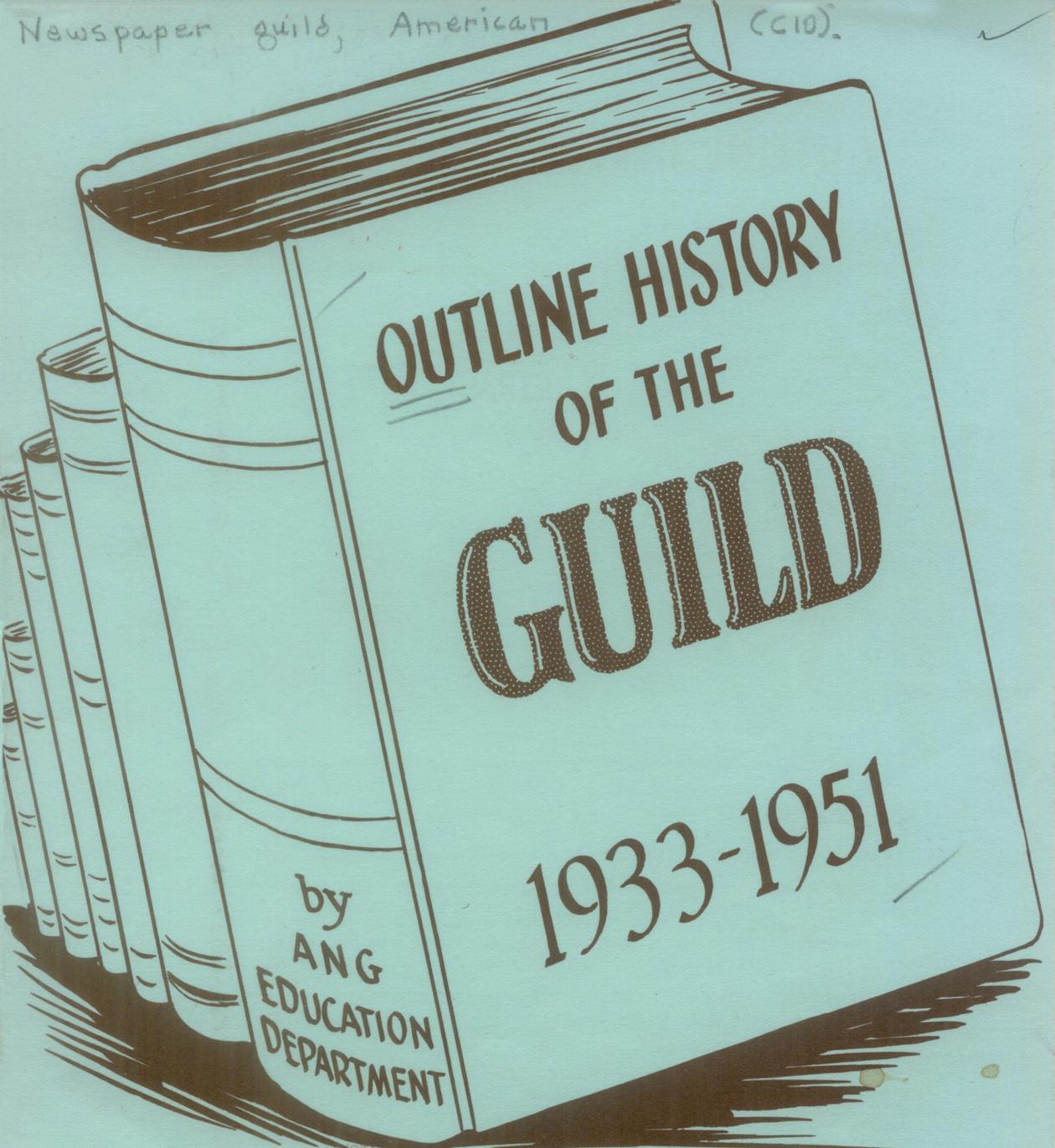


Newspaper guilds, American

(C10).



