

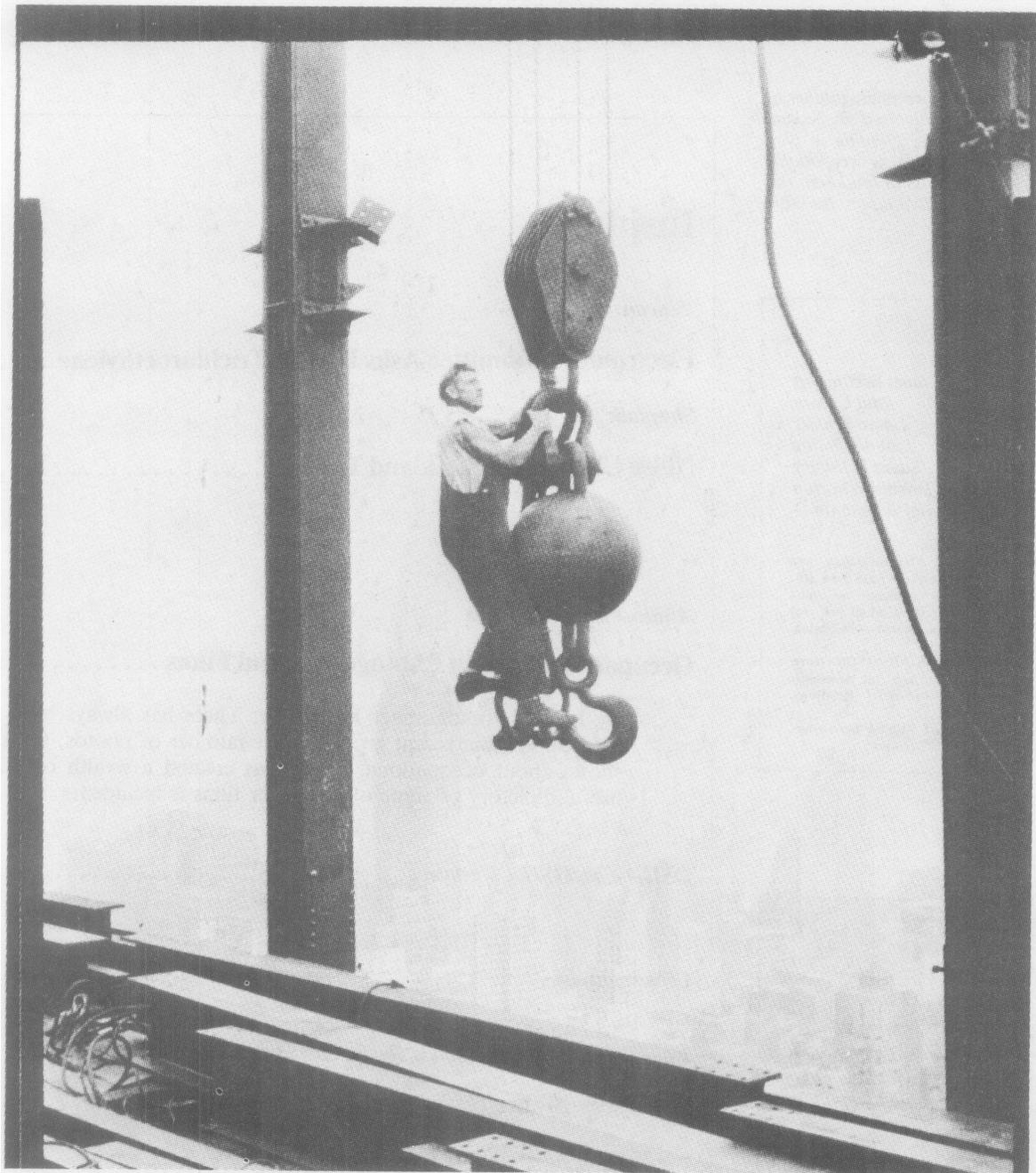
# Labor Occupational Health Program

# MONITOR

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**IN THIS ISSUE:**  
**OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH: PHOTOGRAPHY/FILMS**



# Labor Occupational Health Program

# MONITOR

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**On the Cover:**

*Lewis W. Hine, the well-known photographer of work, captured this worker involved in the construction of the Empire State Building in New York in 1931. Ken Light's article on occupational health photography in this issue (pp. 7-9) emphasizes that socially committed artists are more active now than ever.*

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## MOVING?

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## Inside:

*'Silicon Valley'*

**Electronics Committee Asks Ban on Trichloroethylene . . . . . p. 3**

*Shoptalk*

**Noise Challenge at Oakland Tribune . . . . . p. 4**

*Audio-Visual Materials*

**Occupational Health Photography and Films . . . . . p. 6**

By LOHP Photographer Ken Light. There has always been social and political art, but recent growth in the number of photos, films, and slide shows about occupational health has created a wealth of resources. A useful directory of some of the better films is included.

*OSHA-Cal/OSHA Update . . . . . p. 10*

*Clearinghouse . . . . . p. 12*

*Books, Pamphlets, Articles, Research Reports*

**A Cancer Bibliography . . . . . p. 12**

*Newswire . . . . . p. 14*

# Electronics Group Seeks to Ban TCE

by Mandy Hawes

Electronics Committee on Occupational Safety and Health

The Electronics Committee on Occupational Safety and Health (ECOSH), headquartered in the Bay Area's "Silicon Valley" in Mountain View, California, has undertaken a campaign to ban trichloroethylene (TCE) from California workplaces. There is evidence linking this very toxic solvent with cancer, and there are numerous industrial substitutes available to replace it. TCE has also been linked to liver, kidney, neurological, inner ear, skin, and cardiovascular problems, and there is some concern that it causes birth defects.

ECOSH, an organization of workers and professionals concerned with occupational health problems in the "Silicon Valley" electronics industry, has received a grant from the Berkeley Law Foundation, a public interest organization, to pursue its TCE campaign. The primary work under the grant is being done by Mandy Hawes, a San Jose attorney and ECOSH's Campaign Director; additional work under the grant is being done by Carolyn Langenkamp of Woodland, California, and Blythe Michelson of Berkeley.

*"TCE. In industry we call it an 'oil eater.' That means it eats the oil in your skin, the oil in your eyes, anyplace the body has a protective layer of oil. TCE is a great degreaser, sometimes a whole lot more than the worker bargained for."*

—Statement from a Silicon Valley electronics worker

The data on TCE's potential carcinogenicity include a bulletin from the National Cancer Institute issued in 1975, which reported positive results in one species of test animal. That study has been followed by others, which are also suggestive of cancer potential in humans. Still another study is expected to be released from NCI shortly, and it too is expected to show a positive correlation. (This most recent study is being done with "pure" TCE, to eliminate any argument that any cancers which develop in the test animals are the result of some impurity in the chemical as opposed to trichloroethylene itself.)

TCE is widely used in the electronics industry as a parts degreaser and as a general all-purpose solvent for oils, waxes, and greases. In recent years some plants have used TCE to clean work areas. Despite government reports about the dangers, many "Silicon Valley" workers still use TCE (also called "trichlor") on a daily basis.

## STANDARDS BOARD ACTS

In late May, 1980, the Cal/OSHA Standards Board adopted an emergency standard for TCE which limits exposure to 25 parts per million (ppm). (See related story, below.) There will now be a review period of approximately 120 days, during which Cal/OSHA will receive input from a select Advisory Committee, prior to recommending either that the 25 ppm standard be made permanent or that an even lower standard be adopted. (NIOSH has also recently recommended a 25 ppm standard to federal OSHA.)

