Learning from the past: One-hundred and twenty longshore division members attended a 6-day History and Traditions conference to learn lessons from ILWU history and apply them to current struggles.

Longshore Division’s “History & Traditions Conference” looks back to plan ahead

One-hundred and twenty lucky ILWU Longshore Division members attended an intensive 6-day “History and Traditions Conference” in San Francisco on December 1-6. The event was planned by the ILWU Coast Longshore Division’s Education Committee and featured a host of outside experts who joined ILWU officers and leaders for the jam-packed agenda.

Knowing the history

The event opened with remarks from ILWU International President Bob McEllrath who welcomed participants and urged them to learn more about the union’s history in order to be better prepared for the future. “We’re facing some big fights and need all hands on deck,” said McEllrath. After just 20 minutes of preliminaries, the Conference quickly got down to business and involved all participants in an exercise, led by Local 63 member Patricia Aguirre who chairs the ILWU Longshore Education Committee.

Exercise reveals unity

Aguirre said a central goal of the Conference would be to gather lessons from the union’s history – and apply them to current challenges, including the upcoming negotiations for the new Longshore and Clerk Contract that expires on July 1, 2014. With participants divided into a dozen small discussion groups, Aguirre asked each team to rank the various factors that would be essential for building union power and winning a good contract in 2014. The conference room exploded in animated discussion as members at each table debated the relative importance of many factors that could make the union stronger – and a better contract more likely. While some differences were noted between the groups, a consensus quickly developed around ranking the top three factors needed to build a strong union and win good contracts in 2014:

1. Support and solidarity of Longshore workers.
2. Well informed workforce who knows their contract.
3. Strength & support from community allies.

History lessons

Day two began with comments and context from Coast Committeeman Leal Sundet who reviewed the extensive materials provided to all participants, including three books: “Solidarity Stories, An Oral History of the ILWU” by Harvey Schwartz; “Reviving the Strike” by Joe Burns; and Richard Brashin’s “A Strike Like No Other Strike: Law and Resistance During the Pittston Coal Strike of 1989-1990.”
Oregon Governor announces a step toward resolving one aspect of ongoing issues at Portland’s Terminal 6

Rogue terminal operator ICTSI still has no services agreement with Hanjin and continues with a labor management model that impedes terminal ops

On December 12, Oregon Governor John Kitzhaber announced that all work associated with maintaining refrigerated containers at the Port of Portland, Terminal 6, will be assigned to workers represented by ILWU Locals 8 and 40. Prior to the announcement, a small portion of this work had been performed by port employees. Governor Kitzhaber’s announcement marks a step toward the resolution of one aspect of the ongoing issues that plague ICTSI, the Philippines-based global terminal operator that began its first U.S. venture in 2010 when it leased Terminal 6 from the Port of Portland.

The men and women of the ILWU appreciate the assignment of work as required by our Master Contract with PMA member company ICTSI and the PMA member carriers such as Hanjin,” said Leal Smidt, Local 8 Longshoreman and ILWU Coast Committeeman. “But in order to normalize things at Terminal 6, it’s incumbent on ICTSI to improve labor relations and negotiate reasonably with Hanjin to secure a fair terminal use agreement.”

ICTSI inherited the Port’s Terminal Use Agreement with Hanjin when it took over operations at Terminal 6. That agreement expired a year ago, and negotiations on the terms of a new agreement stalled over ICTSI’s insistence on changing Hanjin’s excessive service rates and eliminating the throughput arrangements Hanjin had with the Port.

Independent of negotiations over a new terminal use agreement with Hanjin, ICTSI imported a model of labor relations that has severely hindered terminal operations. ICTSI’s labor management model is authoritarian and intimidaton-based. The company’s systematic use of employer complaints, legal claims, and NLRB charges to threaten and control workers is without parallel historically among Pacific Maritime Association member companies. Worker morale at Terminal 6 has reached an all-time low.

“The members of Local 8 and Local 40 want Terminal 6 to be as productive as it can be, but that requires labor and management working together toward a common goal,” said Dane Jones, ILWU Local 40 Business Agent. “As a representative of the workers who are at the terminal everyday helping ICTSI makes its profits, I really hope that ICTSI takes to heart the initiative of the Governor and the message that it needs to find a way to improve morale with its Longshore and Clerk workforce.”

IN MEMORIAM

Barry Binsky: ITF Inspector

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

It is with sincere regret that I inform you of the passing of Barry Binsky. Barry was an ITF Inspector on the West Coast USA in the Port of San Francisco from 1996 until 2005. A memorial was held on November 23 in Castro Valley California at the Holy Cross Monastery and was attended by Barry’s friends and comrades from various walks of life including several from the waterfront including Lila Smith the ITF Inspector from Seattle who worked with Barry for a number of years while he was with the ITF.

