

# The Public

The *Public i*, a project of the Urbana-Champaign Independent Media Center, is an independent, collectively-run, community-oriented publication that provides a forum for topics underreported and voices underrepresented in the dominant media. All contributors to the paper are volunteers. Everyone is welcome and encouraged to submit articles or story ideas to the editorial collective. We prefer, but do not necessarily restrict ourselves to, articles on issues of local impact written by authors with local ties.

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## The Public i

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 Does life at times seem  
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# The Public

A Paper of the People

Published by the Urbana-Champaign Independent Media Center

May 2010  
 V10, #5

## LOUKANIKOS, MASCOT OF THE GREEK REBELLION



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## Letting Them Eat Cake at the University of Illinois

By Ricky Baldwin



Loudly proclaiming its poverty whenever workers want a raise, the University of Illinois belies this claim through actions like hiring incoming President Michael Hogan at \$620,000 a year “base” salary, plus retention bonus and perks. That’s more than a third higher than his predecessor’s pay, seemingly a ringing endorsement for the man who made his mark in Connecticut in part by spending \$3,500 dollars on cardboard likenesses he posted all over campus, raising tuition, and blowing half a million on renovations in and around his own office and private bathroom. The floors, he explained, squeaked.

Campus unions say Hogan’s portent actually echoes UI administrations’ past. Their patterns show a university devolving into a cardboard cutout of itself for some time, as the administration, and the attendant white elephants, have grown fat while the substance and mission of the institution suffers.

Originally a land-grant institution, defined under the Morrill Acts of 1862 and 1890 as a site for members of the working classes to obtain a liberal and practical education, the University of Illinois has been skulking toward a private institution for elites which increasingly prices most working-class students out and sells its new “Illinois brand” to the highest corporate bidder.

As curriculum follows funding, the campus narrowly avoided invasion by a self-described private “academy” organized for the promotion of unregulated but heavily subsidized business interests. As it is, we will be losing much of the remaining “labor” curriculum of its School of Labor Relations, this in the context of a program already sharply skewed toward management.

Some of this drift is state-sponsored. Cuts in things like pensions and the tuition discount program for children of University employees highlight the shifts away from the Land Grant Vision. The State is walking away from its obligations to education on many levels, however, it is our own administration that bears the greater accountability.

### A SPREE FOR ME BUT NOT FOR THEE

When it comes to spending, the University plays in the big leagues. Two years ago, with less than one percent of the projected students in evidence, President Joseph B. White’s Global Campus ship was sinking and taking \$10 million down with it. Meanwhile, the Global Campus personnel got \$120,000 bonuses. That same year the State appropriated money for 2.5 percent raises at the University, but the Administration only handed out 1.5 percent to civil service workers.

Last year the University and Foundation pulled in a record \$220 million in donations. The University’s catering service served black-tie alumni events, Republican fundraisers (one with Karl Rove) at the semi-private I-Hotel, and offered extravagant wedding packages. You can now tie the knot at Memorial Stadium and be photographed with the University’s million-a-year-plus football coach.

When it comes to the needs of workers and students, however, we hear about making “shared sacrifices,” no prizes for guessing whose sacrifice is the biggest, considering tuition increases and zero raises. Over 1,300 UI employees made \$100,000+ last year, 125 made

\$200,000+, and sixteen made over \$400,000. Retention and merit raises continue in select areas, along with multi-million-dollar new construction, building renovations, cherry wood furniture, and the like. Meanwhile, University information technologies and printing services are closing and staff are being fired, with functions farmed out to private industry.

Is this a hard-nosed response to a shrinking economy that demands higher standards of productivity, you may ask? Let’s examine the evidence.

Former President White, forced to resign in ethical disgrace over the “clout” admissions scandal, keeps a golden parachute even without his half-million-dollar retention bonus; \$300,000 a year as a “business professor” where he may eventually teach. Similarly, former Chancellor Richard Herman, who was also forced to resign, is on a quarter-million-dollar “sabbatical.” Yet somehow there is no money for the workers at the University who cook and serve food, sweep floors and clean toilets, run the library, teach classes and do research—apparently these are lower priorities for the University than the well-paid job of handing out favors to the rich and well-connected.

Food service workers—who are laid off every summer, every winter break, spring break, and Thanksgiving break, and are not eligible for unemployment—earn so little each year they didn’t even make the cut-off for the recently published campus salary guide. Even the best-paid building service workers, some with decades of seniority, gross about one-twentieth of the new president’s starting pay. Taken together, incoming Pres. Hogan’s increase plus the two golden parachutes would more than cover a 3 percent pay raise for the almost 1,000 building service and food service workers on campus.

### APOLOGIA

Justifications for these disparities are textbook. Capital development funds are a separate budget category from operating funds, including wages. Donations are earmarked for select purposes. On the other hand, little or no fundraising is done for purposes as tangential to the mission of the University as maintaining the library, cleaning classrooms, teaching liberal arts courses, paying employees, boring little things like that.

Yes, but the State owes the University a lot of money, over \$400 million, or about nine percent of its \$4.7 billion overall budget. And, on the Urbana campus, Facilities and Services—which laid off dozens of plumbers, carpenters, sheet metal workers, and other skilled trades workers—are largely state-funded, administrators say. However, a recent audit by the American Association of University Professors, revealed that the University had twelve percent of its total budget already held in reserves—more than enough to cover the delay in State payments.

How about University Housing staff, it is “self-funded,” so workers there are rolling in dough, right? Wrong.

Money from the whopping student fees to live and eat in the dorms are not “earmarked” but blended into the general fund to pay for projects other than the workers who actually clean the dorms or serve the food.

Pay no attention to the administrator behind the curtain and the “work orders” that farm out workers to various other agencies, for a fee.

Furthermore, at the University, administrators create their own meaning. If a department is losing money, managers need “flexibility” to change workers’ hours, add extra duties, bounce workers all over campus and demand that they use their own vehicles. Conversely, if a department is making money, managers need “flexibility” to do the exact same things.

Sure, civil service employees accrue generous vacation time, but what does this mean when requests for leave are routinely denied, allegedly due to shortstaffing. Food service workers can take vacations, when they’re laid off. Otherwise, if they want leave on, say, Valentine’s Day, or the day after the Super Bowl, on practically any day that ends with a ‘y’, they’re told, “That would be problematic.” Building service workers are “essential” after a heavy snow even when the University shuts down and travel is dangerous. Then, when the bill comes due, the workers are expendable. Unions had to fight off attempts in the State Legislature this year to change labor laws to force through unpaid “furlough” days. Non-union workers got stuck with furloughs, of course, and administrators took them, too. But even twice as many days without pay, is not equitable when salaries vary by a factor of ten or twenty. A single day’s pay is significant if you already have trouble paying the bills and your phone may be cut off, compared to even a thousand-dollar loss for someone who earns half a million.

