Call For Labor Representation On The Second Gaza Freedom Flotilla

By John Kalwaic

In addition to my IWW work, I’ve been working with the Free Palestine Movement (FPM) who is a participant in the second Gaza Freedom Flotilla to break the Israeli Blockade of Gaza.

This Flotilla of 23 ships, carrying more than 1,000 passengers and 5,000 tons of humanitarian supplies, is scheduled to sail to Gaza on May 31 (although it may be delayed, depending on circumstances). The anticipated time participants should be prepared to devote to this undertaking is at least two weeks.

There is no dearth of volunteers, and most ships and organizations, open to all, are indulging in a more-or-less strict vetting process, with chosen volunteers being primarily responsible for making their own financial arrangements. The FPM has decided on a different procedure to fill our quota of flotilla passengers: we will limit the number of participants and cover all their expenses. In order to obtain maximum influence and gravity among the American people, we’ve made the decision to invite specific representatives from a broad spectrum of political and social organizations with an interest in the cause, who we feel could best articulate the experience and capture the ear of the public and the media.

Some confirmed members of the delegation include former congresswoman Cynthia McKinney, former U.S. ambassador Samuel H. Hurt, U.S.S. Liberty survivor Joe Meaders, Rabbi Lynn Gottlieb, American Indian Movement representative William “Jimbo” Simmons, musical artists Dead Prez, African-American political activist Fred Hampton, Jr., and others.

My own interest is to ensure that working people have a presence onboard, so as to convey the international import of the voyage from a working-class perspective.

I urgently need your input in finding such persons. In Struggle.

Bahrain Unions Protest For Rights

By John Kalwaic

By Michael Dranove

In Bahrain also contains a vast number of people, and protests have occurred in the small Gulf nation of Bahrain. What started in Tunisia and Egypt has reached parts of the United States, by the earthquake and tsunami on March 11, Israeli settlers have begun pogroms against Palestinians living near the illegal settlement of Itamar, where the killings took place. Itamar is one of hundreds of illegal settlements located in the occupied West Bank.

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The pogroms were launched without any proof that any Palestinians were responsible for the killings. Rumors are circulating that Thai workers might be responsible for the killings, with the Palestinian news agency Ma’an reporting that Thai workers had been rounded up by Israeli police for questioning. This has not stopped the Israeli army from rounding up dozens of Palestinians across the West Bank. Israeli soldiers entered the village of Awarta, south of Nablus, at night and arrested 40 men and boys, fingerprinting them and taking their DNA.

The Palestinian territories have been divided into untenable customs by Israeli checkpoints and settlements, which is exactly what the Israeli army has decreed, it’s the day to remember and celebrate that we are not alone in this struggle: working people are supporting each other in the same situation, fighting back together, and that our solidarity with them is what binds us.

But international solidarity isn’t just about visiting other nations, meeting and learning about people’s lives and loves and struggles. As important as that is, international solidarity is also something you do at home. It’s writing a protest letter or passing a branch motion. It’s tying up the phone lines at Jimmy John’s for a lunch period despite never actually eating there. International solidarity is volunteering to be an ISC liaison in your branch, or just participating because you’re passionate about building solidarity with other nations and unions.

Participating in May Day is an act of international solidarity, in its most genuine and simplest form. It is affirming that between ‘two classes a struggle must go on until the workers of the world organize as a class, take possession of the means of production, abolish the wage system, and live in harmony with the Earth.’ International solidarity is an action anyone can do, and if we are going to be a more just world, everybody should do their part and march in or organize a May Day rally wherever they live.

If you are interested in becoming involved, ISC calls happen third Monday of the month. For more information, email solidarity@iww.org.

Support international solidarity!

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

Benefit stamp designed by underground cartoonist Spain Rodriguez. Send $5 and a SASE to sparrow at IWW San Francisco, 2022 Blake Street, Berkeley, CA 94704.