Barry was a dedicated and intelligent Seafarer who had the ability to tell sea stories, think on his feet, and outwit the employers – all while keeping a straight poker face. But alas, he has finally dropped the hook and gone to join the old shipmates in the sky, telling sea stories to those in the old days.

In Solidarity,
Jeff Engels ITF Coordinator
West Coast USA

Barry Binsky, ITF Inspector
June 2, 1942-October 23, 2013
Nelson Mandela, the first Black president of South Africa, Nobel Peace Prize winner, former political prisoner and leader of the African National Congress who became a worldwide symbol in the struggle against apartheid passed away on December 5th at the age of 95. Local 10 President-elect and International Executive Board member Melvin Mackay attended Mandela’s funeral in South Africa on behalf of the ILWU.

A figure like Nelson Mandela comes along once in a lifetime. He became a world-wide symbol for human rights and the struggle for social justice. He helped South Africa along the path to democracy. The world is a better place because of him. He will be missed,” Mackay said.

Striking the Nedlloyd Kimberly

ILWU Local 10 members helped put the anti-apartheid struggle in the national spotlight in 1984 when they refused to unload South African cargo from the Dutch ship, Nedlloyd Kimberly, at San Francisco’s Pier 80. Although they unloaded the rest of the ship, the South African ‘bloody’ cargo of steel, auto parts and wine remained in the ship’s hold for 10 days while community supporters held daily demonstrations outside protesting South Africa’s apartheid regime. At its peak, the demonstration reached an estimated 700 people. Employers tried to find another West Coast port to take the ship, but because of solidarity from other ILWU locals, no port was willing to accept the Nedlloyd Kimberly. Local 34 clerks played a crucial role in the action by identifying the South African cargo and other freedom struggles across the subcontinent including Mozambique, Namibia and Rhodesia (Zimbabwe).

In the 1970’s and 80’s the ILWU was one of the few unions around the world to do so, ” Cole said. “The other documented instances of union workers taking strike action against South African apartheid were also dock workers—from the Maritime Union of New Zealand (MUNZ) and the Maritime Union of Australia.”

Long history of ILWU support for the anti-apartheid struggle

The striking of the Nedlloyd Kimberly was the result of extensive organizing efforts by Local 10’s Southern Africa Liberation Support Committee (SALSC). The rank and file committee of black and white workers was formed in 1976 when Local 10 passed a resolution authored by member Leo Robinson after the Soweto student uprising and subsequent brutal repression by South African police.

SALSC was likely the first anti-apartheid group formed in a labor organization. They raised awareness and material support for South Africa and other freedom struggles across the continent including Mozambique, Namibia and Rhodesia (Zimbabwe).

In 1976, under threat of a federal injunction and fines for Local 10 members who refused to load US-made asbestos from South Africa’s apartheid regime, the ship was finally unloaded at San Francisco’s Pier 80. Over 100 Local 10 members refused to load US-made asbestos from South Africa. Because the ship was formally instituted by the South African system of segregation and Jim Crow in the American South. The editorial also noted the similarities between the brutal repressions by police forces in both countries of movements for social justice.

Also in 1960 the Longshore Cau- cus endorsed a boycott of South African Cargo. This resolution laid the foundation for a Local 10 boycott of a ship carrying hemp, coffee and asbestos from South Africa. Over 100 Local 10 members refused to cross the community picket and the ship remained unloaded for both the day and night shifts. In 1963 The Dispatcher published a letter from Acting Secretary-General of the South African Congress of Trade Unions, John Gartzewo, thanking ILWU members for their solidarity in the fight against apartheid.

In the 1970’s and 80’s, the ILWU general convention passed numerous resolutions against apartheid and racial injustice throughout Southern Africa.

Early apartheid protest: in 1962 Local 10 longshoremen refused to cross a community picket line of activists from the American Committee on Africa who were protesting a ship containing South African goods.
were distributed throughout the week.

“I think you’ll see a clear pattern if you read these materials and listen to the speakers,” said Sundet. “The labor laws in this country, along with the courts and agencies like the National Labor Relations Board, are not our friends. They’re all working to limit what workers and unions can do, while protecting business and commerce so they can operate as freely as possible.”

West Coast longshore history was the focus for the remainder of the day, with the topic divided into three periods (up to 1934, the 1934 strike, and post-1934), each featuring a noted labor history expert.

