At NCOC
Crocker Is Playing Out The String

SAN FRANCISCO — If you’ve recently come on the job at Crocker’s Northern California Operations Center, you’re probably wondering how come all the leaflets? What is this “union” that people are talking about?

Here’s the story: About a year ago, a group of NCOC employees, disturbed by the generally low wages, lack of decent benefits and poor conditions got together and approached the International Longshoremen’s and Warehousemen’s Union (ILWU) about an organizing drive here. We approached the ILWU because we felt it was an extremely democratic union which would help us bargain with our employer, but also let us run our own affairs.

BIG MEETING

On our own, we had passed out a number of union leaflets and people seemed interested. So in November we called a big meeting, and people there decided to sign up for the ILWU.

Between November, 1976 and May, 1977 over two-thirds of the employees eligible to vote signed designation cards, such as the one at right. A Committee of Concerned Crocker Employees was formed. They wrote and passed out leaflets calling attention to the poor salaries, benefits and working conditions at NCOC and explaining how joining a union would help change things.

When Crocker realized the union drive was strong, they hired a special officer to find out why the employees wanted a union and to do anything necessary to stop the drive. He made a few small changes which were designed to show the employees what a “generous” employer Crocker is. (See “Notes from Inside,” on back page.)

On May 6, in line with federal law, we filed a petition on behalf of employees at NCOC, requesting a secret ballot election. The hearings, before the National Labor Relations Board, to determine who can vote and the date of the election, began on June 3. Immediately, the bank started delaying tactics.

DELAY, DELAY, DELAY

Since that time, we’ve been bogged down in hearings before the National Labor Relations Board. The union wants an election as soon as possible. The company’s tactic is to delay, delay, delay. They have agreed to as few hearings as possible, they have eaten up our precious time with irrelevant testimony, they are trying to prove, they say, that the NCOC is not an appropriate bargaining unit.

At this issue goes to press, the National Labor Relations Board is still permitting Crocker Bank to put on “evidence” that NCOC employees should be denied the right to vote on union representation. So far, the ILWU has not been permitted to present any testimony.

The NLRB, in an effort to find some way to bring the hearing to completion, has indicated that if Crocker is not through by Thanksgiving, hearings will be held five days a week, every week.

By Thanksgiving, Crocker will have been stalling around for six months. Union attorneys estimate that it will take at least four weeks to present our case for an election at NCOC.

Why I Signed a Card

Gail Clardy

I was raised in a union family. My dad and stepfather are still members of unions. I have seen how being in a union has helped them win good pay, excellent benefits and job security. So when my family was approached by the International Longshoremen’s and Warehousemen’s Union (ILWU) about an organizing drive here, we all can achieve these things, plus a lot more.

Anne Ross

I signed up because we all want some things one thing and some people another. I believe in individual merit and all that, but some people seem to get left in the dust. If we’re all clerks, let’s all get paid like clerks. We’d be stronger, and the ILWU is better than most.

Marilyn Romby

There are a lot of people with a lot of seniority, but to get ahead or get promoted it seems they have to go along with the other side. I think the ILWU is better than most.

Lee Brandi

I used to be a part of bank management, but now I realized that most employees are afraid of their supervisors and that I was a part of that system. Now I’m on the other side of the fence. Every day I see situations where employees are afraid to stand up for their rights. Having a union would change all that and I want to help change it.

Jim Tolliver

Basically, I think a union will help us do away with the kind of favoritism that prevails here on promotions, and the money and grade increases that go along with those promotions. A seniority system would put it on a fair basis. The other reason, of course, is that we need some kind of protection from the cost of living. Crocker’s wages don’t even contemplate keeping up.

I designate the International Longshoremen’s and Warehousemen’s Union as my bargaining agent with the company on wages, hours and working conditions.

Name (print)

Address

Phone

Employed by

City

Date

Dept.

Signature

Mail to: ILWU, 1188 Franklin St., San Francisco, CA 94109

Do It Today!

Ken Noguera

Buyway Depot

I signed up because we all want some things changed. We want better pay, more security and better treatment. I think the union will help, because at least we’ll have someone to back us up. I’ve been a member of the retail clerks union and I know that when it gets down to it, they’ll back you up.
Why Office Workers Hook Up with ILWU

SAN FRANCISCO—What are longshoremen doing at Crocker Bank? When bank supervisors at Merchants Ice and Cold Storage told their employees, "You can't do this to us," the ILWU Local 6 organizers were set to strike. They had in mind from the start. We are all twisting the law to serve the desires of their employer. Still Waiting for Promised Big Changes by Concerned Crocker Employees The words seem to stick in our minds— "you can't do this to us." "We have a right to make a living." "Our employer must give me a chance, a lot of changes are going to be made." "We are being treated like regular workers." "We decided that as long as we were working, we would be treated like regular workers." "We felt that the bank was trying to set up procedures to assure workers an equal opportunity to hear from both sides." We joined the ILWU because we were afraid of strikes, and this experience of several hundred office workers employed by steamship and stevedoring companies in the Port of Los Angeles. These clerical workers, who came into ILWU some years ago, have just recently won a three-year contract which will increase their wages by as much as $2.40 per hour over the life of the agreement. This means that, by the end of the contract, wages range from $7.96 per hour for the least experienced, to $8.61 for those with four years on the job. This group of workers also enjoys substantial shift differentials, and fully-paid medical and vision benefits, plus other fringe benefits such as twelve paid holidays and vacations.

IN THE EAST BAY Another similar group we're proud of is our x-ray technicians unit, which represents about 200 x-ray technicians at 12 hospitals throughout the Bay Area. This unit of warehouse Local 6 has just negotiated a two-year contract with a wage increase of 7.6% the first year and 7% the second year. This means that by the end of two years, a technician with four years' experience will earn $9,911 per year. These workers also enjoy a full range of typical fringe benefits. We can't promise that as soon as you join ILWU you'll get these kind of benefits. There are no easy solutions to the difficult process. Our marine clerks in Southern California, for example, had to sign a new contract after going out on strike for 12 days.

There's no free lunch. But believe me, other workers who have gone with organized labor, you'll find that nothing pays off like sticking together.

Office Workers Organize:
"Tired of Working for Peanuts!"

"Right to Work"—A Potentially Deadly Illusion

WASHINGTON, DC—Here are the chief provisions of the labor law reform bill that ILWU and all other unions have endorsed:

- First contract for nonunion employees.
- A worker illegally fired for union activity during an organizing campaign or before a first contract is negotiated would have an equal opportunity to hear from both sides.
- The NLRB would be required to seek a court order immediately reinstating a worker illegally fired for union activity.
- More complicated cases involving questions of the appropriate bargaining unit or voter eligibility would normally be held within 45 days of the date of the election.
- Unions would be given an equal opportunity to hear from nonunion employees during a representation election campaign. Presently, an employer can communicate with prospective employees through his anti-union message. The NLRA would be directed to set up procedures to assure workers an equal opportunity to hear from both sides.
- The NLRA would be required to seek a court order requiring an immediately reinstating a worker illegally fired for union activity during an organizing campaign or before a first contract is negotiated.
- The law only requires the NLRB to seek an injunction for specified unfair labor practices or practices against a union message. The NLRA would be directed to set up procedures to assure workers an equal opportunity to hear from both sides. A worker illegally fired for union activity during an organizing campaign or before a first contract is negotiated would have an equal opportunity to hear from both sides. The NLRB would be required to seek a court order immediately reinstating a worker illegally fired for union activity.
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