### WHAT IS TO BE DONE

This summer Illinois waits with bated breath to learn whether Hogan’s inaugural celebration will top the \$170,000 spent when he began at Connecticut. Will he live in the swank president’s mansion or move out and charge the University \$49,000 a year to rent another house as he did in Connecticut? Will the University repeat this year’s expenditure of \$150,000 looking for a new provost to make more cuts?

Meanwhile, at least three large union contracts will expire this summer at the Urbana campus: two for the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) and one for the AFSCME. All will almost certainly be offered zero raises. On the Chicago campus SEIU has been bargaining for a year.

After a *News-Gazette* story revealed University plans to renew a contract already worth over a million dollars to pay four consultants out of Indiana another half million to teach administrators “team-based decision-making,” the Campus Faculty Association (CFA) organized a public protest, and the contract was canceled. Last fall, the University refused to raise the minimum stipend for GEO and continued to refuse to guarantee tuition waivers right up until the GEO went on a strike publicly supported by CFA

and other campus unions. After three days, the University announced that it had always intended to agree to these demands. When the GEO in Chicago threatened to strike, the University quickly revised its offer from no raise to raises. In the end, it has been protest, not prudence that has gotten results.



University unions demonstrate on campus



CFA and IEA demonstrate for funding of public education in Springfield



## Letter by an Undocumented UIUC Student

By Anonymous

*This letter was read at a May Day rally in Urbana protesting Arizona's SB1070. It was asked that the author's name be kept confidential.*

*Proyecto ALAI (ayudando latinos a aprender ingles) focuses on helping students, particularly adults, learn the English language with the assistance of students from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign pursuing degrees in Spanish. ALAI allows university students to practice their Spanish while helping Latinos learn the English necessary to open opportunities for jobs and education.*

No identification, no rights. Am I invisible? Where do I belong? Who can I trust? What will I do? How can plan my future? When will I stop being an "illegal alien"? These are the mixture of feelings I have experienced as an undocumented student living in the United States. My mother always tells us, "Siguan Adelante," (keep moving forward) and that's

all I can do, hoping that someday my goals of teaching, traveling, and making a change are fulfilled.

I was three years old when my mother said, "Now you will get to see "papa." Since our arrival to the United States, my parents have worked to provide us with a home, food, and most importantly education. I cannot nor will never blame parents for wanting to give extraordinary opportunity that I have today. This is why I do not understand why someone would punish another for wanting to escape poverty and corruption, for wanting opportunities and desiring to see beyond their borders. My parents have done a magnificent job, their accomplishment to have three daughters continuing their education at universities is priceless. What else are we hoping for? To one day no be considered "illegals," to have access to health care, to be able to travel, to be able to freely celebrate our success.

As a university student I have come to realize the importance, the necessity, and what great privilege is it to receive an edu-

cation. The university has allowed me to meet people, get involved, and develop as a professional and a human being. I have learned to speak French, I have learned to paint, I have learned about great leaders, philosophers, and authors. The friends, staff, community leaders, and professors that I have met at the university have all served an inspiration to me. They have, in different ways, influenced my decision and my desire to contribute to the world by teaching. In me, I have an unexplainable passion and dream that no one can ever take away. I will fight and continue to study, to work, to meet new people, until I am where I want to be. I have high goals and expectations for myself and ask that you understand that it would be detrimental if laws like SB1070 come into effect. I will not give up. Please legalize us now.

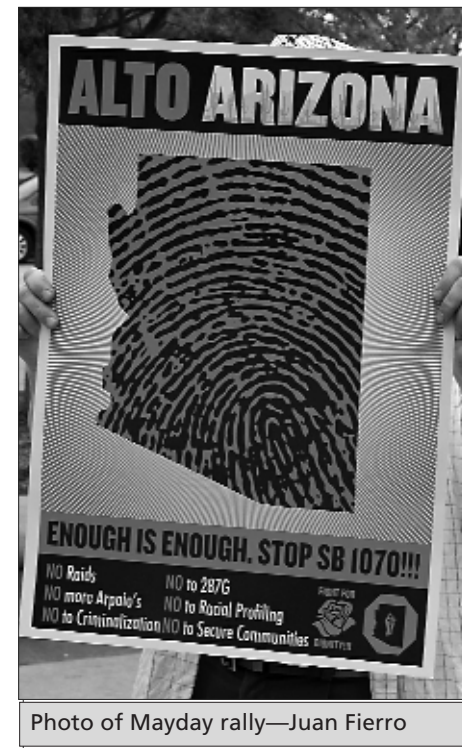


Photo of Mayday rally—Juan Fierro

## More Local Food For More Local Folks

By Carly Nix



May marks the beginning of the 2010 farmer's market season in CU with Urbana's Market at the Square on Saturdays. Urbana's market—and unofficial town square—is open 7 am to noon every Saturday until November 6th at the corner of Illinois and Vine in the Lincoln Square parking lot. Everything for sale is grown or made in Illinois. Each week an average of 6,200 people shop for fruits and veggies, prepared foods, baked goods, handmade soaps and jewelry amidst the buzz of curbside music performances and informational booths for community organizations.

Champaign's markets are opening soon too. Starting in June, the Farmers' Market on Historic North 1<sup>st</sup> Street will be open Thursdays and the Champaign Urbana Public Health Department's (CPHD) Marketing Wellness on Tuesdays. Organizers are planning to enhance the accessibility and quality of this year's markets by expanding educational programming and promotion, adding to available payment methods, and increasing the number of vendors.

There are many excellent reasons for holding farmers' markets. The community as a whole benefits economically. The direct support of local farmers, businesses, entrepreneurs and hobbyists encourages the circulation of money within the community. The economic benefit is even more direct for the farmers themselves. According to LocalHarvest, farmers are paid 18 cents on the dollar for food purchased at a large supermarket; the other 82 cents go to middlemen. At farmers' markets, the middlemen are mostly removed. Although money changes hands at farmers markets, local economist Michael Brün believes the benefits to the community are more social than monetary. "Both the buyer and the seller are getting something other than what's being sold: the pleasure of doing work and supporting work that's thought of as useful, that requires skill, and demonstrates a certain approach to life." In other words, farmers' markets are fun, gratifying, and build communities.

Many are celebrating the increased energy around farmers markets, organics, and local foods in CU and across the nation. Providing more options for people to use their federal food benefits in addition to the Illinois WIC and Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) at farmers markets is a step in the direction of equal access to fresh, whole, local foods.

Purchasing items at Market at the Square just got easier with a new card system that allows patrons to swipe credit, debit and LINK cards (formerly known as food stamps) in exchange for wooden tokens to pay for items. In past seasons, many patrons were deterred by the inability to use cards, and the hope is that the new token system will make the market a viable option for those who don't regularly carry cash. On May 8th, the day of the system's introduction, 24 credit/debit transactions and one LINK transaction were made.