Early longshoring

Retired San Francisco State University History Professor Robert Cherny provided an overview of West Coast longshoring from 1848 to 1934. He emphasized the role of the Gold Rush in launching San Francisco’s status as the top West Coast port for 70 years until being eclipsed by Los Angeles in the 1920s. Cherny provided interesting statistics, including the fact that 83% of San Francisco Longshore workers in the 1920s were either immigrants or born to immigrant families. He also surveyed developments at other ports, including Los Angeles, which was a sleepy backwater until 1899 when millions in federal dollars helped build San Pedro’s breakwater that transformed the port.

In Portland and Tacoma, the lumber boom and growing agricultural exports fueled the rise of their ports, eclipsed by the Port of Seattle in the 1890s which grew rapidly by serving as a staging point for immigrant families. He also surveyed developments at other ports, including Los Angeles, which was a sleepy backwater until 1899 when millions in federal dollars helped build San Pedro’s breakwater that transformed the port.

First Longshore unions

Cherny used the bulk of his time to explain the lengthy and difficult effort by longshore workers to improve conditions on the waterfront. The first effort to organize longshore unions on the West Coast was undertaken in 1853 by San Francisco’s “Riggers and Stevedores” (terms used at the time to encompass longshore work). Twenty-five years later, Portland workers formed their own union of “Stevedores, Longshoremen and Riggers” in 1878. Eight years later, workers in Seattle and Tacoma formed similar unions. A “National Longshoremen’s Union” was formed by workers on the Great Lakes in 1892, winning a nationwide charter from the American Federation of Labor (AFL). They renamed themselves two years later as the Interna-

tional Longshoremen’s Association (ILA) and quickly chartered new West Coast locals, beginning with ILA Local 38 in Everett, WA. By 1902, there were 16 ports with ILA locals along the West Coast.

Limited success & decline

Each local union was limited to a contract covering only their port, which made workers vulnerable to “whipping” by employers who sought to pit workers against each other in order to drive down wages. Sporadic strikes at individual ports occurred in the early 1900s. The first efforts to coordinate “coastwise” strikes happened in 1916 and failed. The First World War began in 1914 and ended in 1918, with the U.S. entering the fray in 1917. Union activity at the AFL was swept up in a patriotic fervor – discouraging strikes and encouraging union members to enlist. Labor organizing continued among Longshore workers who attempted more strikes in 1919 and 1921 that failed. General strikes were also attempted in Seattle and Helena, Montana, but a conservative mood followed the war, climaxed with raids against immigrant militant union leaders, including members of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) and those inspired by Russia’s Bolshevik Rev- olution of 1917 that called for factories to be run by worker-run councils.

The combination of government and employer repression, along with post-war economic prosperity, left most unions – including maritime unions – weak and disorganized. Most fell apart or barely managed to survive during the 1920s. Working conditions deteriorated, with stagnant wages and hazardous work that disabled an average of 5 workers per eight-hour shift involving 2,000 men in San Francisco. Professor Cherny concluded his talk by explaining how the 1929 Great Depression set the stage for a resurgence of militant organizing that eventually turned the tide and gave rise to the ILWU.

Resurgence & triumph

ILWU Librarian and Archivist Robin Walker chronicled the successful effort by Longshore and other maritime work-

ers to organize a coastwise strike and contract fight in 1934 that secured a uniform coastwise contract with jointly-managed dispatch halls.

While emphasizing the central role played by workers who joined in a nationwide upsurge of militant union organizing during the early 1930s, Walker also emphasized the critical importance of new legislation enacted during the early Depression years.

Longshore Division’s “History & Traditions Conference” looks back to plan ahead

Workers forced the law

But in addition to new laws, Profes-
or Logan emphasized the importance to militant mass action by labor organizing led by activists who believed in “organizing the unorganized” and empowering the working class. Thousands of dedicated activists helped organize millions of union members during the 1930s and through World War II. It was the fear of these militant mass actions that forced politicians – led by President Franklin Roosevelt – to pass pro-labor laws.

During the Second World War, unions including the ILWU agreed to moderate demands and curtail strikes in order to support the national cause of defeating fascism in Germany and Japan. The governments of the U.S. and Britain also established a wary but formal alliance with the Soviet Union in order to defeat fascism.

Post war reversal

After the war, political opinion in the U.S. shifted quickly against unions. The alliance with the Soviet Union was replaced with a “Cold War” waged against former Soviet allies. Labor unions – particularly those with leftist leaders like Harry Bridges – came under fierce attack. Anti-Communist crusades were led by Congressmen Joseph McCarthy, Richard Nixon and hundreds of other national and local politicians in both parties. Witch-hunts were launched to expose “Reds” teaching in schools, working in govern-

ment offices, acting or writing in Holly-

wood or employed by private industry. The FBI monitored and harassed millions of Americans, including many ILWU members, who were suspected of being “un-Americans.” The horrors of Joseph Stalin’s reign of terror in Russia confirmed the public’s worst fears about the Soviet Union and the discreetly radical who had staked their hopes and dreams on a belief
that the Soviet Union was a worker-friendly alternative to U.S. capitalism.