ECOSH urges concerned California workers and their advocates to support not only a dramatic reduction in the permissible level for workplace exposure to TCE, but in fact a ban on its continued industrial use. ECOSH further urges support for its demand that one of TCE's most popular, supposedly

*continued on p. 16*

## Cal/OSHA Lowers Exposure Limit for Trichloroethylene

On May 30, 1980, Dr. Richard Wade, Cal/OSHA's Deputy Chief for Health, announced that the Cal/OSHA Standards Board has adopted an emergency occupational safety and health standard for trichloroethylene (TCE) which reduces the time-weighted exposure limit to 25 parts per million (ppm). The emergency standard is effective until a final standard is adopted.

TCE is a solvent used in degreasing operations by the electronics, metal fabrication, dry cleaning, printing, and mechanical maintenance industries.

The original standard for TCE, established in 1973, set an exposure limit of 100 ppm. That limit, Wade said, "is

not adequate to protect workers from acute neurological, liver, and cardiovascular damage."

Wade said that Cal/OSHA believes that industry can quickly comply with the emergency standard through the use of engineering controls, substitution of less toxic substances, modification of industrial processes, and through changing work practices.

According to Wade, nine labor organizations in California sent petitions to the Cal/OSHA Standards Board requesting the change, and research in the Department of Health Services and the Department of Industrial Relations also found that the old standard was inade-

quate.

Wade added that, "As with any emergency standard, public hearings will be held within the next 90 days to evaluate whether the exposure limit specified by the emergency standard should be reduced even more." Hearing dates and places will be published in major newspapers.

Some evidence has been developed by State researchers that TCE causes cancer in certain animals. If it is proven to be a potential carcinogen for humans, even the emergency exposure limit would probably be lowered appreciably, since California applies strict regulations to occupational carcinogens.



*Oakland Tribune Case*

## Union, Cal/OSHA Win Challenge to Pressroom Noise

*(In 1978, following an accident, Web Pressmen Local 4 in San Francisco, which represents pressmen at the Oakland Tribune, filed a formal complaint against the newspaper, requesting a Cal/OSHA inspection. Among violations subsequently cited by Cal/OSHA was a violation of the noise standard. The Tribune appealed the noise citation, and a hearing was held before a Cal/OSHA Administrative Law Judge. Web Pressmen Local 4 elected party status in the case, supporting the citation. In a decision recently announced, the judge upheld the citation. LOHP's Paul Chown, who has worked with the Web Pressmen on health and safety problems, describes some of the difficulties encountered in the appeal.)*

*by Paul Chown*

*LOHP Labor Coordinator*

While Cal/OSHA rightly stresses the amount of voluntary compliance it achieves as a result of its inspections and citations, the fact is that for the small percentage of contested cases which find their way into the appeal process, the road to compliance is a long and rocky one for the workers involved.

Nearly all noise citations which have been appealed by employers have been lost by the Cal/OSHA legal unit. The difficulties faced are threefold:

1. No employer is ever cited for a serious violation of the noise standard because of existing Cal/OSHA regulations. Hence there are never any fines leveled for violations. Cal/OSHA inspectors are limited to citing for general violations. With no serious violations at stake, employers have everything to gain by appealing the general citations.

The Cal/OSHA Policy and Procedure Manual (C-2a, Att. A, p.4) states: "If the Daily Noise Dose is greater than 8, the violation is considered serious." Under the existing code this would require 8-hour noise levels greater than

105 decibels (dBA) before a serious violation would be cited.

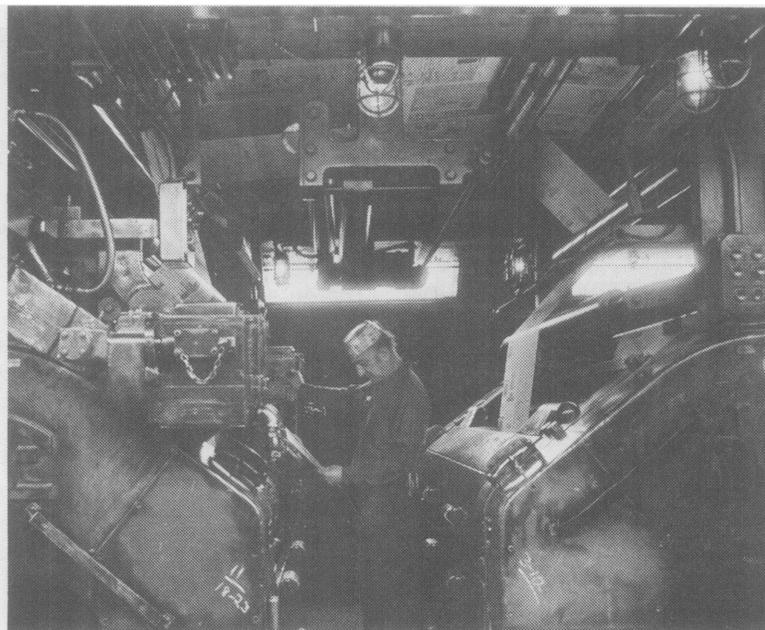
The present standard understates the noise hazard. Hearing loss risks begin at 85 dBA, and with noise doubling every 3 dBA, the 105 dBA level is actually 64 times the level at which hearing loss begins.

The existence of such an administrative regulation is a clear signal to all concerned that noise has a low priority and is not to be taken too "seriously."

The basic lack of enforcement springs from this perception of the noise problem, in addition to some clear deficiencies in the present noise standard itself.

2. The noise standard presents difficulties when citations are challenged, because it requires that noise levels be tested with sound level meters. While this is certainly an accepted way of measuring sound, the standard is silent about the use of dosimeters. (Dosimeters are metering instruments which a worker wears on his/her person to measure all the noise to which he/she is exposed during an eight-hour period).

Dosimeters are clearly the best way to measure sound, which has to be tabulated over an eight-hour period to meet OSHA standards. Using only a sound level meter means that OSHA inspectors have to spend many more hours



*Web pressman at newspaper. Engineering controls to limit noise in pressrooms are feasible, but some employers resist them. (Photo: Ken Light).*

following workers around and taking measurements.

In practice, industrial hygienists use both measuring instruments. But the limitation of the standard to sound level meters provides a fertile field for the employer to challenge the results of the testing. Inspectors, when pressed for how many measurements they took with a sound level meter, and for how long they stayed in each department, inevitably look somewhat foolish and incompetent. For administrative law judges, the Appeals Board itself, and the courts as a final recourse, the technical questions involved in determining how accurate the measurements were are a fertile field for confusion and obfuscation.

3. **Lastly, the issue of feasibility of engineering control measures is very controversial.** In one respect, the California standard is better than the Federal standard as applied. The question of the *economics* of controls ("cost-benefit" analysis) is not a proper subject to be raised in California, because the standard properly restricts the issue to whether in fact the engineering controls proposed by the State are feasible. Nevertheless, of course, employers do attempt to bring this issue into question in most noise cases, even in California.

Whenever cost considerations are allowed to appear full-blown in appeals against citations, the case is almost invariably going to be tied up in the courts for years.

## TRIBUNE APPEAL

The *Oakland Tribune* has gone through two mergers in recent years; currently it is part of the Gannett newspaper chain. The new publisher has already announced a decision to move in the near future to a new location with new newspaper presses. The resistance to settling the noise case initiated by the 1978 citation would appear to rest on a firm decision to oppose any government pressure to force management to make any change. Despite its recent loss in the appeal hearing, management has said it will keep appealing until all remedies are exhausted.

What is at stake for the pressmen themselves is preservation of their hearing from a noise source that inevitably causes the pressmen to lose part or most of their hearing.

Web Pressmen Local 4 elected party status when the *Tribune* appealed, and was involved in the entire proceeding.

In the *Tribune* case, the issue of

# Cal/OSHA Proposes New Noise Standard

by Paul Chown

In order to frame a more enforceable noise standard, and to plug up some of the holes in the wording of the present standard, Cal/OSHA has proposed a series of amendments to the noise standard which are now under consideration by the Cal/OSHA Advisory Committee.

