

# THE ACT REPORT

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The ACT Foundation is a division of The West Virginia State Building and Construction Trades Council, with offices in Charleston and Clarksburg. Steve Burton, President; Roy Smith, Secretary-Treasurer; Steve White, Director.

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## ILLEGALS REPLACED WITH WELFARE-TO-WORK RECIPIENTS

# 28 Illegal Aliens Arrested At WVU Coliseum Project

**O**n May 24, US Immigration and Naturalization Services (INS) Agents arrested 28 illegal aliens working on the asbestos removal project at West Virginia University's (WVU) Coliseum.

Twenty-two of the workers arrested were working for the general contractor, USA Remediation of Warrenton, Va. and are from Central America.

The other six worked for the subcontractor, Keystone Abatement Services of Pitts-

burgh, Pa., and are from central Europe.

Welfare-to-Work recipients are now being used to take the place of the illegal workers.

The arrests came after Gov-

ernor Underwood publicly criticized ACT for running a commercial regarding the project.

Underwood cried foul when ACT tied his veto of a West Virginia Jobs Act pilot project in

1998 to the problems at WVU.

"Instead of dealing with the problems of imported workers the Governor tried to evade the issue and even called us racists," said ACT's Steve White.

"But the INS arrests showed we were right, and the Governor has to accept his role in this terrible event.

"He has given a green light to imported workers and put every barrier in the way of local hiring."

Two weeks after the raid USA Remediation has restaffed the project with 18 out-of-state workers and 12 Welfare-to-Work recipients.

"Now, as a slap in the face to all West Virginia construction workers, WVU's contractor is hiring Welfare-to-Work recipients," said Gary Tillis, business manager of the West Virginia Laborers District Council.

"Instead of using skilled workers who have trained for careers in the industry our government is spending our tax money to put current construction workers out of a job.

Does this mean we should tell our members the only way they can work at WVU is to sign up for welfare?"

This \$7.8 million project has been the subject of controversy



ARE ALIENS INVADING THE COLISEUM? Union members rally at WVU's Coliseum once again to protest USA Remediation's and Keystone Abatement's use of illegal aliens on the asbestos removal project.

## Carpenters Sign Project Labor Agreement With Wal-Mart Contractor

**A**fter waging an aggressive organizing drive Carpenters Local 1024 of Cumberland, Maryland has signed a project labor agreement with C-T Concrete.

C-T Concrete, of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania has been hired to do the foundation work on the new Wal-Mart store in Oakland, Maryland.

Members of Local 1024 picketed the job site on May 22 and 23 for better working con-

ditions and fair wages and benefits.

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**"WE ARE EXTREMELY SATISFIED WITH THE OUTCOME OF THIS AGREEMENT AND WE LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING WITH C-T CONCRETE."**

**BILL DUVAL, BUSINESS REPRESENTATIVE  
CARPENTERS LOCAL 1024**

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

# Trades Picket Columbia Gas Project

**Starting in mid-May, members of Laborers Local 543, Teamsters Local 545, Operating Engineers Local 132 and United Association of Pipeline Welders Local 798 have been picketing daily at a Columbia Gas Transmission project in Ceredo, WV.**

Columbia Gas hired Western Construction, Inc. to relocate a 16 inch transmission line at the Ceredo Compression Station.

A new electric peaking unit is planned for the site through a partnership between Columbia Gas and American Electric Power.

Members were picketing because Western Construction, a nonunion company, pays its employees low wages and subjects them to substandard working conditions.

"Traditionally Columbia Gas

has used union trades for this type of work, and we have had a good business relationship," said Tim Millne, assistant business manager for the WV La-

borers District Council.

"We are bothered by the fact that they chose not to do so this time because the workers suffered as a result of their deci-

sion."

Union members also hand-billed outside the Columbia Gas Corporate office in Charleston on May 16.

