Would you believe....

Ninety-eight percent of all Soviet workers belong to government-sponsored trade unions. Recently, however, an independent workers rights movement has been organized. The group, which calls itself "Trade Union for the Defense of Workers" will concentrate on defending those who have been unjustly fired.

The new union maintains that injustice and corruption on the job are widespread and serious problems in the Soviet Union, and expressed dissatisfaction with government unions which have consistently ignored workers' problems.

A spokesman said the group expects the authorities to attempt to disperse the movement by arresting its leaders, and said they will soon request assistance from the United Nation's International Labor Organization. (Newscript)

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UCLA scientists say they've just completed a new study showing that a diet drug made from the urine of pregnant women is absolutely worthless in speeding weight loss.

The UCLA doctors conducted a double-blind study on 40 women. All were kept on a 500 calorie-a-day diet. Half were given the diet drug, commonly known as HCG, the rest were given a placebo. Researchers found no difference between the two groups, and concluded that HCG "does not enhance the rate of weight loss, nor does it significantly reduce hunger or (alleviate feelings of) anxiety, hostility or depression."

HCG was first used as a diet drug in 1951 by Dr. H.T.W. Simeons, an American doctor practicing in Rome. He soon opened a chain of diet centers around the country that offered the so-called Simeons diet, which consisted of a 500 calorie-a-day diet, almost daily injections of HCG, and consumption of two quarts of water a day. (Newscript)

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A group of women theologians are already criticizing a new version of the Revised Standard Bible, even though it won't be published until the early 1980's. The women, attending a recent "Sexism in the Bible", conference in Manhattan, say the new version has not done enough to erase sexism from the Holy Scriptures, because it still refers to God as a male being.

According to the theologians, early Biblical texts referred to God as both male and female. But the early translators injected sexism into the texts by always referring to God as male. For example, one Greek verse spoke of the "God, who bore you." But when it was translated into English, it became the "God, who begot you."

But according to one theologian, Sister Ann Patrick, the problem of sexism in the Bible goes byond words and translators. "The Bible," she said, "was produced by a Church that is . . . sexist . . . It portrays women as weak, foolish, (and the) property of men. "Wickedness of women," she added, "is (considered) worse than wickedness of men." And she asked, "If you're doing violence to women, but are faithful to the text, what kind of Church is that?" (Newscript)

For centuries, Gay Pairee (Paris) has been known as the homosexual capital of the world. Yet French gays have yet to adopt the political activism of their American counterparts.

It's not for a lack of discrimination. Parisian gays are still the most frequent butt of French jokes. Their bars, they say, are being closed more frequently than ever, and they can still lose their jobs if their sexual preference is discovered.

So why don't they protest? According to one American homosexual, who's finishing his Ph.D. in Paris, French gays seem to prefer the closet. He claims, "They take things lying down, with the feeling that 'this is the lot of gay people.'"

But perhaps their lack of activism lies in the fact that Paris has no laws against homosexuality. And according to the head of the Paris vice squad, "There's nothing in the code which prevents (him from) having an understanding attitude. It wouldn't be normal," he adds, "to forbid people their particular sexual needs." (Newscript)

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Reuben Graham thinks a Washington supermarket may have gone too far in delivering its promise of fresh fish. Graham took home 50 pounds of smelt last week -- at a bargain 10 cents a pound. Then he put them in his bathtub to wash off some of the sand and dirt. The next thing he knew, some of the fish were swimming around. Not believing his own eyes, Graham called in a few neighbors. Sure enough, the fish were paddling away. People familiar with smelt say the sturdy little fish occasionally will revive even after being frozen. (Newscript credit: Phil Cook, Eugene, Oregon)

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The image of the Ugly American may soon be replaced by the Fat American. According to the American Dietetic Association, Americans ate 200 more calories a day in 1974 than they did in 1965 -- enough to add 20 pounds of fat to each person each year.

And most of that extra weight, the association says, comes from a diet that contains too much fat. In 1901, for example, the average American diet was made up of 12 percent protein, 56 percent carbohydrate and 32 percent fat. Today, the American diet contains 42 percent fat. And such an unbalanced diet, according to the Senate Select Committee on Nutrition and Human Needs, can cause all sorts of health problems, including heart disease. (Newscript)

Police in Cologne, Germany, are on the lookout for "Red Zora," a woman who claims to be the female equivalent of "Zorro."