(The Advisory Committee is tripartite, with representatives of industry and labor meeting with the Cal/OSHA Research and Standards Development Unit.)

Hearings on the new proposals have been held in San Francisco and Los Angeles.

The expressed hope of William Stefan, Cal/OSHA Supervising Industrial Hygienist, is to arrive at agreement of all concerned on the contents of the amendments. It is, however, extremely doubtful that such a consensus will be reached. Some of the major disputes are the following:

1. How should "seasonal workers" be defined? What should be the length of employment distinguishing such a

person? The proposed amendment reads that it is 60 days; the cannery industry want it to be 180 days.

2. How much hearing loss, in decibels, when tests for hearing ability are taken at various frequencies (hertz levels), should be sufficient to advise a worker of a possible hearing loss problem?

3. Are dosimeters a good measuring instrument for noise? (The argument of one industry spokesperson was that no two manufacturers' instruments gave the same reading, and he felt this could lead to unwarranted citations.)

4. The table for exposure limits is being criticized.

5. Virtually every definition is being challenged to one degree or another.

Progress, if you can call it that, is so slow that it would seem at this writing as if the differences will not be resolved in the Advisory Committee, but will require ultimate resolution by the full Standards Board.

sound level meter vs. dosimeter measurements did not prove to be a problem; both instruments had been used, and the sound level meter readings backed up and reinforced the dosimeter averages. Costs were really not an issue. The entire defense of the *Tribune* consisted of the employer contention that the engineering controls proposed were not "feasible." The contention is rather bizarre in view of the fact that at two other major newspapers in the Bay Area (the San Francisco Printing Agency, which publishes the *Chronicle* and the *Examiner*, and the *San Jose Mercury News*) engineering controls have been installed which drastically reduce the noise level from about 105 dBA to about 90 dBA, give or take a little depending on where people work in relation to the principal noise source—the folders. This reduction in sound energy represents a reduction of 5 times below the previous level!

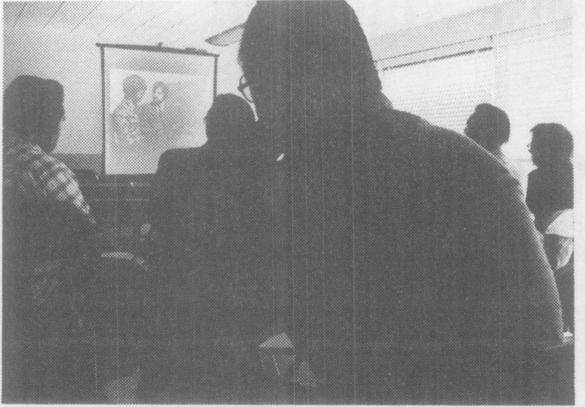
The union, through its witnesses Harold McGuire, Chairperson of the Health and Safety Committee, and

Richard Munger, President, proved with pictures and personal testimony that the folder enclosures at other newspapers would be capable of being designed to fit the presses at the *Tribune*. Other union witnesses testified to the stress and onerous character of the exposure to excessive noise.

Cal/OSHA also had an expert witness, Dr. George Wilson, who advanced a number of alternative solutions to reducing noise in the press room. He endorsed completely, as the "best approach," the proposals of Web Pressmen Local 4. The union arranged for Dr. Wilson to site visit the other newspapers.

Newspaper presswork is an old and highly skilled trade. A large number of current pressmen are second and third generation pressmen. Consequently the disabilities of deafness are passed on from father to son.

What the current membership of the union hope to gain is engineering controls to protect their hearing.



(Photo: Ken Light.)

# Occupational Health: Photography, Films, and Audio-Visual Materials

This article is adapted from "Occupational Health Films and Audio-Visual Materials," appearing in the special labor issue of *Film Library Quarterly*, vol. 12 nos. 2-3, 1979.

By Ken Light

*LOHP Photographer*

Since the beginning of film, and of still photography, there have been media workers who have tried to inspire people to seek changes by documenting dreadful conditions or situations so that the public might become aware of them and create an outcry for change. The 1970's has had its share of socially-committed artists working on the important issues of the day.

Within the last five years, one area that has seen a burgeoning of such work is the field of occupational health and safety. The fact that countless thousands of workers continually confront unsafe and unhealthful working conditions every day, often without knowledge of possible harmful consequences, has led to creation of important films, slide shows, still photographs, and posters documenting the problem or suggesting methods for change.

Lewis Hine (an early documentary photographer) powerfully documented the problem of child laborers in America's factories, utilizing still photographs, posters, and (lantern) slide shows. His work pointed up the power of creating audio-visual materials to bring about public awareness of issues that confront us all. The "new generation" of media workers have developed films, slide shows, posters, and pamphlets that have become important tools to be used by labor unions, rank and file coalitions, and labor educators to educate workers and the public about potentially hazardous working condi-

tions.

What marks these new works is the realistic and human manner in which workers are portrayed. Gone are the typical "government" materials so popular during the '40s and '50s, with scenes like a stand-up narrator dressed in white lab coat exhorting workers to be careful as they work. The implication of many of these films is that accidents are obviously caused by worker laziness or carelessness.

The new generation of films offers a divergent viewpoint from many of the films produced by and for the National Safety Council or industry films which shift the blame for death, disease, and injury away from the work environment and onto the workers.

Today we see a film showing the effects of working with cotton dust, and the fight that workers are waging both to be compensated and to clean up the work environment. Or, we see a film about women workers and the hazards that they commonly face, whether industry-forced sterilization or the introduction of new materials into their offices or plants. The health effects of some of these materials will not show up for 20 or 30 years. The exciting thing is the style and genuine concern that one feels after seeing most of these films and slide shows. The reaction from workers and unions is generally one of support, and often concern about changing the situation.

More and more audio-visual materials are being produced, and the future looks bright. One film about occupational health, just completed, raised nearly \$20,000 directly from concerned

international and local unions for the production. Concern about this issue is becoming more and more common as unions see the need to educate their workers, and as they begin to recognize the potential for organizing around the issue of occupational health. Just this past year, the International Woodworkers of America (IWA) contributed \$16,000 towards production of what may be the first union documentary film that deals realistically with occupational health problems.

The audio-visual materials that are currently available are easily accessible. Many unions, community groups, medical schools, and apprentice programs find that these materials easily fit into the format of a meeting or conference. More of them also offer good viewing and discussion for general audiences that help raise the level of consciousness about the issue.

There are many different kinds of films available, meeting many different needs. Some are good to raise general consciousness about the issues (*More than a Paycheck*, *Song of the Canary*); some can excite audiences new to occupational health or audiences that are knowledgeable about particular conditions (*Working Steel*). But care is needed in choice of films for certain situations. For example, showing *Working Steel* to an audience of mostly women workers might not be the right approach. The film shows the heavy industrial work of this almost totally male-dominated industry, and many non-industrial workers may not be able to relate to the work if this is their first introduction to the health and safety

issue. (One-third of all women workers today are clerical workers.) *Working For Your Life*, on the other hand, talks about problems that are common to both men and women, featuring women workers. And the second half of *Song of the Canary* shows many women textile workers fighting for compensation and improvements in the industry. These two could be successfully used in a variety of different settings.

LOHP's slide shows on construction may be best suited for audiences that face hazards similar to the ones described in the shows. The film dramatizations from the Wisconsin School for Workers (*Health Hazard in the Shop; The Shop Accident*) are good to show at union meetings where discussion may have occurred about contract language or health and safety committees, or at a "how to" session on using the Occupational Safety and Health Act. These films are not as good at raising general consciousness and might not work with groups unfamiliar with occupational health jargon.

It is important to decide what it is you are trying to do, and the issues you want to discuss; most likely there is some form of audio-visual aid available for your need. The films and slide shows are available by purchase or rental. Many are available from International Unions, or from regional offices of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). Reviewed below are some of the available materials that have been recently released and that are useful, in varying degrees, in union or other programs. This is not an implication that they are the only such materials available; but these materials are some of the best and most versatile that I have found.