To use a card, locate the city tent at the Northwest corner of the market. Market staff will swipe the card, enter the desired amount for the transaction, and issue tokens of equivalent value. Tokens for LINK-eligible items are green



Urbana Farmer's Market tokens

and valued at \$1, while credit/debit tokens are orange and valued at \$5. LINK tokens come in smaller denominations because change cannot be provided for purchases. Vendors are reimbursed for tokens collected on a weekly basis.

Lisa Bralts, Director of Market at the Square, said the LINK card option was introduced to increase access to the Market for those with SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) benefits. "This is win/win—the consumer wins and the food producers win. That kind of economic activity encourages entrepreneurship and builds relationships over time—it's priceless and good for communities." Market at the

Square's LINK program is modeled after the downtown Bloomington Farmers' Market program, which sold \$2,000 in LINK purchases in its first season last year.

The LINK card option was also available last year in two of Champaign's markets—CPHD's market, and the North 1<sup>st</sup> Street Market—but each brought in less than \$100 in LINK purchases. Brandon Meline, Director of the CPHD market, said few people took advantage of the LINK card option primarily because of low awareness; the marketing budget was frozen last year due to budget cuts. Director of the North 1<sup>st</sup> Street market, Wendy Langacker, said their LINK purchases were low because prices are higher at the market than in the grocery store. "People would come to the market, maybe spend \$2.50 and say 'I'd like to, but I can't afford to'."

To help address this challenge, Champaign's Market on North 1<sup>st</sup> Street plans to include demonstrations on how to save money with seasonal cooking this year, and Market at the Square launched the "Eat Here" campaign to educate about the benefits of eating locally. It could also help to share the work of authors such as food activist Michael Pollan. He writes about the hidden costs of cheaper processed foods on our health and on the environment. For example, fast food prices are lower because cheap meat is made possible by subsidized corn. While the money that comes out of your wallet for a burger is low, you're also paying for it in taxes that go to corn farmers to produce corn to feed the cattle.

Efforts to spread access are growing. According to the Illinois Department of Human Services website, there are eleven farmers' markets in the state accepting LINK cards this year, including five new markets in Chicago. Chicago's first market to accept LINK cards opens May 13th and is located on Daley Plaza. California, Massachusetts, Montana, Iowa, New Jersey, New York and Maine have LINK programs in place already. The Food and Nutrition Service of the USDA expects the number of SNAP programs to increase. Programs like these will help the entire community come together over a good meal!



# The Campus Faculty Association at U of I Fights Back: In Springfield and on Campus

By Belden Fields



Belden Fields is the CFA's delegate to the AFL-CIO of Champaign County

In a political climate of incredible irresponsibility, ineptitude, and corruption, the Campus Faculty Association (CFA) at the U of I has been letting our state legislators know that we will not put up with the privation to which public education at all levels has been subjected. A strong contingent of CFA members joined members of the Graduate Employees Organization (GEO) and other unions affiliated with the Illinois Education Association in the April 21 march on Springfield. Fifteen thousand people from all over the state listened to speakers telling of how devastating this lack of responsibility by politicians is to our educational institutions and public services. They marched around the capitol building carrying SOS (Save Our Schools) signs, and visited offices of individual legislators. The

turnout was historic for demonstrations in Springfield, reflecting the gravity of the budget and the ruinous effects on people's lives of promised funds undelivered.

These effects include the termination of thousands of teachers and other state employees, "furloughs" (which are really pay cuts), the under-funding of public pension systems, threats to health care benefits, and the closing of some state funded non-profit service providers.

Then, on May 5<sup>th</sup>, the CFA held a demonstration in front of the Swanlund Administrative Building on the U of I campus to protest the university's contract with the RTG consulting company. RTG, a company working out of a house near the Purdue University campus in Indiana, was hired by university administrators to help them implement the Strategic Plan adopted by former President White, former Chancellor Herman, and former Provost Katehi. Katehi had worked with RTG when she was Dean of Engineering at Purdue before coming to the U of I and thought it would be a good idea for the U of I to contract with

them. Since 2006, this four-person firm has been awarded \$1.73 million in consulting fees. At issue this year was a remaining \$450,000 of that total to be paid out for helping U of I administrators work as a team, and to organize others further down the hierarchy who would be involved in implementing the Strategic Plan. This was an area in which former President White himself was supposed to have been an expert. Plus, the College of Education, in which White is now housed, has a Department of Organization and Leadership that is supposed to be teaching those skills to other professionals in the field. It seems never to have occurred to our former administrators that this should be a part of their own jobs, and that there was plenty of local talent that is already being paid by the university.

So, at the May 5 rally, CFA President Megan McLaughlin raised the questions of how many layoffs could have been avoided, how many TAs could have been paid, how many units could have been preserved, if the administrators had not paid out such an enormous amount of money to this one firm of four peo-

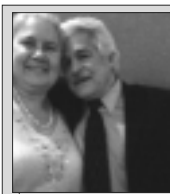
ple. She also asked how many other such contacts are out there siphoning off badly needed funds from our educational functions.

The University's spokesperson, Robin Kaler, was present as President McLaughlin spoke. Immediately afterward she announced to the press covering the event that while RTG would continue to receive a portion of the \$450,000 for projects that were already underway, the other projects yet to get off the ground would be cancelled and most of the \$450,000 would not be turned over to the consulting firm. She did not specify exact amounts.

While there were others, such as a group of the U of I Senate Executive Committee led by former CFA President Joyce Tolliver, who had expressed concern to the administration over this matter, it was the CFA that was the activist force that educated the university community about the damage being done, and that engaged in public protest. Anyone who questions the utility or appropriateness of faculty unions in institutions of higher education—take note.

## The April 21<sup>st</sup> March on Springfield

By Gene Vanderport and Germaine Light



Gene Vanderport is an Illinois Education Association staff person, Co-Chair of the Central Illinois Jobs With Justice, and Co-Chair of the Campus Labor Coalition. Germaine Light is an IEA activist and Vice Chair of Region 9 IEA, and leader of the IEA Peace and Justice Caucus.

It was a common refrain of rally organizers that they had trouble sleeping the morning of April 21, 2010 before a Save Our Schools rally was to take place in Springfield. Most of us were up at 3:30 or 4:00 a.m., anxious about the day, most worried about something going wrong. At that point organizers began going over the checklist: 28 dozen doughnuts, enough caffeine to caffeinate the county, instructions to bus captains, instructions to bus drivers, fact sheets, water, sign-up sheets, bullhorns, video cameras, plastic water bottle drums, banners, signs, and 1,000 Jobs With Justice whistles.

All this was made possible by intensive staff organizational work and planning. These efforts, combined with extensive and persistent organizer outreach and coalition-building, created a significant base for the event. It became clear that anger was widespread and very deep. Public education was being starved for funds. The legislature had already failed us by cutting pensions. Tuitions were being raised. A popular slogan was "Our class can't go to class."