OUTLINE HISTORY  
OF THE  
**GUILD**

1933-1951

by  
A.N.G.  
EDUCATION  
DEPARTMENT

INSTITUTE OF  
INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS  
LIBRARY

*Most of the Best Newspaper Men  
and Women are Guild Members*

# OUTLINE HISTORY OF THE GUILD



## WHAT THE GUILD IS

- An organization of over 25,000 men and women in the newspaper and allied industries.
- Guild locals in over one hundred cities in the United States and Canada.
- Collective bargaining agreements covering approximately half of the national daily newspaper circulation with contracts on most of the outstanding dailies such as: *The New York Times*, *The San Francisco Chronicle*, *The St. Louis Post-Dispatch* and *The Toronto Star*.
- Contracts covering 180 daily and Sunday newspapers of general circulation, 12 wire and news services, 47 news and feature magazines, and radio and television stations.
- Jurisdiction over all employes in the news, editorial, business, circulation, maintenance, promotion, advertising and related departments of newspapers, news and feature publications, wire and news services and radio and television stations. *ANG Constitution (Art. II, Section II)*

## WHY THE GUILD WAS ORGANIZED

- To bring orderly collective bargaining to the newspaper and allied industries.
- To eliminate inequities and injustices.
- To give employes a real voice in deciding the conditions under which they work.

## THE PURPOSE OF THE ANG

- To advance the economic interests of its members.
- To guarantee, as far as it is able, constant honesty in the news.
- To raise the standards of journalism and ethics in the industry.
- To foster friendly co-operation with all other workers.
- To promote industrial unionism in the newspaper industry.

*ANG Constitution (Art. I, Section II)*

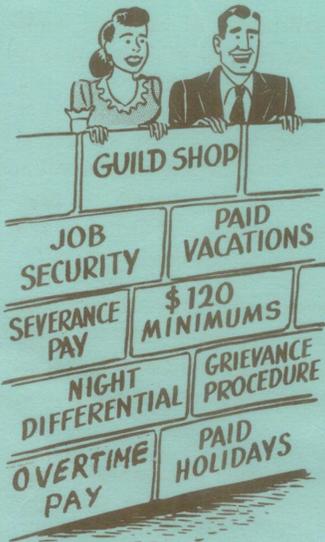
No eligible person shall be barred from membership or penalized by reason of sex, race, or religious or political convictions, or because of anything he writes for publication.

*ANG Constitution (Art. II, Section I)*



## WHAT CONDITIONS WERE PRIOR TO THE GUILD

- Substandard wages (except for the mechanical trades which were organized by the craft unions). \$30.21 was median pay for reporters with 5 to 10 years experience, proportionately lower wages for others.
- No security; during the depression frequent and arbitrary dismissals particularly hitting the higher paid experienced men.
- No overtime pay for majority of workers who were required to work long, irregular hours.
- Persistent unattended grievances, poor working conditions, no severance pay, rarely paid holidays or vacations.
- Low morale and cynicism which were breeding poor standards.



## WHAT THE GUILD HAS ACHIEVED

- Fair wages for Guild members. \$100 minimums (or more) for experienced reporters established for over 65% of those covered by ANG contracts with \$120 minimums established in a number of places. Proportionate increases won for others in Guild jurisdiction.
- Job security, no discharges except for just and sufficient cause.
- Regular hours, with time and a half for overtime and night work differentials.
- Orderly grievance procedure, good working conditions, paid holidays and vacations (3 weeks or more for over 80% of the Guild's membership).
- Severance pay entitling Guildsmen to 2 (or more) weeks pay for each year of employment on dismissal. (Many contracts give severance on resignation as well.)

- New feeling of self-respect and dignity for employees who could plan for the future, establish a home and family and become permanent and respected members of their communities.
- Pride in work which results in higher standards.

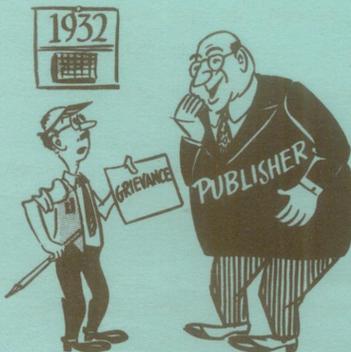
## HOW THE GUILD WORKS

- Democratic control of policies is in the hands of the membership.
- Annual conventions are held with delegates chosen by each Guild local.
- Election of national officers and International Executive Board members is by referendum of the entire membership, from nominations made at convention. Guild locals are required to have regular elections for officers and convention delegates. All elections are held by secret ballot. The columns of the ANG publication THE GUILD REPORTER are open equally to all candidates.
- Regular audit of finances by CPA is printed quarterly in union newspaper. Local Guilds must have regular audits as well.
- ANG Constitution provides for a great deal of autonomy in the conduct of local and unit affairs.
- Guild policy is subject to review by general membership referendum which can be instituted on petition by the IEB or by any local provided ratification is received from ten Guild locals from any five states.
- Local Guild presidents and all International Executive Board members (save the full time Executive Vice-President and Secretary-Treasurer) are working newspapermen serving the Guild as volunteers.