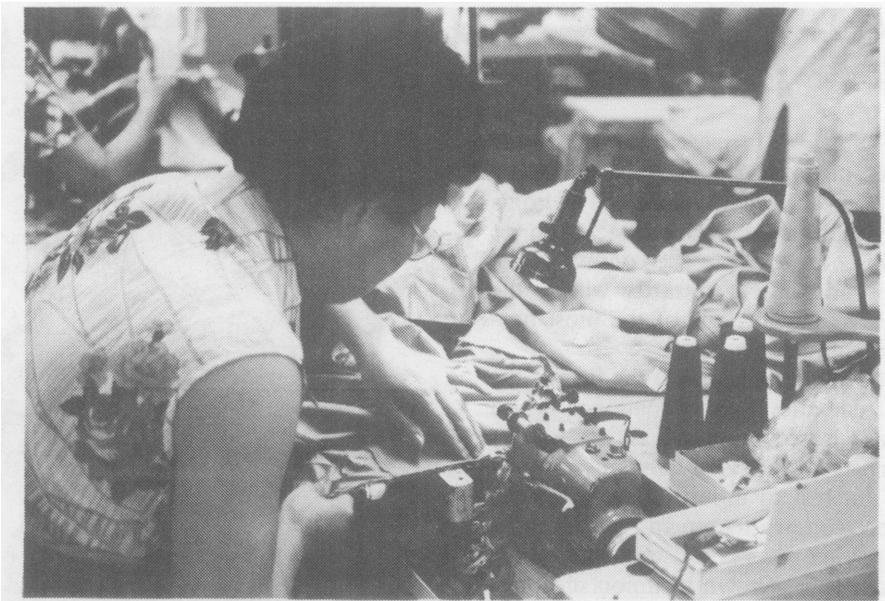
## **Song of the Canary**

*Directed by Josh Hanig and Dave Davis.  
16 mm; color; 58 minutes.*

*Available from:  
P.O. Box 315  
Franklin Lakes, N.J. 17417*

*Rental \$65.; purchase \$650.*

**Song of the Canary** is a welcome addition to the ever-growing number of films on occupational health. It is well-made and has been used successfully by many union and community groups to



*Photo of a textile worker from Working For Your Life, LOHP's film on women workers. (Photo: © LOHP. All rights reserved.)*

raise consciousness about occupational health and the long- and short-range effects of occupational illness.

The film is a prime example of the new generation of labor-oriented films that are being made, and that hopefully will continue to be made. The filmmakers offer a humanist and personal vision of chemical workers at California's Oxy-Chem pesticide plant, stricken with fertility loss due to occupational chemical exposure, and of the older, longer range effects of brown lung disease (byssinosis) from cotton dust on textile workers.

The film is emotional and terrifying, and it emphasizes the need for cleaning up the industrial environment. The title reminds us of the once-common practice of coal miners to bring canaries into the mines to warn of otherwise undetected gases. At the end of the film, the viewer realizes that the workers themselves have become the new "canaries."

This film is excellent for showing to any group interested in occupational health.

## **Working For Your Life**

*Directed by Ken Light and Andrea Hricko.  
16mm; color; 55 minutes.*

*Available from:  
LOHP  
2521 Channing Way  
Berkeley, CA 94720*

*Rental \$65.; purchase \$475.*

**Working For Your Life**, recently released, is a film that covers working women, their problems, and their struggles to correct workplace hazards. Filmed in over 40 workplaces, the vivid scenes and humanistic portrayal of women as part of the once male-dominated workforce make this film an important contribution to both occupational health materials and to the filmed history of labor.

**Working For Your Life** interviews injured workers, from a woman who has asbestos-related disease to a woman who lost her finger in an industrial accident. Both sterilization of women workers and worker hysteria are discussed through interviews and filmed footage. Important about this film is the fact that, unlike many of the other available health and safety films, it shows that people are beginning to deal with workplace hazards and points out that organization is one of the best ways to protect one's health.

## **Working Steel**

*Directed by Ken Light and Charles West.  
16mm; black and white; 20 minutes.*

*Available from:  
LOHP  
2521 Channing Way  
Berkeley, CA 94720*

*Rental \$30.; purchase \$175.*

*continued on p. 8*

## HEALTH FILMS

*continued from p. 7*

The glowing furnaces and steaming molten metal of America's foundries are the heart and lifeblood of the nation's heavy industry. Such is the vision of **Working Steel**, set in the context of the health and safety hazards within the foundry industry, one of the most hazardous in America.

**Working Steel** is one of the first of the new generation of occupational health films (released in 1976), and it still remains a film that is visually powerful. It is of interest to industrial workers, but has been shown to general audiences.

**Working Steel** is a useful tool, short enough to be shown at union meetings or to medical schools and community groups. It generally invites long discussion and usually leads the viewers to discuss who is responsible for such unhealthy workplaces and what can be done to improve conditions.

The film follows the foundry process, discusses the hazards, and interviews injured workers. But the film does not directly lay blame for the treacherous conditions; thus after a showing the viewers often end up in lengthy discussion.

### **Our Health Is Not For Sale**

*Directed by Boyce Richardson and David Newman.*

*16mm; color; 25 minutes.*

*Available from:*

**National Film Board of Canada  
1251 Avenue of the Americas  
New York, N.Y. 10020**

*Purchase \$305.*

The workers know what is best for the workplace, and so it is the worker who should control the work environment. Unions' constant pressure, and only that pressure, will accomplish anything in the workplace.

Such are the overriding statements made in the yet-to-be-released film **Our Health Is Not For Sale**, produced in Canada by the National Film Board. Using vivid footage of strikes and workplace scenes intertwined with interviews, the filmmakers make the point that occupational health and safety is a right, and, as such, non-negotiable. It points out that only through strikes (some very successful Canadian strikes



*Documentary photographer Lewis Hine made many aware of the problems of child labor through his work. This spinner was caught by Hine in a Carolina cotton mill in 1908.*

are used as illustrations) and bringing these issues to the bargaining table are workers able to receive a fair shake from the companies that employ them.

The film can be a useful tool at union meetings, particularly if used in relation to discussing collective bargaining. Because of the vivid footage of such workplaces as the INCO copper smelter, it should be of interest to a general audience. But it would be most valuable to show after the more basic films have introduced health and safety issues.

### **More Than a Paycheck**

*Directed by Frank Cavanaugh.  
Narrated by John Wayne.*

*16mm; color.*

*Produced by George Washington University.*

*Available from U.S. Department of Labor (OSHA).*

**More Than a Paycheck** is a thoughtfully-made film that looks at workplaces where cancer-causing materials are used. But it unfortunately lacks the impact, emotion, and urgency of many of the other occupational health films. Visually, the footage is quite beautiful and in many cases shows work scenes seldom seen.

**More Than a Paycheck** shows a wide variety of workplace scenes, and contains strong narration by Dr. Irving Selikoff talking about the "seeds of cancer in the workplace." It also offers

some solutions that industry is attempting to implement in the workplace. Comments by industry spokespeople from Johns-Manville and Exxon tend to make one feel that the overall problem is being dealt with by most industry. But statistics and descriptions by workers of the hazards they face show otherwise.

Generally, this film should be looked at as an introduction to carcinogens and the workplace. But the film is bland in its approach to a gripping issue, and will most likely not excite an audience or direct viewers to action.

### **Health Hazard in the Shop**

*16mm; color; 25 minutes.*

### **The Shop Accident**

*16mm; color; 26 minutes.*

### **Responsibilities of Union Health and Safety Committees**

*16mm; color; in progress.*

*Available from:*

**University of Wisconsin  
School for Workers  
1327 University Avenue  
Madison, Wisconsin 53701**

The School for Workers at the University of Wisconsin has been offering films that differ from the current trend in occupational health audio-visual materials, in that they are dramatizations. They have been effectively used

in educational programs specifically discussing issues such as OSHA inspections or employee rights and responsibilities under the OSH Act.