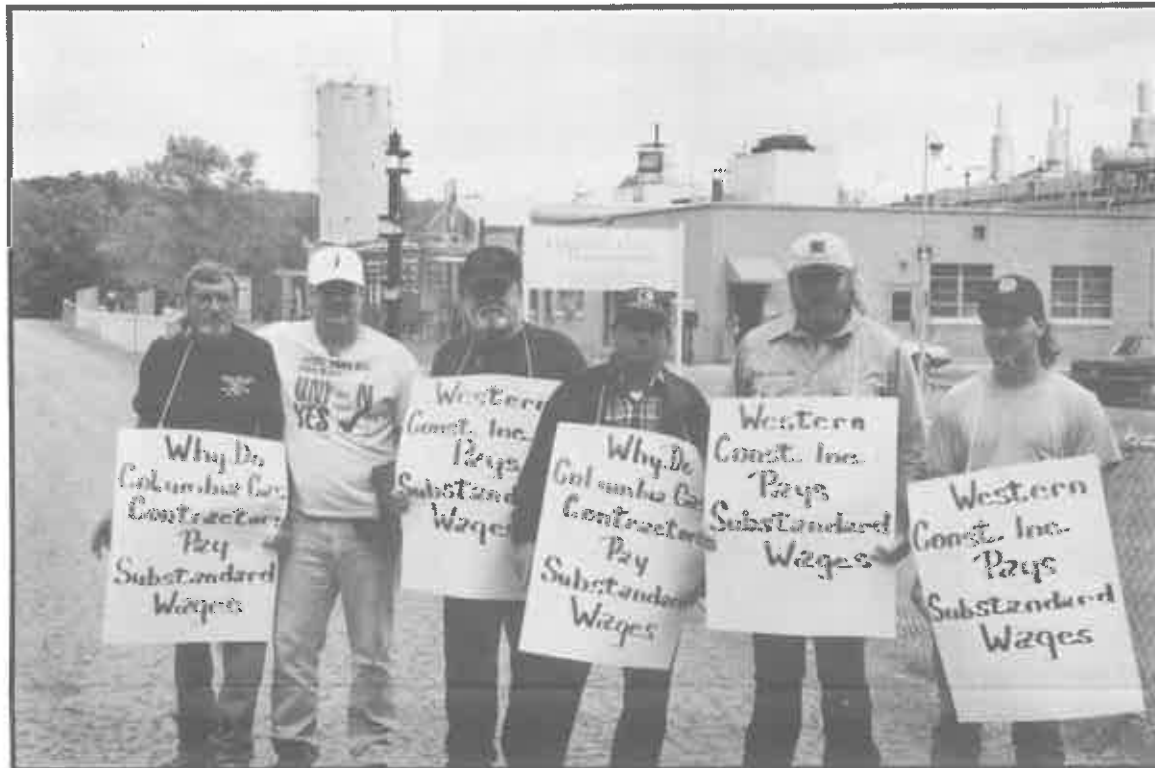
"I hope we really grabbed the attention of Columbia Gas officials," said Bill Lemley, Pipeline Special Representative for the Operating Engineers.

"And I hope contractors like Western Construction won't be doing work for Columbia Gas in the future."

As a result of the picket, Southern Excavating, a contractor doing the site preparation for the peaking unit project, has signed building trades, heavy and pipeline agreements.

"The point of our picket was to let Columbia Gas know union trades workers were still here and willing to work and that we would not stand for contractors who pay workers substandard wages and benefits," said Roy Snodgrass, business agent for Local 132.

"We had a lot of help with the picket and hand-billing from several crafts," said ACT's Donnie Huff.



MEMBERS OF LABORERS OPERATING ENGINEERS, TEAMSTERS AND PIPELINE WELDERS are protesting at Columbia Gas Transmission project in Ceredo, WV. The contractor, Western Construction, Inc., is paying employees substandard wages.

## LU 625 Signs Contract With Hughes Supply Co.

**Members of Plumbers and Pipefitters Local 625 have approved a contract with Hughes Supply Co.**

a six-month effort by Hughes employees to get better wages and working conditions.

Negotiations between Local 625 and Hughes Supply began

vote.

"We are happy with the contract and we are satisfied that Hughes Supply employees are happy with it as well," said Local 625 business manager T.L. Ranson.

"These guys really wanted union representation and we are proud to be the ones representing them."

Ranson commented that the negotiations went smoothly, and that while neither side got everything they wanted, a good working relationship was established.