A cautious confidence was growing over the two-week period prior to the march. The Illinois Education Association (IEA) had the responsibility of ordering the buses. We started off by ordering three buses, but more sign-up sheets came in, and we eventually commissioned seven buses in all, just from the Champaign-Urbana area alone. Similar reports were coming in from around the state.

It was time to go to the bus boarding sites. People frantically moved from site to site, making sure that food, provisions, and materials were properly allocated, making sure that the bus captains were in place. Then we waited to see who would show.

8:15 a.m. and here they came: Pre-K and elementary kids with their parents, middle school students, high school students, undergrads, grads, student IEA, Champaign Federation of Teachers, Central Illinois Jobs With Justice, American Federation of State, County, and Munic-

ipal Workers, Graduate Employees Organization, Service Employees International Union, Campus Labor Coalition, Campus Faculty Association, Illinois Education Association of Academic Professionals, PreK-12 teachers, social workers, psychologists, certified occupational therapists and assistants, support staff, including custodians, teacher aides, clericals, bus drivers, and monitors. There were some 350 people in all. We were witnessing the broadest unity of public sector constituencies in recent memory.

We had been shouting at planning events for months, "Get on the bus!" Well, we're actually on the bus! As the buses moved out of Champaign-Urbana, local organizers felt exhilarated. We got the first part of our job done!

As we rode down I-72, rally participants engaged in spirited discussions. You might say at this point that the sugar and caffeine had kicked in. For many folks, it was their first event ever, the first time they ever lobbied, the first time they ever met so many people from so many allied groups. Common ground was quickly found. As the buses came closer to our destination, bus captains were instructed to read the basic orders of the day. "Our message to legislators and to the public must be focused. We're here to advocate for fair and full funding through progressive taxes to save our schools and save our state. We're here to advocate for tuition freezes. We're here to tell legislators that they will be held accountable for the votes they've taken on pensions, and they'll be further held accountable for the votes they take on fair funding."

Six of our seven buses lined up and parked on Cook Street, two blocks away from the Capitol building. Signs and hats were distributed and marshals were selected. Champaign folks coalesced around whistles and thumping water bottle drums. Parade marshals for the IEA state-wide group asked members of the Champaign contingent to help carry the lead banner, which was immediately behind IEA state officers. The GEO drum and Jobs With Justice whistle corps lead this part of the parade. As we marched to the rally site, we were greeted with cheers and chants, "SOS, SOS!" Three blocks later we joined the rest of the march participants, 15,000 strong. This was now the largest march in the history of Springfield! We smiled and looked around with pride and awe.

A series of speakers representing citizen groups, unions, and other constituent leaders spoke about the issues which united us that day. We emphasized the need

for legislators to have the courage to pass a fair and progressive tax. We are opposed to tuition hikes, a form of regressive taxation. Speeches were given and people joined in chants, "SAVE OUR SCHOOLS, SAVE OUR STATE!" The crowd of 15,000 would turn toward the Capitol building and chant in unison, "Shame on you!"

From there the march commenced and, needless to say, Champaign bullhorn captains were exquisite in directing chants, with drums and whistles providing rhythm and music. As thousands were marching, others headed into the capitol building. Significant numbers of people made attempts to occupy different parts of the capitol, many exercising traditional, yet contentious lobbying with targeted legislators. AFSCME retirees sneaked into the visitor's balcony in the house, pulled out hidden placards, and began chanting. Security police promptly escorted them out. In another instance SEIU members tried to rush the door of the General Assembly Chambers, but were pushed back.

As the march wound down, people went to various constituency and union tents around the capitol building to be fed and to share experiences. It soon became time to get back on the bus. We knew we had left a message, but it was also time to figure out who was left behind. One of our buses discovered that Jim McGuire, an AFSCME leader, missed the bus, but House Representative Chapin Rose drove him home! For most of us, we thought a lobby day does not get better than that!

As much as this day felt to us like a high water mark, it was most certainly a culmination of increasing resistance to the attacks on public education. In the course of this last academic year, we saw the incredibly successful graduate employees strike. We saw the fight against furloughs. We saw the fight against RIFs (lay-offs) in Pre-K through 12. We saw the campus faculty teach-in. We saw the April 1st undergrad theater wherein students in business suits held tin cans and asked for donations to help the starving administrators. This year we also saw the rise of student insurgencies across the country protesting tuition hikes and the cuts in state scholarships, and even more recently, high school students from California to Chicago to New Jersey demonstrating against cuts in public education.

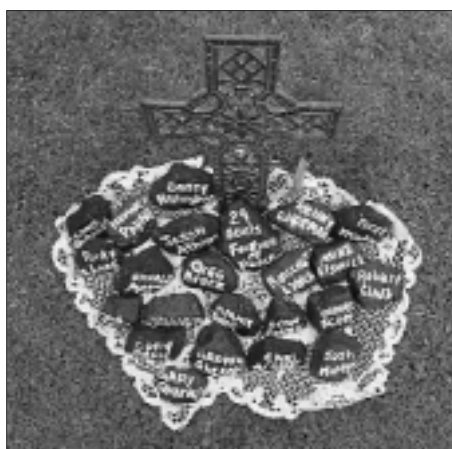
It is clear we now have a movement that is willing to commit to a long term struggle to preserve our public schools. We are absolutely sure we will be given another opportunity to "get on the bus!"



## The Public i Honors Workers Who Sacrificed Thier Lives For Corporate Profits

An explosion in a coal mine in the mountains of West Virginia killed 29 miners on the morning of April 5, 2010. The Upper Big Branch mine was owned and operated by Massey Energy, which had been cited for numerous violations. In a 2006 lawsuit against the company, a memo was exposed from Massey CEO Don Blankenship that instructed superintendents: "If any of you have been asked by your group presidents, your supervisors, engineers or anyone else to do anything other than run coal (i.e. build overcasts, do construction jobs, or whatever), you need to ignore them and run coal. This memo is necessary only because we seem not to understand that the coal pays the bills." The drive to "run coal" has now cost the lives of 29 men.