A new film, **Responsibilities of Union Health and Safety Committees**, also a dramatization, was filmed in an industrial shop in the Midwest and is currently in rough-cut version, to be released in August.

Both currently available films are good how-to-do-it films and are easy to incorporate into training sessions or conferences. Generally, they are too specific to be shown to audiences unfamiliar with occupational health. The information and points made in both films are important, and one should overlook the sometimes stilted acting and context of these films.

### **Asbestos: Fighting a Killer**

*By Bonnie Bellow and Nick Egleson.*

*Slide show with tape.*

*Available from:*

**Oil, Chemical, and Atomic Workers International Union**  
1126- 16th St. N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20036

**Asbestos: Fighting a Killer** is an excellent slide show, and is a must for anyone interested in occupational disease. Its vivid photographs and powerful commentary are interwoven with the voices of many of the workers using asbestos, talking of their experiences. The technique of having interviews and songs as part of the tape make the show move along at a fast and interesting pace.

This show discusses causes and effects of exposure to asbestos and shows ways workers can protect their health.

Bonnie Bellow and Nick Egleson have produced several other slide shows, including one on textile hazards for the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union, and one on organizing for OCAW. Their shows are all high quality productions, interesting both visually and in the sound tracks used.

The vivid photography and taped narration make them of interest to many varied audiences.

### **Occupational Hazards of Construction**

*4 slide-tape modules:*

#### **Health and Safety Hazards of Construction**

#### **Chemical Hazards**

#### **Walking/Working Surfaces**

#### **Hazards of Noise**

*Available from:*

**Labor Occupational Health Program**  
2521 Channing Way  
Berkeley, CA 94720

These educational materials developed by California-based LOHP are shows that discuss both potential hazards of a construction site and the differences between safety and health hazards. The major show (**Introduction to Health and Safety Hazards of Construction**) is the most versatile of the four. The others are more specific and are probably most valuable to a building trades audience, but the vivid photography and taped narration have been effectively used by other groups also.

The walking/working surfaces show discusses hazards of using ladders and scaffolds, and is probably appropriate only for use by an audience of building trades workers.

### **Your Job or Your Life**

*Slide show with tape; 29 minutes.*

*Available from:*

**Institute for Labor Education and Research**  
853 Broadway  
New York, N.Y. 10003

**Your Job or Your Life** is a slide show containing original cartoons, collages, and photographs discussing the political economy of health and safety. It points out how corporations attempt to force working people into choosing between their jobs and their lives. It is an excellent learning tool and most enjoyable presentation.

#### *Coalition of Labor Union Women*

## **Women's Conference in L.A.**

Working women from a variety of occupations attended a conference on occupational safety and health on March 29 and 30, 1980, at the Institute of Industrial Relations on the UCLA campus. Co-sponsored by the Los Angeles chapter, Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW) and the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO, the conference attracted representatives from such unions as the Communications Workers, Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers, American Federation of Teachers, Office and Professional Employees, and American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees.

Participants heard a keynote address by Sylvia Krekel, Health and Safety Specialist for the Oil, Chemical, and Atomic Workers International Union in Denver, Colorado. Krekel focused on the many concerns within OCAW around the issues of occupational health and safety, particularly as it relates to women workers. One of the major topics was discrimination leveled against women simply because they are able to bear children. The whole issue of reproductive hazards and discriminatory hiring and placement policies was discussed in detail, as were strategies to effectively fight

such practices.

Krekel described the filing of an OSHA complaint by OCAW and the subsequent citing of American Cyanamid in Willow Island, Virginia for violating OSHA's "general duty" clause. (The company practiced exclusionary policies which resulted in five women having themselves sterilized so they could keep their jobs.) Krekel also explored other avenues of concern to working women and dwelt on the need for collective action to effect change in the workplace.

Several workshops were offered with an emphasis on identifying and correcting hazards in various occupations such as retail trades, clerical jobs, manufacturing, and service industries. Recommendations coming out of the workshops were reported back in a general session. Participants also took part in discussions on topics such as health and safety in organizing, development of health and safety committees, and using law to stimulate change. LOHP staff members Janet Bertinuson and Jo Molloy participated in the conference as resource persons and workshop leaders.

*—Janet Bertinuson*



## 'New Directions' Program

# Tennessee OSHA Program Assists Workers

By Carolyn Bell

University of Tennessee Occupational Health Program

*The following article continues Monitor coverage of various health and safety projects around the U.S. which have received funding, as has LOHP, from the federal OSHA 'New Directions' program. The OSHA grant program, established in 1978, provides funding to unions, universities, public interest and management groups. Earlier coverage of 'New Directions' grant recipients has appeared in the March-April, May-June, and July-August, 1979 issues of Monitor.*

The Occupational Health Program (OHP) at the University of Tennessee College of Pharmacy provides training and technical assistance in an area of the country where occupational health resources and expertise are very scarce. Our task is extremely difficult and challenging because small businesses predominate in Tennessee. And, equally as significant, less than 10% of Tennessee workers are represented by a collective bargaining agent.

As an OSHA 'New Directions' grantee, the OHP has planned strategies to reach both organized and unorganized workers and employers. These strategies involve developing occupational health competencies in existing organizations. To date, the organizations have included the American Lung Association of Tennessee, the American Cancer Society, local Chambers of Commerce, the Small Business Administration, trade associations, and labor organizations.

As an example of one of our joint efforts, the OHP is working with the Tennessee Lung Association to develop and implement a training program for workers in brake-lining and clutch repair shops and garages where there is high-level exposure to asbestos.

A very unique part of the program is our affiliation with the National Poison Control Network (NPCN). Currently, we are developing a protocol to provide training and technical assistance to the many poison centers that comprise the NPCN. As part of this program, we are also developing a national system to disseminate information and to collect data on occupational health exposures. The joint OHP-NPCN effort has a great potential for reaching groups that are not a part of the mainstream for occupational health information, such as

unorganized workers, small businesses, and the general public.

Target groups of workers were selected for outreach activities including trade unionists, unorganized workers, minorities, women, and employees in high health risk small businesses. The OHP offers the following services to these groups:

1. Round-the-clock access to trained health care professionals through the Southern Poison Center. Information on:

- Emergency treatment of toxic exposures;
- Product composition and toxicity;
- Special laboratory tests and medical exams.

2. Industrial hygiene phone consultation on the recognition of health hazards and practical recommendations for control methods:

- Identification of sources of toxic exposures in manufacturing process (including raw materials, by-products, and the final product);
- Use of ventilation and noise controls to eliminate health hazards;
- Advice on safe handling procedures and use of personal protective equipment;
- Interpretation of Tennessee OSHA regulations and recordkeeping requirements.

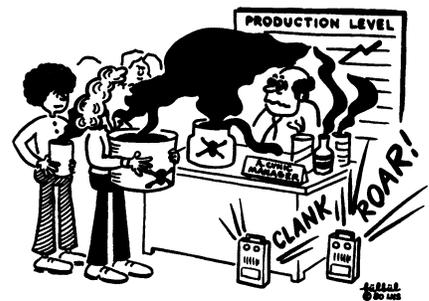
3. Training programs for supervisors and workers to promote good work practices and attitudes:

- On-site classes for small businesses based on a health hazard evaluation of the shop;
- Special topic seminars on toxic chemicals and ventilation;
- Worker training classes.

4. Up-to-date library of occupational health books, periodicals, and training materials:

- Government publications;
- Professional journals;
- Training slides and films;
- Occupational health and toxicology reference books.