Backlash
When the ILWU and other union members tried to gain ground through strikes after the war ended, they encountered hostile politicians and a not-so-friendly public. President Truman set the tone early after the war by ordering the U.S. Army to break a railroad strike in 1946. Industrial leaders pushed hard for legislation to restrict union power, portraying unions and strikes as dangerous threats to American democracy. Special hostility was directed at unions with left-wing leaders, such as the ILWU, which had refused to purge its ranks of activists. The ILWU left the CIO in 1950 to avoid expulsion.

Taft-Hartley repression
It was in this context that Professor Logan explained details of the anti-worker Taft-Hartley Act, that was passed by Congress in 1947, which:

- Outlawed strikes intended to establish union jurisdiction
- Outlawed wildcat strikes (unsanctioned actions by union members)
- Outlawed strikes over political issues that concerned union members and the public
- Outlawed “secondary” boycotts and picketing
- Outlawed mass pickets so employers could more easily employ strikebreakers
- Outlawed union shops so that union membership became optional
- Outlawed donations of union funds to support pro-workers candidates
- Outlawed mass pickets so employers could more easily employ strikebreakers
- Outlawed union shops so that union membership became optional
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The Taft-Hartley Act also restricted many rights granted just 12 years earlier by the National Labor Relations Act.

- Taft-Hartley allowed unions to be charged with “Unfair Labor Practice” violations
- Taft-Hartley required unions to provide 80-day notices before economic strikes
- Taft-Hartley prohibited federal employees from striking
- Taft-Hartley allowed individual states to adopt their own anti-union laws and restrictions
- Taft-Hartley granted the President new rights to break strikes with court injunctions
- Taft-Hartley allowed employers to sue unions for damages from “secondary” boycotts.

Despite union opposition, the growing right-wing tide and power of big business made Taft-Hartley impossible to stop. In 1948, the ILWU and a few other unions backed a third party led by Henry Wallace. It was hoped that the “Progressive Party” could rally union members and working class support, but the effort failed miserably, winning no electoral votes and only 2.7% of the popular vote – mostly from New York.

Longshore courage in 1948
Amidst this seemingly hopeless political situation, ILWU Longshore workers dared to confront their aggressive maritime employers and hostile politicians in 1948 by challenging provisions of the new Taft-Hartley legislation and organizing a bold strike.

The National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) decided to impose a new proviso of Taft-Hartley on ILWU members that required workers to vote on the employers’ “last, best and final” contract offer. When longshore employers in their “last, best and final offer,” Longshore Caucus delegates recommended that members boycott the election proceedings. In a remarkable show of solidarity, not a single one of the 26,965 members cast a ballot. Employers responded to the standoff by announcing there was one issue that must be addressed, which they said was “Communists leadership in the ILWU.” Again, members refused to be divided and launched a strike effort that lasted 93 days. When it was over, the ILWU’s unity prevailed, and employers agreed to lockout and accept a contract with better terms for workers.

Mine worker solidarity
A similar story of courageous union members overcoming powerful employers and Taft-Hartley restrictions was told by retired professor Richard Brubin of West Virginia University. He explained how the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA), like the ILWU, had been built on militant struggles during the 1930s, when the union was led by President John L. Lewis who also founded the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) that launched massive union organizing efforts in the 1930s. Lewis and his team of radical organizers formed the CIO – with immediate support from Harry Bridges – because the labor establishment in the American Federation of Labor (AFL) was refusing to organize millions of industrial workers who weren’t wanted by narrow craft unions. Like Bridges, John L. Lewis remained in office four decades, a question respected within his union and became notorious for making alliances with Communists, and a willingness to confront employers with militant strikes.

Fighting corruption
When Lewis left the leadership in the 1960s, a period of corruption ensued, leading to the 1969 murder of union reformer Jake Yahblom’s who’s killing was ordered by UMWA incumbent President Tony Boyle. Reformers eventually won control of their union and led a series of militant strikes.

Striking Pittston Coal
One of the most famous battles was the 1989 strike against the Pittston Coal Company, triggered when the company dropped out of the coal employers association, then refused to pay pension and health care payments collected $1.3 billion. Miners, widows and disabled miners. Pittston warned employees they would be replaced if there was a strike, so miners remained on the job without a contract for another 16 months, before finally striking in April of 1990. UMWA members established a “Camp Solidarity” on company property and conducted a series of dramatic actions – including the non-violent blockades – all of which eventually forced the company to settle, sign a new contract and resume paying health and welfare benefits. The struggle also generated millions in legal fees and court fines, most of which stemmed from violating court injunctions, many related to the Taft-Hartley Act. The union was eventually successful in reducing some, but not all, of the court fines.