Carl Accord, 52  
 Jason Atkins, 25  
 Christopher Bell, 33  
 Gregory Steven Brock, 47  
 Kenneth Allan Chapman, 53  
 Robert Clark, 41  
 Charles Timothy Davis, 51  
 Cory Davis, 20  
 Michael Lee Elswick, 56  
 William I. Griffith, 54  
 Steven Harrah, 40  
 Edward Dean Jones, 50  
 Richard K. Lane, 45  
 William Roosevelt Lynch, 59  
 Nicholas Darrell McCroskey, 26  
 Joe Marcum, 57  
 Ronald Lee Maynor, 31  
 James E. Mooney, 50  
 Adam Keith Morgan, 21  
 Rex L. Mullins, 50  
 Joshua S. Napper, 25  
 Howard D. Payne, 53  
 Dillard Earl Persinger, 32  
 Joel R. Price, 55  
 Deward Scott, 58  
 Gary Quarles, 33  
 Grover Dale Skeens, 57  
 Benny Willingham, 61  
 Ricky Workman, 50



Memorial to the 29 miners

### FIRE IN THE HOLE

By Hazel Dickens

You can tell them in the country, tell them in the town  
 Miners down in Mingo laid their shovels down  
 we won't pull another pillar, load another ton  
 or lift another finger until the union we have won  
 Stand up boys, let the bosses know  
 Turn your buckets over, turn your lanterns low  
 There's fire in our hearts and fire in our soul  
 but there ain't gonna be no fire in the hole  
 Daddy died a miner and grandpa he did too,  
 I'll bet this coal will kill me before my working days  
 is through  
 And a hole this dark and dirty an early grave I find  
 And I plan to make a union for the ones I leave behind  
 Stand up boys, let the bosses know  
 Turn you buckets over, turn your lanterns low  
 There's fire in our hearts and fire in our soul  
 but there ain't gonna be no fire in the hole  
 There ain't gonna be no fire in the hole

### 11 Killed in Deepwater Horizon Disaster

On March 30th, 2010, President Obama announced a proposal to end a moratorium on offshore drilling, opening the coasts of Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and North Alaska. Three weeks later, eleven workers died on the offshore drilling rig Deepwater Horizon after an oil well blowout caused an explosion and the rig sank off the coast of Louisiana.

Since the explosion, crude oil has been pouring into the Gulf of Mexico for weeks in a spill that some scientists say will become the worst in U.S. waters. BP, the company leasing the Deepwater rig, says the amount gushing into the Gulf is 5,000 barrels a day, while scientists around the globe put the figure more at 20,000 to 100,000 barrels a day. Meanwhile the corporations with connections to the rig (owners, renters, operators) are pointing fingers at each other in a circle of non-accountability.

Karl Kleppinger Jr., 38, of Natchez, Mississippi  
 Adam Weise, 24, of Yorktown, Texas  
 Aaron Dale Burkeen, 37, of Neshoba County, Mississippi  
 Donald Clark, 49, of Newellton, Louisiana  
 Roy Kemp, 27, Jonesville, Louisiana  
 Jason Anderson, 36 of Bay City, Texas  
 Stephen Curtis, 39, of Georgetown, Louisiana  
 Gordon Jones, 28, of Baton Rouge, Louisiana  
 Blair Manuel, 56, of Gonzales, Louisiana  
 Dewey Revette, 48, State Line, Mississippi  
 Shane Roshto, 22, from Franklin County, Mississippi

## Ben Fletcher IWW

By David Johnson



Born in Philadelphia in 1890, Ben Fletcher was the most important African American labor leader in the most influential union of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW). This was no small accomplishment considering that this was a time of wide-spread racism, Jim Crow laws, lynch mobs, and the exclusion of African Americans from the American Federation of Labor (AFL). However the IWW was unique in that it was ideologically committed to racial, ethnic and gender equality. More than any other IWW affiliate, Ben Fletcher's Local 8 of the Marine, Longshoremen and Transport Union in Philadelphia worked hard to be a progressive interracial Union.

Ben Fletcher became active in the IWW in 1912 working as a longshoreman loading and unloading cargo ships. The dock and ship owners were able to prevent

dockworkers in Philadelphia from being unionized for decades by a divide and conquer tactic by pitting the three major ethnic groups of the time in Philadelphia; African Americans, Irish and Eastern European immigrants against each other. They achieved this primarily by using racial and ethnically segregated work crews to compete against each other. Soon after joining the IWW, Ben Fletcher became a popular speaker and leader, winning interest and influence amongst dockworkers because of his oratory style and arguments against racism and capitalism as well as his advocacy of worker solidarity and direct action against the employers.

By 1916, under the leadership of Ben Fletcher, all of the Philadelphia docks and transport ships were unionized by IWW Local 8 with a membership of nearly 5,000 workers. By 1917, IWW Local 8 had nearly tripled their wage rates from 25 cents to 65 cents per hour and won favorable working conditions that no other dock-

workers in the country had. This was accomplished by the integration of work crews, membership social gatherings and leadership positions within the IWW. Last but not least, Local 8's success was also due to its steadfast on the job-site direct action. That is, the willingness of ALL the members to walk off the job and shut down the ports if its demands were not met or if any single member was abused by the bosses.

For more in depth information about Ben Fletcher and IWW Local 8, read Peter Cole's book *Wobblies on the Waterfront*. If you'd like more information about the IWW or are interested in organizing your workplace, contact the IWW Central Illinois General Membership Branch at 217-356-8247.



Ben Fletcher, Wobbly



# Precarity. You Live It, But Do You Know What It IS?

By Angry Workers

## DEFINITION

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Precarious work is a term used to describe non-standard employment which is poorly paid, insecure, unprotected, and cannot support a household. In recent decades there has been a dramatic increase in precarious work due to such factors as: globalization, the shift from the manufacturing sector to the service sector, and the spread of information technology. These changes have created a new economy which demands 'flexibility' in the workplace and, as a result, caused the decline of the standard employment relationship and a dramatic increase in precarious work. An important aspect of precarious work is its gendered nature, as women are continuously over-represented in this type of work.

Precarious work is frequently associated with the following types of employment: part-time employment, self-employment, fixed-term work, temporary work, on-call work, homeworkers, and telecommuting. All of these forms of employment are related in that they depart from the standard employment relationship (full-time, continuous work with one employer). Each form of precarious work may offer its own challenges but they all share the same disadvantages: low wages, few benefits, lack of collective representation, and little to no job security.

There are four dimensions when determining if employment is precarious in nature:

1. The degree of certainty of continuing employment;
2. Control over the labor process, which is linked to the presence, or absence, of trade unions and professional associations and relates to control over working conditions, wages, and the pace of work;
3. The degree of regulatory protection; and
4. Income level.

## F@#K PRECARIETY!!

**I. Precarious**—literally means unsure, uncertain, difficult, delicate. As a political term it refers to living and working conditions without any guarantees: for example the precarious residence permission of migrants and

refugees, or the precarious *everyday life* as a single mother. Since the early 80s the term has been used more and more in relation to labor. Precarious work refers to all possible shapes of unsure, not guaranteed, flexible exploitation—from illegalized, seasonal and temporary employment to homework, flex- and temp-work to subcontractors, freelancers or so called self employed persons.