Our program was initially funded in October, 1978. In nearly two years of



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existence, we have continued to provide training and technical assistance to the aforementioned target groups. One of our most outstanding achievements was the presentation of a Minority Workers Conference on Occupational Health in August, 1979. This conference provided the impetus to launch this issue as a national priority for NIOSH and other occupational-environmental agencies and organizations. The OHP is presently under contract with NIOSH to publish the conference proceedings.

In the fall, we have plans to present a General Occupational Health Conference and a Conference on Women in the Work Environment. We believe that these two enhance our efforts to promote the awareness of occupational health hazards among workers, employers, health care providers, and the general public in the Memphis and Mid-south area.

## Carter Confirmed as DOSH Chief

The California Senate confirmed the appointment of Art Carter as Chief of the Division of Occupational Safety and Health (DOSH) on April 10, 1980.

DOSH, a component of the State Department of Industrial Relations, was formed when the original Division of Industrial Safety was reorganized to include health functions in 1978. Carter had been the prior Chief of DIS.

Governor Brown's reappointment of Carter was confirmed by a Senate vote of 22-5.

Before his service with DIS and DOSH, Carter had been Executive Secretary-Treasurer of the Contra Costa County Central Labor Council, AFL-CIO.



## New Regulation

# OSHA Orders Worker Access to Medical Records

All general industry, maritime, and construction employers subject to the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 have been required to give workers access to company-maintained medical and toxic exposure records by a new federal OSHA standard announced on May 21, 1980.

Assistant Secretary of Labor for OSHA Eula Bingham, who announced the standard at a press conference, termed it "perhaps the most important standard to be issued since I've been in office." The standard will become effective August 21.

The standard permits any worker to examine and copy an employer's records of exposure to toxic materials, personal medical records, and analyses based on these records. Access must be provided no later than 15 days after a request. Employers must maintain toxic exposure and data analyses for 30 years, and medical records for the duration of employment plus 30 years. Former employees of a company must also be allowed access to their files.

Exposure records include environmental and certain biological monitoring information, material safety data sheets, and industrial hygiene reports. Medical records include such items as medical histories, examination and test results, medical opinions and diagnoses, description of treatments and prescription, and employee medical complaints.

The regulations apply to all employer-generated exposure and medical records, regardless of whether created or maintained within the company or by an outside contractor. Employers are provided complete flexibility as to the form or manner in which records are maintained, except that x-rays must be kept in their original state. Employers may charge reasonable sums for copies of records.

The standard allows a worker the option of having his or her medical record explained by a company physician, or by anyone else, rather than receiving a verbatim copy, but a verbatim copy must be supplied if requested.

In a separate proposal, issued May 23, OSHA extends the standard to agriculture.

## AFL-CIO SUIT

Within two hours of OSHA's release of the new standard May 21, the AFL-CIO filed suit against it in the U.S. Appeals Court for the District of Columbia.

George Taylor, director of occupational health for the AFL-CIO, said that the court challenge was based on failure of the final standard to include a provision for union physicians or researchers to obtain personal medical records of represented employees without their consent for purposes of epidemiological or other investigations, and its failure to allow a union with a legitimate interest to obtain medical records from a company with personal identifiers removed.

The standard does not guarantee access of collective bargaining agents to employee exposure records, analyses based on exposure, and medical records unless the employees each give express written consent.

## OSHA ACCESS

In another regulation, also issued May 23, OSHA establishes an "elaborate security system" to govern its own access to employee medical records.

According to OSHA representatives, "OSHA authority to gain access to personally identifiable employee medical information will be exercised only after the agency has made a careful determination of its need for this information" and will require a written access order which has been approved by the Assistant Secretary of Labor upon the recommendation of the OSHA Medical Records Officer (a new OSHA position).

"Personally identifiable employee medical information will be retained by OSHA only for so long as needed to accomplish the purpose for access, will be kept secure while being used, and will not be disclosed to other agencies or members of the public except in narrowly defined circumstances," according to the regulation.

Compiled from BNA Current Report, United Press, and Occupational Health and Safety Letter.



## PAMPHLETS

**California Meat Products Industry: Analysis of Work Injuries and Illnesses** is a new pamphlet from the California Department of Industrial Relations, Division of Labor Statistics and Research. Analyzing statistics in the industry during the first half of 1976, the study finds that 19,600 workers in more than 280 establishments sustained 1,342 lost-time injuries. 54% of the injuries occurred in slaughterhouses. The proportion of knife injuries in the industry was ten times that of California manufacturing industries in general. 42% of all injuries and illnesses were judged to be preventable by compliance with General Industry Safety Orders, and 54% were deemed preventable by more effective safety and health training.

Single copies of the pamphlet are available at no charge from: Division of Labor Statistics and Research, 455 Golden Gate Ave., San Francisco, CA 94102. Ask for Research Bulletin No. 5 (December, 1979).

## MAGAZINES

A special issue of **Science for the People** which focuses on occupational safety and health is available for \$1.50 from Science Resource Center, Inc., 897 Main St., Cambridge, MA 02139. Ask for the March/April, 1980 issue (vol. 12, no. 2).

**Science for the People** is a bimonthly magazine which covers a broad range of issues, presenting a radical view of science and technology.

The occupational safety and health issue includes articles on hazards of women's work, mass psychogenic illness, and nonionizing radiation. Also included are an interview with LOHP's Molly Coye, M.D., and an article on Black Workers and Occupational Hazards by LOHP Director Morris Davis.

Annual subscriptions to the magazine are also available for \$9. (six issues via regular mail in the U.S.)

## *A Cancer Bibliography*

# For Additional Information . . .

*The last issue of Monitor, March-April, 1980, focused on occupational cancer. LOHP Library Assistant Susan Salisbury has compiled a bibliography of reference material and additional reading for those who wish to pursue topics covered in that issue.*

by Susan Salisbury

### General Reference:

Agran, Larry. *The Cancer Connection*. Houghton Mifflin Co., 1977.

Epstein, Samuel S., M.D. *The Politics of Cancer*. Sierra Club Books, 1978.

Lehmann, Phyllis. *Cancer and the Worker*. New York Academy of Sciences, 2 East 63rd St., New York, NY 10021, 1977.

### Research Reports:

Blanc, Paul. *Corporate Causes of Cancer in California*. 1978.

Prepared for the Campaign for Economic Democracy and the Public Policy Center. Available from CED, 304 South Broadway #501, Los Angeles, CA 90013.

*ICRDB Cancergram—Environmental and Occupational Carcinogenesis*. Cancer Information Dissemination and Analysis Center, Publication CK 02.

This is an abstract service which cites cancer-related articles published in more than 3,000 journals. The *Environmental and Occupational Carcinogenesis* issues are one part of the series published every few weeks at \$2.00 apiece. Subscriptions are available from: U.S. Department of Commerce, National Technical Information Service, 5285 Port Royal Road, Springfield, VA 22161.

*Special Listings of Current Cancer Research Projects* is another service of

ICRDB, also available from the National Technical Information Service.

### Statistical Reports:

National Cancer Institute. *Atlas of Cancer Mortality For U.S. Counties 1950-1969*, DHEW Publication No. 75-780.

National Cancer Institute. *Atlas of Cancer Mortality Among U.S. Non-whites: 1950-1969*. DHEW Publication No. 76-1204.

In both of the NCI atlases, cancer mortality statistics have been analyzed for geographic and racial divisions and are demonstrated in map form.

National Cancer Institute. *Cancer Rates and Risks*. 1974.

For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402. Stock Number 1742-00086. Price: \$1.80. Telephone: (202) 783-3238.

National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health. *A Retrospective Survey of Cancer in Relation to Occupation*.

Available from NIOSH Publications Dissemination, 4676 Columbia Parkway, Cincinnati, Ohio 45226. NIOSH Publication No. 77-178. Telephone: (513) 684-4287.