How the ILWU works
Ray Famlhate, International Vice President (Mainland), walked participants through a detailed explanation of the ILWU’s current structure. Famlhate noted some new developments, including the addition of a Panama Canal Division.

Information about the non-longshore aspects of the ILWU were provided by ILWU historian Harvey Schwartz, who curates the Oral History Collection at the ILWU library. Joining Schwartz was Local 8 member Adam Wetzel.

The ILWU experience in Hawaii, Canada and Alaska was also covered in the conference. ILWU International Vice President (Hawaii) Wesley Futurod provided a detailed overview of past organizing and current struggles by non-longshore workers living in the Hawaiian Islands. He covered the dramatic political changes that resulted from ILWU efforts to organize pineapple and sugarcane workers in the past, and current efforts to organize tourism, service and retail workers on the island. “The ILWU helped ease the transition from plantations to tourism where the ILWU is fighting for good union jobs,” said Futurod.

ILWU Canada President Mark Gordenko hoped to attend the Conference but was unable to join due to a scheduling conflict. Gordenko prepared a letter expressing fraternal greetings to Conference participants on behalf of the members of ILWU Canada. A three-page history of ILWU Canada, prepared by local 500 pensioner Dave Lomas was also distributed.

ILWU Alaska President Chuck Wendt was on hand to present a summary of the challenges and opportunities facing union members in the 49th State. His overview covered ILWU activities from the southern part of the state in the nation, to the ILWU presence in Dutch Harbor, a rugged fishing town situated in the remote Alaskan Islands chain.

ILWU Coast Committeeman Ray Ortiz, Jr., explained “How the ILWU Longshore Division Works,” explaining the various committees and procedures.

Local 94 President Danny Miranda explained the historical and present-day status of Walking Bosses and Foremen in the ILWU.

Safety & health
Longshore Division Safety Committee Chair Tim Polee and Safety Committee member Adan Diaz joined with Local 91 President Fred Gilliam, Local 13 member Alberto Borilla and Local 10 President Mike Villeggiante, to explain the history of the Pacific Coast Maritime Safety Code. The presentation and discussion covered the ILWU’s efforts to reduce hazards and risks on the job, and their Committee’s involvement with federal and state rulemaking and enforcement agencies.

Contract history
A discussion of the historical development and evolution of the Longshore and Clerk Contract was presented by Committee member Adrian Azevedo.

Conference Organizers:
The Longshore Education Committee planned and organized the “History & Traditions Conference” on Dec. 1-6. (L-R) Local 54’s Marc Cuevas, Local 4’s Brad Clark, Local 13’s Alberto Bonilla, Local 19’s Rich Austin, Jr., Local 8’s Adam Wetzel, Local 91’s Fred Gilliam, Committee Chair and Local 63 member Patricia Aquirre, Local 23’s Dean McGrath, International Vice President (Mainland) Ray Famlhate who closed the Conference, Local 10’s Mike Villeggiante, and Local 63 Pensioner Lewis Wright. Not pictured, Local 29’s Ray Leyba.
Crisis in union meeting attendance must be explored

By J.R. Robertson

Originally published March 19, 1965

A growing concern affecting practically all ILWU locals is the lack of membership interest and participation in local union meetings. This problem was discussed at length at the last International Executive Board meeting. Although no practical solutions were forthcoming, the Board was deeply interested and recognized that the problem of attendance at meetings has become increasingly serious.

Any investigation, almost anywhere in the country, will show that this problem is not confined to ILWU locals, but is general throughout the nation. Pick up almost any labor paper and you will discover that in most local unions they face similar issues. Of course, in the case of many tight little craft unions this is rarely discussed—if for no other reason than that many of these are run from above, and don’t really want the local meeting to exert any control or pressure.

Membership attendance and participation in ILWU locals, however, is historically of tremendous significance. Our “secret weapon”—the real answer to the ILWU strength ever since it was formed—has always been this active participation of the membership in all phases of union life and rank-and-file control.

At the recent Local 6 annual convention with over 500 delegates present, considerable discussion was devoted to this matter of meeting attendance. Again, no tailor-made answer to this question was evolved, proving that the problem has fairly deep roots and doesn’t lend itself to simple formulas.