**II. Precarization at work**—means an increasing change of previously guaranteed permanent employment



conditions into mainly worse paid, uncertain jobs. On a historical and global scale precarious work represents not an exception, but the rule. What was a generalized *myth* was the short period of 'full' (95%) employment during the "welfare" state in the U.S. and Western Europe after WWII. Yet, for those in the 'Global South,' and Southern immigrants in the North, precarious working conditions have always been the *norm*. Precarization describes moreover the 'crisis' of established institutions, which have represented for that same short period, the framework of (false) certainties. It is an analytical term for a process, which hints to a new quality of societal labor. Labor and social life, production and reproduction cannot be separated anymore, and this leads to a more comprehensive definition of precarization: the uncertainty of all circumstances in the mate-

rial and immaterial conditions of life of living labor under contemporary capitalism. For example: wage level and working conditions are connected with a distribution of tasks, which is determined by gender and ethnic roles; the residence status determines the access to the labor market or to medical care. The whole ensemble of social relationships seems to be on the move.

**III. Precariat**—is an allusion to *proletariat*—meanwhile is used as an offensive self-description in order to emphasize the subjective and utopian moments of precarization. Through the mass refusal of gender roles, of factory work and of the command of labor over life, precarization has really a double face: it is possible to speak of a kind of *flexibilization* from below. Precarization does not represent a simple invention of the command centers of capital: it is also a reaction to the insurgency and new mobility behaviors of living labor, and in so far it can be understood as the attempt to recapture manifold struggles and refusals in order to establish new conditions of exploitation of labor and valorization of capital. Precarization thus symbolizes a contested field: a field in which the attempt to start a new cycle of exploitation also meets desires and subjective behaviors which express the refusal of the old, the so called *fordist* regime of labor and the search for another, better—we can even say flexible life. However, we think that precariat as a new term of struggle runs in an old trap if it aims at a quick unification and creation of a dominant social actor. Precariat gets even into a farce, if the radical left tries to legitimize itself as main force in its representation because of the increasing involvement of leftist activists in precarious labor and life conditions. But the main point is that taking into account the hierarchies which shape the composition of the contemporary living labor (from illegalized migrant janitors to temporary computer-freaks), the strong diversity of social movement and respective demands and desires, nobody should simplify precarization into a new identity. We are confronted here with the problem of imagining a process of political subjectivation in which different subject positions can cooperate in the production of a new common ground of struggle without sacrificing the peculiarity of demands which arise from the very composition of living labor.

## A Tale of a Small Tech Business

By Allison Payne

Allison Payne grew up in the Center of the Universe, but knows better now that she owns cats.

Calling tech support. We've all been there: Long hold times with bad music, automated phone trees that go nowhere or are unclear, support staff that are required to follow a script and have a hard time deviating to accommodate different situations, and eventually, a fix that may or may not work, but will probably cost a lot of money. Two years ago, as a young professional hoping to launch a small business in computer services, I didn't have a clear idea of what I wanted it to be, but I knew what I wanted to avoid: being that number you dread calling, being that person you get agitated talking to, being everything that is frustrating about consumer technology support systems.

As I considered what I wanted to do with the skills and knowledge I had in computer technology, my personal vision of 'how to be' in society directed me toward community and non-profit efforts. I decided I would offer individualized lessons and completely transparent advice and help, and I would help people find the perfect computer for their needs and budget. Of course, not everyone can afford a personal computer, and not everyone can afford to pay someone to teach them how to use it or fix it when it breaks. I

would address that by instituting a donation and refurbishing program and by offering a set number of pro bono lessons every month. I imagined that as time went on, I'd begin to collaborate with other non-profits in town to meet their computing needs. I'd offer classes and get a community computer recycling program up and running...

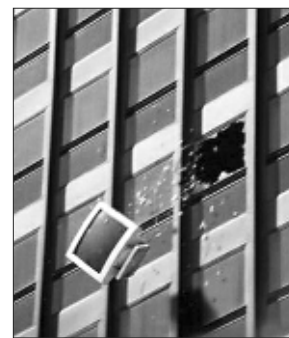
And then the economy tanked. My husband finished grad school with no job awaiting him (and no job forthcoming for over a year), so I wasn't able to leave my steady paycheck behind to pursue a large, risky venture. As it happened, having to wait was probably the best thing for me. The information available regarding starting a new business is extensive and intimidating, and the process itself is full of pitfalls. Having to first launch as a side business, more of a hobby than a career, gave me the opportunity to acclimate slowly, to tweak my business model and to network. It meant putting off the non-profit side for another year or two so I could build a solid foundation for my work. It also gave me a very, very clear idea of just how much personalized services are needed.

Just before formally launching, I gave an interview to the News-Gazette's Debra Pressey for the column, "It's Your Business." I had only just nailed down the basics of what I wanted to offer (and charge), and my availability was severely limited due to job and family obligations; however, I wasn't about to

turn down the publicity that can be so essential for a new business! The day the article hit, I received phone calls from dawn until dusk; dozens of people called about their computer issues, they'd tried everything, and they couldn't afford the bigger chains, and could I help? Some called to offer their old computers as donations, and a few called to

arrange lessons. It was overwhelming, a family emergency combined with the immense volume and desperation of potential clients hit me like a tsunami. Had I been completely up and running by the time the article came out, I probably would have been able to weather it with more grace, but life doesn't always work that way. I managed to stay flexible, initially making myself turn away a few potential clients or schedule them for a couple weeks down the line. This tumultuous beginning wound up being a positive start. It bolstered my confidence; perhaps one could make a living doing this, after all.

Six months later, I still drew customers from that article, but more than anything else, word-of-mouth was my best advertiser. I kept my client circle small enough for me to handle, but included a personal aspect in a way that print advertising can never duplicate. People coming to me had an idea of



what to expect, and we had a contact in common, which often made the experience less formal and friendlier. In my work with clients, there is an unavoidable power differential (information being power); having a sense of shared experience and community helps level the playing field, and I strive for that. They can see that I'm not some corporate

robot out for the bottom line. I went to school with their kids and have opinions about the university's budget crisis, too. My entire goal is to give clients the tools to navigate technology, and the biggest obstacle to that is apprehension or the attitude that they just can't learn anything. The more at ease people are with you, the more open they are to learning.

If the predominant business model is "information is power; don't let the customer have too much," my model is, "information is power; no one should be powerless." I could probably convince my clients that they need me at every stage—they're often in that headspace already—but my focus is longer-term than that. I want to help people grasp their own power to take control of the technology pervading their lives. After all, it's not going away any time soon.



# The Aging of America: Is It an Economic Problem?

By Michael Brün



For decades, environmentalists concerned about overpopulation and social workers concerned about families have both advocated family planning, and by that they mostly mean having fewer children. And indeed, throughout the world, including both developed and underdeveloped countries in every continent, birth rates have fallen dramatically in the last forty years. In the U.S., the birth rate per woman dropped from 2.5 in 1970 to 2.1 in 2006, and that is a comparatively small drop. According to the World Development Indices of 189 countries published by the World Bank, in China, for example, the recorded drop was from 5.8 births per woman in 1970 to just 1.8 in 2006; in India from 5.8 to 2.5 over the same period; in Japan from 2.1 to 1.3; in Germany from 2.0 to 1.3; in Kenya from 8.0 to 5.0; in Brazil from 5.0 to 2.3 and Mexico from 6.6 to 2.2.