It seems that someone has been robbing sex shops, and has, so far, made off with $50,000 (dollars) worth of goods. The thief leaves leaflets signed "Red Zora" and claims to be the (Quote) "avenger ofthe oppressed."

Says Red Zora in one of her leaflets, "love today is nothing more than the domination of women by men . . . the pornographers want to use our bodies to make their profits."

Sex shop owners, as a result of Zora's raids, have banded together to offer a $1500 (dollar) reward for her capture. (Newscript Credit: Her Say)

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Cliff Branch, a wide receiver for the Oakland Raiders, was the team's fastest player -- until he hurt his ankle in the second game of the season. He got fixed up by having needles stuck in his ear and mysterious oriental herbs wrapped around his ankle. Branch is now a firm believer in acupuncture.

After he twisted the ankle trying to cut, Branch received the "usual treatment". "But it wasn't getting any better," he says. So he took the advice of a friend and visited an acupuncturist, who put four or five pins about two inches long in Branch's ear for about a quarter of an hour, and soaked the ankle in the herbs.

And then, able to run once again, Branch went out and caught a touch-down pass against the Denver Broncos. (Newscript)

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The State of Virginia has banned the sale of "Billy's beer" -- the brew that's been endorsed by President Carter's liquor-loving brother.

Virginia's Alcoholic Beverage Control Commission (ABC) recently banned the beer on the basis of a state regulation, that allows the ABC to withhold approval "for any label . . . that infers endorsement . . . by any prominent living person."

In addition, ABC chairman Archer Yeatts, Junior, a Republican appointee, said his commission feels it's "highly improper for (Billy) Carter to endorse a label selling beer in Virginia," saying, "I think it is downgrading to the Office of the President of the United States.

Neither Billy nor his press agent had any comment on the ban. (Newscript)

New Mexico has become the first state in the union to allow cancer and glaucoma patients to be treated with marijuana.

This week New Mexico Governor Jerry Apodoca signed the Controlled Substances Therapeutic Research Act, which allows doctors to prescribe either marijuana or THC, the weed's psychoactive ingredient. Under strictly controlled circumstances, only patients suffering from glaucoma, a blind eye disease, or cancer patients suffering from the side effects of chemotherapy and other treatments qualify under the Act.

Patients must first be certified for the pot treatments by their own physicians and then must be approved by a state board of physicians. After their cases are certified by the board, the patients can then obtain prescription doeses of pot from state operated pharmacies. (Newscript)

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Federal agents are holding a New Mexico man because he offered to buy a limousine . . for cash . . . after he bumped into it with his own vehicle near the New Orleans International Airport.

It seems 28-year-old Henry Wallace wanted to buy the limousine rather than call police after the traffic mishap. When police arrived . . . they found over $113,000 (dollars) where the ink should have been. (Newscript Credit: Dan Gilbert, WQUE, New Orleans)

A psychiatrist at Sonoma State Hospital in California says he's discovered links between magazines, lead poisoning and mental illness.

Dr. Dan Jenkins, by the way, believes that at least 20 percent of the patients at state mental hospitals have the same magazine-eating habit. And he says they are especially fond of munching on Playboy centerfolds and the cover of Time Magazine because they are so colorful (Newscript Credit: Jerry Bell, San Francisco, for Newscript)

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At a time when the American Cancer Society is trying to convince smokers to kick their tabacco habit, the value of cigarettes seems to be escalating throughout the world.

Recently, it was reported that some 23 states are losing hundreds of thousands of dollars a year in tax revenues to smugglers who transport truckloads of cigarette cartons over state lines. And now, the New York Times reports that American cigarettes have become the new currency in Rumania. According to the Times, the cost of having a tooth pulled by a good Rumanian dentist now costs tow cartons of extra-long filter Kents. Just about anything can be purchased in that shortage-ridden country, if you flash the right brand. (Newscript)

A WESTERN MBA?

PROFESSOR DAVID A. PEACH, MBA PROGRAM CHAIRMAN AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO WILL BE ON CAMPUS TO PROVIDE INFORMATION ABOUT WESTERN'S MBA PROGRAM ON

TUESDAY, MARCH 21, 1978

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