So the question has to be asked: Who knows better than a member himself why he doesn’t attend meetings, and why he doesn’t participate in vital discussions where basic policy is made and adopted? In addition to the individual member, the same question can be asked of shop committee men, stewards, local officers, and to all of us who are in any way involved at any level.

Whatever the cause for lack of interest, solutions must be found.

Here’s one example of how important this is: We are now less than three short weeks from the International Convention to be held in Vancouver, British Columbia.

All local delegates are expected to come to the convention prepared with what amounts to orders from the membership to act on resolutions on a variety of subjects.

It is essential that the same convention delegates come well prepared to cope with this subject of meetings as well. At the local level, and that’s where the ball starts rolling, convention delegates should prepare themselves now with ideas, suggestions and, if possible, practical plans to instruct the entire membership on how the membership can be integrated into the everyday life of the local.

As has been said before, the ILWU cannot rest on any laurels nor can it be satisfied to be like any other union in the country. We are not a stand-still organization.

Ask yourself this question: Has the labor movement—including the ILWU—reached the point where members feel so secure that they have to do is throw up a lot of demands, and then just turn these demands over to their officers and neglecting committees and expect them to produce?

If such feelings do exist, it is the capacity to fight, to maintain what we’ve won and to move ahead to achieve greater security.

This capacity to fight depends not only on muscles and numbers, but on membership understanding of the major role they play in discussions, in debate, in analyzing and in reaching areas of agreement in which they are willing to act to achieve a common goal.

That goal is not only winning a better economic life for their families but also to keep the union itself in tip-top shape, always ready to fight another day.

Flood the Coast with 2014 Contract Victory Buttons

During this holiday season, we and our families would like to extend our sincerest thanks to all of you and your families for the sacrifices that you all made during our 32 month contract battle and for supporting our 8 day strike!

Without your support, we would not have been successful. We were called to defend the American right of Unionism and the strength of SOLIDARITY prevailed.

Thank you, thank you, thank you.

Fraternally,
ILWU Local 63 Office Clerical Unit (OCU)
Longshore Division’s “History & Traditions Conference” looks back to plan ahead

continued from page 5

Local 4’s Brad Clark, and Local 19’s Rich Austin, Jr. who Co-Chairs the Division’s Grain Negotiating Committee.

Court injunctions

A panel composed of ILWU Librarian and Archivist Robin Walker, with ILWU attorneys Rob Remar and Rob Lavitt, explained how ILWU Longshore Division members were hit hard with federal court injunctions under the Taft Hartley Act soon after the new law was passed in 1947. Injunctions were imposed during the 1948 Longshore strike that lasted 95 days. Longshore workers in that strike managed to protect their jointly-managed dispatch halls and raise wages despite employments by the government and to crush the ILWU with Taft Hartley. The government also used Taft-Hartley in 2002 and 2008.

Longshore Jurisdiction

A panel moderated by Kirsten Donovan, Coast Longshore Division Director of Contract Administration and Arbitration, provided a detailed discussion of efforts to protect Longshore Division jurisdiction under a set of challenging labor laws, including the National Labor Relations Act, subsequently modified by the Taft Hartley Act. The labor laws are being used by employers on a daily basis to attack ILWU members and their union.

Coast Committeeman Leal Sundt discussed the Contracts’ Maintenance and Repair (MCPR) provisions.

Attorney Rob Remar discussed the ILWU’s struggle with International Container Terminal Services Inc. (ICTSI), the rogue Philippine-based employer who operates Terminal 6 at the Port of Portland. Although ICTSI is a PMA employer, they have openly defied the Longshore Contract.

Attorney Eleanor Morton discussed the legal basis for the ILWU’s organizing and political action efforts, Austin concluded by citing the ILWU’s rank-and-file culture and need to support activists who understand the union’s concerns and are willing to fight for working class issues.

Adams told of a recent trip to Washington he led with Longshore Legislative Committee Chair Max Vechil, Jr. of Local 52, Local 8 President Jeff Smith, Local 19 President Dan Mciliston and Grain Negotiating Committee Co-Chair Rich Austin, Jr. of Local 19. They met with administration officials and members of Congress about the lockout by rogue grain companies. Marubeni/Columbia and Mitsui/United. Adams said the upcoming Longshore Contract negotiations are a time when the union will need help from politicians in Washington who share our concerns, and he urged everyone to consider contributing to the ILWU Political Action Fund. Legislative Director Lindsay McLaughlin explained the difficulty of working with members of Congress, where worker-friendly legislation has been blocked by an extreme group of anti-union Republicans in the House of Representatives. McLaughlin outlined the union’s continuing effort to address problems with port security and Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC) cards, and the latest efforts to address the grain lockout.