### Pamphlets and Articles:

Environmental Protection Agency. *This Rat Died in a Cancer Lab to Save Lives*. 1980.

Pamphlet available from U.S. EPA,

Washington, D.C. 20460.

"The Cancer Establishment—Whose Side Are They On?" *The Progressive*, February, 1980.

"Chemical Carcinogens: The Scientific Basis for Regulation." *Science*, Vol. 201, September 1978.

Cancer Information Clearinghouse. *Cancer Information in the Workplace—Annotated Bibliography of Educational*

*Materials for the Public and Health Professionals*. 1979.

Available from: Cancer Information Clearinghouse, Office of Cancer Communications, NCI, 7910 Woodmont Ave., Suite 1320, Bethesda, MD 20205. NIH Publication No. 79-2001. Telephone: (301) 496-4070.

National Cancer Institute. *Everything Doesn't Cause Cancer*. 1979.

For free copies, call the Cancer Information Service: (800) 638-6694.

Western Institute for Occupational and Environmental Sciences. *Asbestos Disease—Are You Covered?*

WIOES. *Asbestos Dust: Everyone's Problem*

WIOES. *Plain Talk About Asbestos*.

All available from WIOES, 2520 Milvia St., Berkeley, CA 94704. Telephone: (415) 845-6476.

## Around LOHP...

### Conference on Hazards for Working Women

"**Danger! Hazards on the Job—A Conference for Working Women**" is an LOHP conference to be held at Pauley Ballroom, ASUC Student Union, University of California, Berkeley, on Saturday, July 12, and Sunday, July 13, 1980. It will provide an opportunity for working women to hear presentations on critical job safety and health issues, and will also provide a forum for exchange of ideas, experiences, and strategies to combat job-related hazards.

Workshops and general sessions during the one-and-one-half day con-

ference will explore the hazards in occupations into which women are channeled (clerical, service, hospital work) as well as in non-traditional jobs into which women are moving in increasing numbers.

Other topics of concern for working women will be explored, such as sexual harassment, job stress, and discrimination as it relates to health and safety.

Co-sponsors, with LOHP, of the conference include: Merritt College Labor Studies Program; Coalition of Labor Union Women, East Bay and

San Francisco chapters; Communications Workers of America, District 9; Office and Professional Employees, Locals 3 and 29; San Francisco-Oakland Newspaper Guild, Local 52; and Department Store Employees, Local 1100.

Registration fee is \$15. Send a check, payable to The Regents of U.C., to "Women's Conference," LOHP, 2521 Channing Way, Berkeley, CA 94720. For more information, call Kate Caldwell at (415) 642-5507.

### 'Getting Organized'

### LOHP Union Organizers' Conference July 25

"**Getting Organized: Making It Work**" will be a one-day conference sponsored by the Labor Occupational Health Program for union organizers on July 25, 1980. It will be held in the Tan Oak Room, ASUC Student Union, University of California, Berkeley.

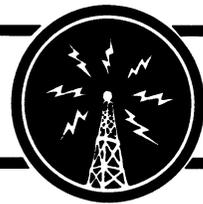
Co-sponsors of the conference, with LOHP, are: The Coalition of Labor Union Women, East Bay and San Francisco chapters; Center for Labor Research and Education, UCLA; and the Electronics Com-

mittee on Safety and Health.

This conference is aimed at assisting unions and their organizers (staff, stewards, etc.) in pinpointing and utilizing relevant health and safety issues. Some of the key topics will be: obtaining information on health and safety hazards affecting workers being organized; maximizing the impact of OSHA activities; protecting workers from discharge or discrimination if they become active on health and safety issues; representing workers on health and safety

cases before labor law enforcement agencies; and assessing workers' rights to health and safety information.

Registration fee is \$10. Send a check, payable to The Regents of U.C., to "Getting Organized," LOHP, 2521 Channing Way, Berkeley, CA 94720. The registration fee is refundable within 10 days prior to the conference. For more information, call LOHP at (415) 642-5507 or the UCLA Center for Labor Research and Education at (213) 825-9602.



## Copier Chemical May Be Carcinogen

A chemical found in many office copying machines could prove a cancer hazard to those exposed over long periods, University of Texas scientists have found.

Scientists in a laboratory at the University of Texas Medical Branch, Galveston, called the chemical—nitropyrene—a potential carcinogen on the basis of tests in bacteria and in cultures of mouse cells. “We need some animal data before we can say whether it’s a problem or not,” said the head of the Texas group, Dr. Marvin Legator.

Xerox Vice President Horace Becker said that nitropyrene has been virtually eliminated from Xerox copy toner (chemical darkener) since early March, 1980. Xerox said that it had found adverse health effects in tests similar to those run by the Texas group, but no human health hazard. According to Xerox, its supplier of toners has reduced the concentration of nitropyrene from 10 to 15 parts per million in some toners to about 0.15 parts per million, “an amount so small it’s not precisely measurable.”

According to Xerox Vice President

Becker, a Swedish researcher informed Xerox over a year ago that carbon black—aggregates of carbon particles used in copy toner—tests positively in the Ames test (used to detect carcinogens). Xerox officials then identified nitropyrene as the likely culprit; it is a contaminant in carbon black.

Legator charged Xerox with not publicly presenting any of its data until March, 1980, when his group presented its findings. Legator and an Environmental Protection Agency spokesman said that Xerox should have presented its test results, by law, to EPA as soon as a potential hazard had been identified.

According to Legator, Xerox toner with the present reduced amounts of nitropyrene continues to test positively in the Ames test and in “transformation” tests (with mouse embryos). Therefore, Legator says, the potential cancer hazard of long-term exposure to toner probably is not eliminated simply by removing nitropyrene.

—Compiled from *Science News*, *The Washington Post*, and other sources.

## Highway Maintenance Worker Killed

Highway maintenance worker Wade Brewen, 56, was killed near Susanville, California, on April 4, 1980 when a speeding vehicle struck him and slammed into the rear of his dump truck as he was working with a crew patching a state highway.

Brewen is the 29th highway right-of-way worker to be killed on duty in California since 1972. He was a member of the California State Employees’ Association (CSEA), which is currently sponsoring emergency legislation to provide highway maintenance workers with hazardous duty pay.

CSEA also operates a safety program designed to educate the driving public to be alert when passing orange markers and clothing which indicate the presence of road repair crews.

—CSEA State Employee

## Health Dept. Seeks Hazardous Dump Site Locations

The State of California, responding to such tragedies involving hazardous waste disposal as the Love Canal disaster in Niagara Falls, N.Y., has begun a study of dump sites throughout Alameda and Contra Costa Counties. The Hazardous Materials Monitoring Section of the California Department of Health Services in Berkeley is trying to determine whether any hazardous materials have been included in the normal garbage and waste materials used as landfill.

Tests have revealed that numerous communities throughout the U.S. have dangerously high levels of toxic materials in their water supplies and

in the ground. Federal and State officials believe that indiscriminate dumping by chemical companies during the 1950’s and 1960’s of chemical wastes in abandoned lots was a major cause of the problem. The wastes were released into the ground when their containers deteriorated over the years. Through seepage into the ground, the toxic materials came into contact with the water table, exposing entire communities. The cancer rates in these exposed communities have been well above the norm, and the miscarriage and birth defect rates have been astonishingly high.

Brian Sheppard of the Hazardous

Materials Monitoring Section asks that *Monitor* readers who may have worked in jobs where they were required to haul chemical wastes to dump sites within Alameda or Contra Costa Counties, or who know of such sites, contact the Section. Please call John Katz at (415) 540-3006 for Alameda County sites; or Brian Sheppard or David Pontecorvo at (415) 540-3007 for Contra Costa County sites.

For more information, write to: Department of Health Services, Hazardous Materials Monitoring Section, 2151 Berkeley Way, Berkeley, CA 94704.