"We believe all sides will benefit."

**"WE ARE HAPPY WITH THE CONTRACT AND WE ARE SATISFIED THAT HUGHES SUPPLY EMPLOYEES ARE HAPPY WITH IT AS WELL."**

**T.L. RANSON, BUSINESS MANAGER  
PLUMBERS AND PIPEFITTERS LOCAL 625**

The vote on the two-year contract, held on May 31, ended in February after the NLRB election was won by a 10-3

## ACT Loses Suit Over WVU Construction

**Kanawha County Circuit Judge, Charles King, ruled that West Virginia University (WVU) was not dodging prevailing wage and fair bidding laws by building its new administration building through the WVU Foundation.**

WVU will rent the \$23 million building with public money and then own it after a 30 year lease.

Rather than bid the construction as a public project,

WVU officials are contracting the project through the WVU Foundation.

"Our argument is the University set up the deal to avoid state bidding procedures and prevailing wage laws," said ACT's Steve White.

White told the *Charleston Gazette*, "We are very disappointed in the judge."

"This takes all the safeguards and oversight off the use of public projects, and that's wrong."

ACT is considering an appeal of the decision

## BY DENYING REQUEST FOR SUBCONTRACTOR LIST

# Feds Block ACT's Attempt to Track Gilmer Prison Project

**The Federal Bureau of Prisons is blocking ACT's attempts to monitor the new prison project in Gilmer County.**

ACT's request for a list of subcontractors on the \$100 mil-

Jim Lewis requested a subcontractors list from the Bureau of Prisons under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

In a letter to Lewis, Katherine A. Day, Chief of the FIOA Privacy Act Section at the Federal Bureau of Prisons denied his

lating of the law and shows the agency is not acting in good faith.

"We were told by the Bureau of Prisons when this project began that at least 90 percent of the workforce would be local," said Lewis.

"How are we supposed to track the number of local workers on the project if we don't have access to who's doing the work?"

"I don't see how finding out which companies are working on this project is a violation of privacy."

Lewis has sent a letter to the Office of Information and Privacy asking for an appeal of the response.

Copies of that letter have also been sent to Sens. Byrd and Rockefeller and to Congressman Wise.

**"HOW ARE WE SUPPOSED TO TRACK THE NUMBER OF LOCAL WORKERS ON THE PROJECT IF WE DON'T HAVE ACCESS TO WHO'S DOING THE WORK?"**

JIM LEWIS, REPRESENTATIVE  
ACT FOUNDATION

lion Federal Prison has been denied by the Bureau of Prisons.

In an attempt to determine how many local workers were working on the project, ACT's

request siting federal privacy provisions.

According to Lewis he has gotten dozens of subcontractor lists, denying them is a clear vio-

## WVU COLISEUM PROJECT

*CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1*

since it began.

ACT made several complaints to INS officials that illegal aliens may be working on this project which led to the investigation.

Building trades members have held several rallies and pickets protesting first the hiring of the out-of-state contractors and then the use of out-of-state workers.

ACT has also been airing a commercial statewide criticizing Gov. Underwood for vetoing the Jobs Act pilot project law that could have prevented the problems at the Coliseum.

The pilot project would have tested the local hiring requirements of the Jobs Act at three state-funded projects.

"The pilot project was the stepping stone to the Jobs Act,"

said White.

"The Governors veto of the pilot project stopped the Jobs Act dead in its tracks.

"But if the Jobs Act had passed, ninety percent of the

released and the others are still under investigation.

"Local jobs for local workers is what we are all about," ACT's Steve Montoney told the *Dominion Post*.

**"LOCAL JOBS FOR LOCAL WORKERS IS WHAT WE ARE ALL ABOUT."**

STEVE MONTONEY, REPRESENTATIVE  
ACT FOUNDATION

workers on the WVU project would have come from West Virginia or live within seventy-five miles of the project no matter what state they lived in."

According to an article in the Morgantown *Dominion Post*, two of the 28 who were arrested will be deported, one has been

Montoney also said hopefully this raid, "... would open people's eyes to the problem of labor being imported from out-of-state and apparently out of the country."

ACT is continuing its investigation into the case.

"You haven't seen the end," said Montoney.