International Solidarity

International President (Mainland) Ray Familathe introduced a special guest who came to the conference from London: Sharon James, Dockers Section President and International Transatlantic Workers Federation. She provided a compelling overview of the global struggle by dockworkers against powerful international employers.

James noted the similar strategic patterns employed by the handful of companies who control the world’s terminal operations. She said that companies are privatizing public ports, outsourcing labor or seeking “individual contracts” with workers to bypass unions, and investing heavily in automation systems.

James said the challenge is for dockers unions to coordinate, share as much information as possible, and use the power of solidarity to take on the global employers. Vice President Familathe reinforced her comments and said that the ILWU will continue promoting international solidarity, not just to help other unions, but because it benefits the ILWU as well.

Revising the strike

Joe Burns, veteran union negotiator, labor lawyer and author of the book, "Revising the Strike: How Working People Can Regain Power and Transform America," spoke at the Conference. Burns said workers and unions won’t recover from their current position of weakness without organizing bold, powerful strikes that can bring industries to a halt; just like unions did in the 1930’s until the early 1960’s. He praised the ILWU’s willingness to battle powerful employers. He believes that unions aren’t likely to survive in their present form by relying on political contributions, lobbying and contract negotiations that approach employers from a position of weakness.

Organizing to win

The remainder of days five and six were spent exploring new skills and approaches to increase unity among Longshore Division members as the battle for a new contract looms ahead in the summer of 2014. The last session on day five was led by the team of Patricia Aguirre, Chair of the Longshore Education Committee and Teresa Conrow, long-time labor organizer and educator. Their presentation focused on a comparing and contrasting two different approaches to unionism which they described as “servicing versus organizing.” Through a host of examples including contract negotiations, health and safety, legislative action and education, participants were asked to consider the strengths and weaknesses of solving problems by organizing or servicing. The conclusion didn’t require participants to choose one or the other, but, it asked everyone to suggest an ideal balance that combined the best of both approaches.

Communication

The last day began with a presentation by Coast Communications Director Jennifer Sargent, who delivered a presentation that compared traditional union communication methods (union meetings, newspapers, letters, flyers) with the challenges posed by new forms of social media (websites, Twitter, Facebook). She emphasized the problems that can arise when well-intentioned members communicate using social media – without realizing that their communications are easily monitored by employers and the government. Sargent urged participants to carefully consider the impact of what they share online – before hitting the “send button” – by imagining how the information could be used against the union by employers and government agencies, including the National Labor Relations Board.

Looking ahead

The final exercise at the History and Traditions Conference was led by the team of Patricia Aguirre and Teresa Conrow, who asked everyone to consider the advantages of building a “member-to-member” communication network in each Longshore local. They started by posing a question: “Are the largest group of co-workers in your union involved, not involved or anti-union?” Most participants agreed that the largest group of workers were the ones who aren’t actively involved. Aguirre and Conrow noted this was typical of most unions, and suggested that a “one-on-one” or “member-to-member” approach was the best way to reach and involve this group. Before the session ended, most participants filled out a form with the names of co-workers they could invite to get more involved. A series of educational events was suggested, where less-involved members to could attend and feel welcome. “The key to building the network is personal conversations with members that have us listen to their concerns and urge them to get more involved in something they care about,” said Aguirre.

Concluding remarks for the Conference were delivered by ILWU Vice President (Mainland) Ray Familathe, who thanked everyone for spending six days together to learn about the ILWU’s history and traditions. “Let’s go back and put what we’ve learned into action,” said Familathe who recognized and thanked the Coast Education Committee and staff for organizing the event.
ILWU Organizing Director Peter Olney retires

ILWU Organizing Director Peter Olney retired at the end of November after serving the union for 16 years. Olney thanked “the entire ILWU for providing me with the opportunity to work with this great and historic organization.” ILWU Vice President (Mainland) Ray Famalathe praised Olney’s efforts to help organize new union members and assist with contract campaigns for many existing members. “We wish him well in his retirement and thank him for his many years of service.”