*To Reduce Litigation*

# Brown Administration Wants Sweeping Comp Changes

California's Brown administration, supported by organized labor, the insurance industry, and many major employers, in May proposed important reform legislation to increase workers' compensation benefits and minimize unnecessary litigation.

One feature of the proposal is a substantial increase in benefit level maximums. The maximum weekly payment for temporary disability and permanent total disability would increase to \$280. from the current \$154. Surviving dependents of workers killed on the job would be entitled to pension payments of up to \$280. weekly until death or remarriage, or until a ceiling of \$200,000. is reached. Currently there is a \$55,000. ceiling on death benefits to family members.

The most controversial aspect of the package is a set of proposed procedural changes, many of them reforms which the insurance industry and business community have long supported. These include:

- A requirement that the injured employee provide written notice of claim to the employer, eliminating the present situation where em-

ployers often first learn of a claim when a worker's attorney files an Application for Adjudication;

- Modification of Labor Code Section 3202, which now requires that provisions of the Workers' Compensation law be "liberally construed" by the courts, to require that "all questions of fact, including questions of medical fact" be determined according to "the preponderance of the evidence";
- A \$200,000 study "to improve the adequacy and equity" of permanent partial disability benefits, as a preliminary step toward repealing the present rating schedule for permanent disabilities on January 1, 1984.

Important procedural changes are proposed, also, for determining the existence and extent of permanent disability. Permanent disability would be determined by the Disability Evaluation Bureau (DEB) within the Division of Industrial Accidents, which would be greatly expanded in personnel. This de-

termination, including a rating, would be issued within 60 days, based on review of an evaluation by the worker's treating physician, the worker's medical file, and any subsequent examinations deemed necessary by the DEB. Either the worker or the employer could appeal the DEB determination within 30 days. The appealing party, however, would have the burden of overcoming the DEB determination, and a worker could not recover the attorney's fee unless the appeal succeeded in increasing the disability rating by more than 5 percent.

Supporters of the proposal claim that it would save some \$100 million a year in legal and medical costs by simplifying procedures and bypassing attorneys in the initial stages. "The truth of the matter is that workers' comp is cluttered with litigation," said Don Vial, Director of the Department of Industrial Relations.

*Compiled from California Workers' Compensation Institute Bulletin, California Workers' Compensation Reporter, and San Francisco Examiner.*

## *LOHP Bilingual Training*

# UFW Ranch Committees Attend Class



*Farmworkers gather for safety training.*

48 ranch committee members of the United Farmworkers' Union spent the entire day Saturday, April 26th participating in a training session on the dangers of pesticides, workers' rights under pesticide regulations, and Cal/OSHA.

The rank and file ranch committee members who attended all work in the Oxnard/Ventura area of Southern California, primarily in the lemon and mushroom industries. Training was conducted by Molly Coye, M.D., of the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), and Paul Chown from the Labor Occupational Health Program. A bilingual (English/Spanish) manual which has been developed by LOHP was used, but the

training session itself was conducted entirely in Spanish.

The training session, requested by Jose Manuel Rodriguez, Director of the UFW for the area, was also attended by area UFW staff.

A slide show on pesticide hazards was also presented to the group.

The Plumbers' Union in Ventura donated the meeting hall, and the day was further highlighted by a barbecue at lunch time.

Many questions were raised by the participants about the difficulties of obtaining medical care and problems in dealing with growers. Follow-up sessions were planned as a result of the training.

—Paul Chown

## TCE BAN

continued from p. 3

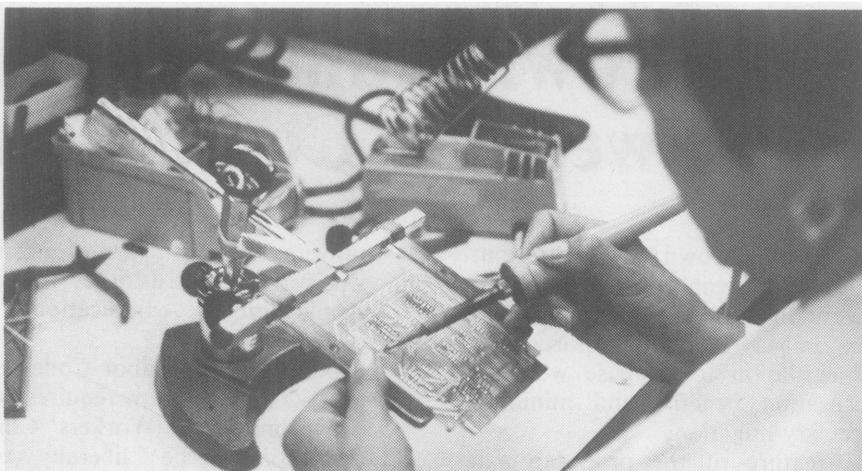
safer substitutes (1,1,1 trichloroethane) be rigidly controlled due to the serious acute health effects now being reported among workers in electronics and elsewhere. The current maximum permissible exposure level for 1,1,1 trichloroethane is 350 ppm as a time-weighted average; ECOSH is calling for a reduction to no more than 25 ppm.

ECOSH is also asking OSHA to publish a list of all the trade names for chemicals which contain TCE. Among such trade names, ECOSH to date has identified such benign-sounding ones as "Blacosolv," "Fleck-Flip," "Lanadin," "Trimar," and "J-100." Many electronics workers who report acute exposure symptoms such as headache, skin irritation, sleepiness, nausea, confusion, and loss of muscle control turn out to be handling chemicals which contain TCE, but which they know only by a brand name.

Support for prompt Cal/OSHA action on TCE has already been voiced by the Santa Clara County Central Labor Council, plus representatives from the Steelworkers, the Machinists, United Electrical Workers, IBEW, the Longshoremens, the Los Angeles Committee on Occupational Safety and Health, and the NOW Labor Task Force. Further, Assemblyman Art Torres, Chairman of the Assembly Health Committee and representative of Los Angeles area residents whose water has been found to contain TCE residue, is also on record calling for stringent control of this toxic material.

## BAN VS. CONTROL

One question often put to ECOSH concerns our decision to call for an out-



Electronics worker in the Silicon Valley. TCE exposures continue although substitutes are available. (Photo: LOHP Photo File.)

right ban rather than control of TCE as a carcinogen. Our response is that there has yet to be shown that there is any proven safe level of exposure to a carcinogen, no matter how "weak." Any chemical which has been demonstrated to be carcinogenic in animals must be viewed as having that same potential in humans, and a chemical like TCE is in such wide use as a degreaser in California industry that there is a serious risk that the incidence of human cancers is increased significantly by continued use of this chemical, even at very, very low levels. Further, in some parts of industry the switch has already been made to less toxic, presumably safer substitute solvents with no great outcry that the switch brought financial ruin to the companies making the move. Why then should any California workers continue to be "guinea pigs" in those industrial sectors where TCE remains in use? Why must the community be made to rely on enforcement of exposure standards which would continue to expose workers to a cancer-causing substance when alternatives exist? Why not take the only preventive measure that will

really limit exposure—a prohibition on continued use? Such a step is not only the best means available of protecting workers against the famous "inevitability that researchers will be wrong," and it is also probably the easiest standard of all to enforce.

As for ECOSH's simultaneous concern over 1,1,1 trichloroethane, there is increasing evidence not only in the literature but also from workers who present clinical symptoms of overexposure, that this supposedly safe substitute for TCE must be rigidly watched. And should data appear which link this chlorinated hydrocarbon to a possible human cancer risk as well, ECOSH is prepared to mount a campaign to control it further.

Monitor readers who would like to participate in the campaign to get real control over TCE in California are encouraged to contact ECOSH at 655 Castro St., Mountain View, CA 94040. Call: (415) 969-7218. For specific questions about TCE and the current status of ECOSH's campaign, contact Mandy Hawes at (408) 287-7720.

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