## HISTORY OF THE GUILD

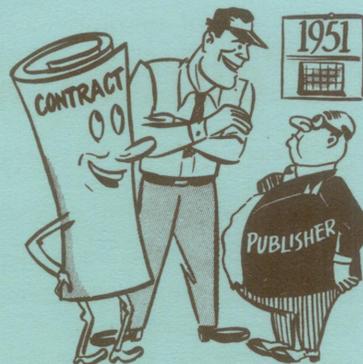
- 1933 — Publishers object to NRA establishing minimum wage code for editorial workers.
- August 7, 1933 — Heywood Broun, best paid, most successful columnist of his time, calls upon newspaper workers to organize. Writes in his column in the *New York World Telegram*:

“The fact that newspaper editors and owners are genial folk should hardly stand in the way of the organization of a newspaper writers’ union. There should be one. Beginning at nine o’clock on the morning of October 1, I am going to do the best I can to help set one up.”



- 1933-34 — Newspaper workers in many cities throughout the country respond to Broun’s challenge and by 1934 join together in a Constitutional Convention which sets up the Guild for the purpose of dealing with publishers as a professional association.
- 1935-36 — Two years as a professional association brings little success in obtaining bargaining recognition from the publishers.

- 1936 — Guild (still editorial employes only) votes to affiliate with the AFL, establishing itself as a regular part of the labor movement in its determination to use economic strength to enforce collective bargaining in the industry.
- 1937 — Guild votes to join CIO in order to broaden its jurisdiction and forge a more effective union capable of meeting management on equal terms. From this year on, the Guild takes into its ranks all non-mechanical employes on newspapers, wire and news services, news and feature publications and radio and television stations.



- 1938-40 — Guild continues to conduct organization drives and strengthen its collective bargaining position. This results in major gains and improved conditions.
- 1941 — All remaining Communist influence removed from national Guild leadership.
- 1942-45 — Organization develops program to support war effort and maintain union standards. One quarter of membership in service, additional numbers serving as war correspondents throughout the world.
- 1945-46 — Formulates national wage program for the purpose of establishing minimum goals for economic independence and security for all members. Program started without a single contract providing \$65 minimums. Today over two-thirds of the Guild has established \$100 or over as reporter minimums with proportionate increases for all other classifications. N. Y. minimums are \$120 and over.
- 1948 — Newsprint study is part of freedom of the press campaign. This focuses attention of House investigating committee on newsprint trust whose monopoly practices, exorbitant prices and restricted production are undermining the economic security of newspaper employes.
- 1950 — Cooperation between Guild and the craft unions established during the *World Telegram and Sun* strike and the Pittsburgh lockout goes a long way toward cementing newspaper union unity.
- 1950 — *The Pittsburgh Daily Reporter* published for 34 days by 12 newspaper unions helps end publishers' lockout and re-establish collective bargaining. Points up need for the Guild's program of new daily papers that will create a competitive threat when monopoly publishers refuse to bargain in good faith.

## GUILD OBJECTIVES

- To continue to press for economic advancement and job security for Guild members through collective bargaining.
- To erase those injustices and bad conditions which still bedevil many workers in the industry.

- To carry on the drive to organize the unorganized in the Guild jurisdiction.
- To build a greater awareness among Guild members of the principles of good trade unionism and to work toward greater membership participation in all Guild activities.
- To create greater harmony between the Guild and all bona-fide labor organizations and to continue to press for concerted action with the craft unions in the field.
- To continue to bring public pressure against the monopolistic practices of the newsprint industry.
- To work with those enlightened elements in the community who are aware of the dangers inherent in monopoly control of information channels.
- To fight on every front for full economic, social and political democracy for all workers.
- To carry on the struggle for free trade unionism as the most effective weapon for democracy throughout the world.



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