Now some influential and well funded organizations such as the Peter G. Peterson Foundation are getting a lot of attention for saying we face a crisis: The Aging of America. The ratio of retirees to workers is increasing, for two reasons. First, as we just saw, people are having fewer babies—that's fewer replacements for retired workers. Second, people are living longer—that means retirees stick around longer collecting pensions and social security and getting lots and lots of expensive health care. Is this really a big deal? The short answer is no. It is not a big deal (except maybe the health care part, but that's another article).

Look at the birth rate numbers given above, and how they have changed. Were it a major problem, most countries would be in a lot more trouble than the U.S. Indeed, some writers suggest this very thing, writing articles about

China getting old before it gets rich, about the graying of Japan, about the heavy burden of retirees on European economies. The funny thing is these articles appear mostly in the U.S., where they seem to appeal to local prejudice. In those other countries, few seem to think the issue worth even discussing. Why not? The answer is that retirees are only part of the story. While it is true that they are dependent on the productive work of non-retirees, and that their proportion of the total population is everywhere increasing, it is also true that they are not the only dependents. There is another big group of dependents—children.

The point is that the important number is not really the ratio of only retirees to workers, it is the ratio to workers of both retirees and children. This second ratio is known as the dependency ratio. You get the dependency ratio by adding together all those below 15 and all those over 64, and dividing the total by the population in between those ages. Of course this is still a very approximate measure. Not everyone between 15 and 64 really is productively employed, while some below 15 or above 64 may be. The average annual cost of supporting a child is probably not the same as the amount to support a retiree. Also, when comparing the dependency ratios in different countries, you have to remember the cost of supporting children or retirees is not everywhere the same. Conditions and standards of care do differ. Even with all that in mind, it remains obvious that the total dependency ratio is a much more relevant measure of the cost burden on workers than the ratio to workers of only retirees.

If you make a graph based on the information from the World Development Indices comparing the total age dependency ratios with the ratios to workers of just people

over 64, it looks like the capital letter L. What you see is that as you move from countries with less than five percent of the population over 64 to countries with over 30 percent over 64, the total dependency ratio first drops dramatically, and then basically levels off.

How can this be? The answer is simple. In countries with really high dependency ratios the fertility rate is very high—lots and lots of children, and low life expectancies. In these countries, very few people live to be 65. In countries with low dependency ratios, there appears to be a roughly even trade-off. As the proportion of those over 64 gets higher, the proportion of those below 15 gets correspondingly lower, so that the total dependency ratio is about the same for quite a range of countries.

We have determined that the "Aging of America" is not as dramatic as the "Aging of the Rest of the World," and that the aging trend does not mean an increase in overall dependency. So, there is no economic crisis to worry about—at least not from this source—no new burden on productive workers. What we do face is a political and financial challenge. The proportion of retirees is increasing, so more funding is needed for the social security system and for pensions, two institutions that have nothing to do with childcare. But the problem is not about an added burden on productive workers. Instead, it is about a shift in the burden from children to retirees. The political challenge is to persuade people that the money they would in the past have spent to support an extra child should now instead go to support the old. The financial challenge is to adjust the taxation system so that cash flows shift accordingly. Those are both challenges, both serious enough; but there is no problem of overall economic viability.

## What is Tamms?

By Joseph Dole

Joseph Dole is an inmate in Tamms.

- Tamms Super Maximum Correctional Center, which opened in March 1998, is Illinois' only "Supermax" prison. It is located at the southern tip of Illinois, originally opened under the guise of being for short-term incarceration.
- There is no bus service to the prison. There's no way for family or friends to get to Tamms without a car. Visits hardly ever happen, and visitors only see inmates through a Plexiglas wall. Inmates in disciplinary segregation are additionally handcuffed, shackled, and chained to a cement stump throughout the entire visit.
- Tamms inmates are not allowed to make any phone calls unless there is a death in the family, and even then may have to go

on a hunger strike to get it. Even at Florence ADX, the federal supermax prison where convicted al-Qaeda terrorists are imprisoned, inmates are allowed to make one phone call each month.

- No one is sent to Tamms for the crime they were incarcerated for. Criteria for placement at Tamms are currently so vague that every prisoner in the Illinois Department of Corrections is eligible. Decisions to send men to Tamms are secret and not open to review. Men are not given placement forms and many do not know why they are there. A number of men have life without parole sentences and don't know if they will ever be released from Tamms to general population.
- Every man at Tamms Supermax is kept in solitary confinement. Men never leave their cell except to shower and exercise in a concrete room. Meals come through



a slot in their cell door. Men at Tamms eat alone, pray alone, and walk the yard alone. Tamms keeps strict limits on the amount of personal property men can keep. This includes family photos, letters and Christmas cards.

- Long-term solitary confinement causes mental illness. Suicide attempts, self-mutilation, smearing of feces, and

severe psychological illnesses are common at Tamms.

- Just 3 months in solitary confinement has detrimental effects. Yet 100 men have been there since April of 1999. The other men at Tamms have been there for years and years on end. When proposing the creation of Tamms the Illinois legislature was told that it would be used solely as a sort of shock treatment for periods of one year for the "worst of the worst."
- Taxpayers pay about \$90,000 per year to keep a man at Tamms—over four times the cost of other state prisons. There is no clear benefit for this expense. Nor for the court costs incurred to defend against the numerous lawsuits for violations of these inmates' constitutional rights.

### PEOPLES' COMMUNITY POTLUCK

Sunday, June 6, 6–8 PM, Independent Media Center, 202 South Broadway, Urbana

The Peoples' Community Potluck is a food-sharing communal gathering to discuss the economic and social problems in our community. The intention is to harness the talents and resources of local organizations and individuals to improve the conditions of working people, unemployed people, poverty-stricken people, and those who are physically or mentally unable to care for themselves. Given the sorry state of the economy over the past 8 years, and government economic policy that has been most concerned with the well-being of the very wealthy, organizations and individuals at the grass-roots level are going to have to use social conscience and talents to find ways of supporting the most vulnerable people in our communities. We cannot just rely on the new administration to turn things around. We envision a new stimulus for coordinated action and communication for a democratic, egalitarian political-economy.

### Kiwane Carrington Update

According to Champaign City Manager Steve Carter, the appeal of a 30-day suspension given to Daniel Norbits, the officer who shot and killed Kiwane Carrington, was denied.

A day after the suspension was announced, an attorney with the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) filed an appeal on behalf of Norbits. A hearing was held on May 18, 2010 between the FOP attorney, Norbits, Deputy Chief Troy Daniels, and Carter.

After a CCAPP meeting held Monday, May 24, 2010, Carter said he had made his decision and the appeal was denied. The city, he said, would send us a copy of his statement in response to a FOIA request for the results.