# Credit Unions Good For Building Trades

**Do you own a bank? Well you may be surprised that a number of building trades members do.**

Well, maybe not a bank, but perhaps one step better—a credit union.

The Plumbers and Pipefitters Local 565 Credit Union was started 1972, and currently exceeds funds of \$7 million which are available for lending.

organizations.

According to Fox, credit unions traditionally have a record of working with people when times get tight and making payments is tough.

Credit unions also have a history of offering lower loan rates and higher savings rates to their members than traditional banks offer to their customers.

This is especially beneficial to construction workers since much

**"WE TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION THAT MANY OF OUR MEMBERS FACE SEASONAL LAYOFFS AND LONG PERIODS WITH LITTLE INCOME."**

JOYCE FOX  
PLUMBERS & PIPEFITTERS CREDIT UNION

"The members pooled their money together back in the early 70s and at that time the Credit Union was only able to make small car loans," said Joyce Fox, representative for Plumbers and Pipefitters Local 565 Credit Union.

"Today, with over \$7 million we are able to make car loans, mortgage loans and also provide a number of other services to members."

A number of Electrician Locals also have credit unions.

IBEW Local 968 in Parkersburg has had a credit union for many years.

"Our credit union offers a number of services to our members that they could not find at a traditional bank," said Jim Ross, business agent for Local 968.

While only a few local unions have credit unions in the state many participate in area credit unions established by other or-

of their work is often seasonal.

"We take into consideration that many of our members face seasonal layoffs and long periods with little income," said Fox.

"Most traditional banks will not consider these things.

"It is for that reason that I believe 100 percent in the use of Credit Unions."

Other services provided to Local 565 Credit Union members include payroll deductions - which allows members to have their loan payments taken directly out of their paychecks - automatic deduction of union dues each quarter, and life insurance policies.

For more information about Credit Unions, or to find out how to establish a Credit Union, contact Joyce Fox at the Plumbers and Pipefitters Credit Union 304-485-1421.

You can also contact the West Virginia Credit Union League.

# Trades Picket For Better Working Conditions

**B**uilding Trades members are on an unfair labor practice strike at the Kanawha River Terminals project in Ceredo, WV.

Two voluntary union organizers, who wish to remain anonymous, were working on this project for Alcorn Erectors Inc., from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

When the organizers identified themselves to the company management, their working conditions immediately changed.

The men were threatened with physical violence, they were told they would lose their jobs, they were harassed and cussed and were subject to other unsatisfactory working conditions.

"The working conditions these men had to face were terrible and hindered their abilities to effectively organize the employees greatly," said Steve Burton, business manager for Tri-State Building Trades.

"They had no other choice but to strike."

"I think ACT's Donnie Huff is doing a great job to try and better the conditions they have to face at work.

"The response from all the crafts has been fantastic too.

"Members of the Cement Finishers, Iron Workers, Laborers, Operating Engineers, Carpenters, Cement Masons and Bricklayers have been out on the picket lines every day."

Tri-State Building Trades filed charges with the National Labor Relations Board on behalf of the two organizers on the same day they began the strike.



PICKETING AT THE KANAWHA RIVER TERMINALS PROJECT are Tri-State Building and Construction Trades Council members. They are protesting the poor working conditions.

## PROJECT LABOR AGREEMENT

*CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1*

"These men were expected to work 12 hour days with no lunch or coffee breaks," said Bill DuVall, business representative for Local 1024.

"There was only one portable restroom for nearly 30 workers and no available water cooler."

Local 1024 members were also bothered by the fact that most of the workforce was brought in from the Philadelphia area.

"The only workers from our area on the job were union salts," said DuVall. C-T Concrete agreed to talk with

DuVall and by May 26 both sides had come to an agreement.

"C-T Concrete has agreed to pay union wages and benefits and they have agreed to a regular work day," said DuVall.

"There are more restrooms on the job site, enough water, and the men get to take their lunch and coffee breaks.

"We are extremely satisfied with the outcome of this agreement and we look forward to working with C-T Concrete."

Currently three members of Local 1024 are on the job.

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Parkersburg:  
Sundays @ 11:30 am on FOX 11

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