NEW PENSIONERS:
Local 7: Larry G. Brooks; Local 8: Mark R. Rendell; John C. Miller; Local 12: Tony E. Richards; Local 13: Leonard E. Armstrong; Svetozar Valerija; Daryl L. Grippando; John D. Mc Farland, Jr.; Frank R. Warth; Rodger W. Goddard; Gerald R. Lewis; Local 19: Jim F. Mallou; Local 21: Gerald M. Hanson; Vernon E. Jacobson; Local 23: Randall M. Lovitt; Ralph L. Hopf; Patrick J. Casey; Local 46: Gregory L. Holloway; Local 63: Roger A. Rizzi; Charles W. Gobbell; Joycelyn M. Gordon; Manuel R. Velasquez; Clarence Wiltz Jr.; Vernita W. Brown; Local 92: Michael B. Ragland; Local 94: Marco S. Mazarakovich;

DECEASED PENSIONERS:
Local 4: George Roemmmich; Arnold K. Sanchez (Cynthia);

Local 8: Frank Kirk Jr; Local 10: Luther Bailey; Joseph J. Castle; Peter P. Elias Sr (Mary); Local 13: Eddie P. Ruiz (Elena); John L. Nappi (Rita); Enoch Nixon; Local 19: John Wikene (Alice); Local 29: Dewey K. Mookin; Local 40: Troy W. Slinger; Local 50: Larry H. Hall (Martha); Local 51: Donald E. Lund; Local 63: John Randle (Tonya);

DECEASED SURVIVORS:
Local 8: Ruth E. Moffit; Local 10: Bernice Campbell; Clara M. Castle; Maria L. Nevel; Willie M. Smith; Carmen Cartahena; Local 13: Emma Chor; Carmen Juarez; Local 14: Bonnie Romines; Maryeveline Anderson; Local 19: La Vonnie A Williams; Local 23: Annette Sundquist; Local 24: Zora Simac; Local 29: Jeannie Harman; Local 63: Billie Kelly; Ruby H. Rinehart;

ILWU BOOKS & VIDEOS

Books and videos about the ILWU are available from the union’s library at discounted prices!

BOOKS
Solidarity Stories: An Oral History of the ILWU. By Harvey Schwartz. An inspiring collection of first-hand accounts from ILWU union leaders and rank and file workers. $17.00.
A Spark is Struck: Jack Hall & the ILWU in Hawaii. By Sanford Zalburg. A high quality re-issue of the informative epic account of Jack Hall and the birth and growth of the ILWU in Hawaii $13.50 (paperback).
The Legacy of 1934: An Historical exhibit by the ILWU. Produced as a catalyst to accompany the new travelling historical art exhibit about the origins of the ILWU in the 1934 maritime strike, this brief but vivid publication stands on its own as a pictorial history of the coastal strike and an account of the extraordinary sacrifices and democratic principles of the founding members of the union. Two (2) for $5.00

Harry Bridges: The Rise and Fall of Radical Labor in the United States. By Charles Iarrowe. A high quality production and documentation about labor and labor history. $10.00.
The ILWU Story. This book unrolls the history of the union from its origins to the present, complete with recollections from the men and women who built the union, in their own words, and dozens of rare photos of the union in action. $5.00.
The Big Strike. By Mike Quin. The classic partition point of the 1934 strike. $9.00.
The Union Makes Us Strong: Radical Unionism on the San Francisco Waterfront. By David Wellman. The important new story of laboring in the ILWU. $20.00 (paperback).
The March Inland: Origins of the ILWU Warehouse Division 1934-1938. By Harvey Schwartz. A new edition of the only comprehensive account of the union’s organizing campaign in the northern California warehouse and distribution industry. $9.00.

VIDEOS
"We are the ILWU." A 30-minute video featuring the principles and traditions of the ILWU. Features active and retired members talking about what the union meant in their lives and what it needs to survive and thrive, along with film clips, historical photos and an original musical score. DVD or VHS version $5.00.
"Life on the Beam: A Memorial to Harry Bridges." A 17-minute DVD of the original video production by California Working Group, Inc, memorializes Harry Bridges through still photographs, recorded interviews, and reminiscences. Originally produced for the 1990 memorial service in San Francisco. DVD $5.00.

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Death of Nelson Mandela recalls decades of ILWU support for anti-apartheid struggle

continued from page 3
Nedlloyd Kimberly is one example. The South African ambassador to the USA honoring Leo Robinson, post-humously, is another. I hope that the ILWU continues to take such principles stands when needed. And it will be needed!”

“Harry Bridges and Nelson Mandela both understood that the struggle for workers and the struggle for civil rights was the same fight,” said Melvin Mackay. “That ILWU members used their power on the docks to support the freedom struggle in South Africa reflects the best traditions of this union: solidarity, racial equality, internationalism and working class power.”

Southern Africa support: Members of Local 10’s Southern Africa Liberation Support Committee coordinated shipments of clothing to assist refugees from the racist government of Rhodesia (Zimbabwe). Committee members were (Loft) Larry Wright, Clarence C. Cooper Jr., Alton Harris, Leo Robinson, Bill and Max Proctor, Bailey M. Buffin, Charles Jones, Amile Ashley and David Stewart. Not pictured: LeRon “Ned” Ingram, Lawrence Tribbeaux and Herb Burnley.