### Get Involved with the *Public i*

You don't need a degree in journalism to be a citizen journalist. We are all experts in something, and we have the ability to share our information and knowledge with others. The *Public i* is always looking for writers and story ideas. We invite you to submit ideas or proposals during our weekly meetings (Thursdays at 5:30PM at the UCIMC), or to contact one of the editors.



# History on the Platform, Memory in the Street

## Notes from May 1, 2006 Chicago

By Helena Worthen



Helena Worthen is a labor educator at the University of Illinois School of Labor and Employment Relations. She and her husband Joe Berry will be leaving C-U this summer. We wish them well, and thank them for their contributions to our community.

This is a reflection on the May Day actions of 2006 and a sudden conflict that brought to life the complex relationship between "history" as spoken from the platform and "memory" as lived in the street. In 2007, 2008, 2009 and again this year tens of thousands marched in Chicago, and again a small memorial was held at the Haymarket statue. In 2010, plans were announced by the Illinois Labor History Society for a major campaign to restore the Haymarket burial monument in Forest Home Cemetery in River Forest. More information will be available at [illinoislaborhistory.org](http://illinoislaborhistory.org)

### HERE IS THE STORY...

On Mayday, 2006 I left the huge Immigrants Rights rally in Grant Park in Chicago and headed towards Haymarket Square to get there by 4:30 for the Labor History Society celebration at the Haymarket monument. As I came up Randolph Street toward DesPlaines, I noticed that the monument, a statue representing a hay wagon with figures, was surrounded by portable barriers.

Normally, there are no barriers around the statue. In fact, bronze soapboxes are set into the sidewalk beside it and it is common for people to stand on the soapboxes and climb up on the wagon. The statue replicates what was there 120 years ago: it stands on the spot where the hay wagon stood from which the speakers at the Haymarket mass meeting addressed the crowd.

But that day, barriers enclosed both the statue and the soapboxes. Something was the matter.

At that point, it was still early and only a handful of celebrants were in the square. Five or ten uniformed police were standing around. There was a big speaker's platform set up about forty feet north of the statue. People were setting up microphones and video cameras.

Then a group of anarchist kids came into the square, dancing and jumping and beating paint can drums. They wore the usual green hair, black jeans, some masks, some theatrically ripped and debrided shirts and skirts. They made a circle below the speaker's platform and danced and beat their drums. They looked like the cast from Les Miz.

Now more police appeared. Some were on bicycles and wore yellow bike jackets and bike helmets.

Suddenly the anarchist kids ran toward the statue, jumped over the barriers and climbed up and placed their black flag on top of the statue. In their gray and black clothes, they looked like part of the statue. They looked great against the dark gray sky.

Just as suddenly, the police rushed them. I was standing about twenty feet away. The ferocity with which the police threw themselves towards the kids on the statue, tore them down and tore their flag down, was breathtaking. They pulled the kids to the ground. Some kids got up again and struggled, but they were overpowered.

My first thought was that this was some kind of theater, a choreographed historical re-enactment of the police riot that had ensued after the bomb was thrown among the demonstrators in Haymarket Square 120 years ago. One person was killed by that bomb, but eight were killed by gunfire from the police, who went crazy and started shooting into the crowd.

The tussling continued with the kids getting up off the ground and pushing back at the police, and the police

grabbing them and knocking them down. There were a lot of photographers who were dipping and snapping all around. I was standing near a lamp post beyond the statue when the police rushed some kids who were fleeing in my direction. I was not right in their path, but I was close enough, and one policeman knocked me down with his bicycle. It was not an accident. They were using their bicycles as prods and shields, and he lifted his bike up and aimed it so that the front wheel struck me in the chest. At this point, I realized it was not theater.

I was shaken.

The four people who were tried and hung after the Haymarket massacre of 1886 were not the police, but some anarchist immigrants, most of whom had not even been at the demonstration, which had been called to

cover the multitudes of diverse social justice organizations alive in this country. The worst was about Haymarket. He had come to the US some years ago, before the statue was erected, and asked to see the site of the Haymarket Massacre. He was taken to it, and of course, there was nothing there. Nothing there! He was amazed and angry. "Even in the worst of times," he said, "we in India did not forget. We never lost the left, we never forgot, even in the worst of times."

The statue that stands there today, the haywagon, is very new and was the product of years of difficult negotiation with Mayor Daley, the City Council, and the Chicago Police.

It started to drizzle. Now various labor leaders climbed up onto the platform. The musicians started playing, loudly. At the same time, more police flowed into the square,

some on bikes. By the time the speeches started there were at least four dozen police standing in ranks beside the statue. They had taken their bike jackets off. The speakers got into gear. Nor one mentioned the rush to tear the anarchist kids off the statue. Not one commented on the presence of the silent ranks of police in their blue uniforms as if at a funeral. It was as if the speakers were reading prepared scripts that couldn't incorporate the confrontation between police and anarchists that had happened right in front of them.

I decided to leave. I was sore where I'd been whammed, and still shaky. Also, I had to drive down to Champaign that night and it was just about time to hit the road and join the end of rush hour.

On the way down to Champaign, I listened to NPR. Lots of the news was about the immigrants' rights marches but the commentators seemed to be disparaging their significance: they weren't as big as they looked, the marches weren't as many as expected. One official said, "These people who are marching today want to be part of the American mainstream. It's too bad the left wing groups, the labor unions, have tried to hitch a ride on this movement. These people don't want to be associated with left wing groups." She explained that May Day is "The socialist left-wing holiday in some other countries." Yet two things had just happened that were indisputable, no matter

how comfortable it might be to deny or ignore them: the streets had filled with thousands and thousands of marchers, reclaiming May Day for immigrants and workers, and the police had once again, as if reliving an old memory, tried to beat up anarchists.

In Champaign the next day, I attended a symposium at the Center for Democracy in a Multi-Racial Society. One speaker compared the domains of history and memory. "History is the arena of data, of libraries and archives, of writing and paper," he said. "Memory is the arena of the street."



Helena and Joe at the Haymarket memorial statue in Chicago

protest the killing of two strikers over at the McCormick factory. Their trial consumed the public press and received international attention. It is a tale of a judicial process distorted by ideology, money and fear.

The first statue that was erected in Haymarket was not a statue of the martyrs but of a policeman, shown standing in uniform with his hand raised to signify that he was ready to protect family, community and country. This statue was bombed several times and finally placed in an inner garden inside the police academy, where it still stands. Then for many years there was nothing to mark the site of Haymarket except an almost illegible plaque set in the sidewalk. Visitors from other countries would come, expecting to find a monument that would commemorate the day that is recognized all over the world as May Day. I remember a presentation by Ashim Roy, the president of the NTUI, the new union federation in India. During the question period, he was asked to tell his impressions of the United States, the best and the worst. The best was his dis-