



THE DISPATCHER

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THE INSIDE NEWS

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PCPA officers sworn in: The Pacific Coast Pensioners are committed to fighting to save Social Security for younger workers despite the fact that current retirees will not be affected by any of the rumored benefit cuts.

ILWU pensioners warn younger workers: Don't let them cut your Social Security



Blowing the whistle on Rite Aid: A national day of action calling on Rite Aid to "stop the health care rip off" took place in LA, NY and WA on Oct 6th. [page 3](#)

The fight to save Social Security was a central theme at the annual ILWU pensioners' convention, held this year in San Francisco. The convention delegates heard from experts and ILWU officials about the planned assault on the program and after the November elections, pensioners will be a part of an ILWU delegation in Washington that will be lobbying hard to protect this vital program. (For full report on the convention and an excerpt from the PCPA President's address, see pg. 6)

The ILWU mobilization is in response to plans by the White House deficit commission, the secretive bipartisan committee selected by President Obama, that is reportedly considering drastic cuts to Social Security benefits, including a steep increase in the retirement age. The move could be passed in the lame duck session of Congress after the November elections. The move would be an attempt to balance the federal budget deficit on the backs of workers despite the fact that the deficit is the result of large tax cuts to the wealthiest Americans, the mounting costs of the two

wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and the economic crisis caused in part by under-regulated financial markets.

The ILWU has taken a strong stand in defense of Social Security and will be sending a delegation including pensioners to lobby in defense of the program which has been the most successful anti-poverty programs for 75 years.

"Who better to fight for Social Security than the people who are collecting these benefits and know how vital they are," said ILWU President Robert McEllrath when he announced to the pensioners that a delegation of retirees will be a part of lobbying effort.

Cuts would impact blue collar and minority workers most

Raising the retirement age would disproportionately impact blue-collar workers, a recent report by the Center for Economic and Policy Research concluded. "Despite the fact that the retirement age increase is supposed to encourage workers to work longer, many [blue collar workers] would be physically unable to extend work lives in their jobs, and they would most likely be left with no choice but to receive reduced benefits," the report stated.

Teresa Ghilarducci, an economics professor at the New School for Social

Research, says raising the retirement age on Social Security would discriminate against working class and minority workers, who tend to have lower life expectancies and as a result fewer years of collecting benefits. In addition, blue-collar workers often spend more years paying into Social Security because they start full-time work younger than white collar professionals, she said in a recent interview with the *New York Times*.

"People who need to retire early – and they need to – are folks that start working in their late teens, whereas people who are promoting raising the retirement age are people who were in graduate school or professional school and got into jobs that would logically take them into their late 60s and 70s," she said.

Critics of the proposed cuts say that reducing Social Security benefits, which provides the majority of income for two-thirds of the elderly population, and nearly all of the income of one-third of the elderly, does not make sense, especially with record poverty and inequality. They also point out that Congressional Budget Office has stated the program is not in financial trouble. Social Security would still be able to provide full benefits to every recipient through 2039 and provide 75% of

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LETTERS TO THE DISPATCHER

Dear Editor,

I am a longtime member of Local 13 who feels that it is my obligation and duty to inform everyone about an incident that happened to me and my co-workers on September 15, 2010. As we left work at the end of our shift, we were met at the gate by a legion of police officers who asked each of us for our TWIC cards, drivers licenses, and other identification. Our bags were searched. This experience made us feel dirty, as if we'd done something wrong, when we were just leaving work after a long hot day. I feel disgusted that our government is attacking those of us who work our butts off to load and unload ships, trucks and trains. We are not the enemy. We are not criminals. We are American citizens just trying to make a decent, respectable living. I want other members to know what happened because this felt like an invasion of our privacy and an attack on our union.

Judy Mavar
San Pedro, CA

Dear Editor,

I would like to encourage all pensioners to join your local pensioners club to keep the spirit of "An injury to one is an injury to all." Our union has been on the front lines for social justice and on the picket lines for workers' rights. We must join with other pensioners to keep our union strong. The companies and

bosses will run over the weak and gang up against us to bring down the strong. Remember that we are riding on the gains of other ILWU members who came before us, and there are only a few of the old-timers left. The youngsters today will soon be old-timers. Remember and live by our motto by getting involved with other pensioners in your area.

Osborne W. Hills
Richmond, CA

Dear Editor,

The September *Dispatcher* included a nice photo of pensioners and active members from the Seattle area who were shown honoring longshoreman Shelly Daffron, who was shot and killed during the 1934 coastwise strike. The caption incorrectly stated that Daffron was the first man killed during the strike. While brother Daffron may have been the first to die in the Northwest, brothers Dickie Parker and John Knudson were both shot on May 15, 1934. Parker died almost immediately and Knudson passed a few weeks later, but both were the first to die and give their lives during the 1934 strike. Thanks for helping us keep our history alive and accurate.

Art Almeida, Local 13 (retired)
San Pedro, CA

Send your letters to the editor to: *The Dispatcher*, 1188 Franklin St., San Francisco, CA 94109-6800 or email to editor@ilwu.org

For the record: corrections and omissions

Dale (Ron) Crabtree was retired from Local 98, not Local 94 as was reported in the September issue. Louie Hill was misidentified as retired in the September issue. He is still an active member.



Local 13 cuts ribbon on new building: On Sept. 17th ILWU Local 13 members held their official grand opening and ribbon cutting ceremony at their new office building in San Pedro. Several elected officials were on hand to participate in the event and officially welcome Local 13 into their new home. From left to right: Bobby Olvera, Jr., Vice-President, Local 13; Anthony Santich, San Pedro Chamber of Commerce; Chris Viramontes Sec-Treasurer, Local 13; Joe Cortez, President, Local 13; State Assemblywoman Bonnie Lowenthal; L.A. City Councilwoman Janice Hahn and Carmen Trutanich, L.A. City Attorney.

Photo by: Robin Doyno



Mobilizing the membership: Members from ILWU Locals 6, 10, 34 and 75 have been phone banking, precinct walking, and putting up yard signs in a "get out the vote" effort that will make the ILWU's voice heard this election. Volunteers are reporting tremendous response in the member-to-member outreach with an overwhelming number pledging to vote for the District Council endorsed candidates and agreeing to put up campaign signs in their yards. An active and engaged membership that helps elect the right people to office is invaluable in our fight for good jobs. For information about how to get involved in your areas political program contact your District Council: Southern California: (310) 521-8796; Northern California: (415) 775-0533; Oregon Area: (503) 224-9310; Puget Sound: (253) 272-6600. In the photo above, Local 10 President Richard Mead phone banks on behalf of Jean Quan, who is running for Mayor of Oakland. The electoral efforts by the Northern California District Council is one of the largest in years.

DISPATCHER

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Bayer workers fight for good jobs in Berkeley

In July, 450 workers at the Bayer pharmaceutical plant in Berkeley, CA. heard that that the giant German-based corporation was planning to make layoffs. Within weeks, 29 employees were escorted out of the plant where ILWU Local 6 members have been working since the 1950's.

Because they were covered by a union contract, the laid-off workers were able to choose between remaining on a recall hiring list for one year and collecting severance pay if a job doesn't open up, or taking their severance over six months while remaining on the company health plan, or taking a lump sum severance and leave the company for good. While these choices were far better than what most laid-off employees receive in a non-union setting, the pain and suffering was significant. Some workers lost their jobs just as they were buying new homes or expecting new babies. Bayer didn't make things any easier by giving laid-off employees only 15 minutes to decide which severance package to take.

Fight back or keep quiet about layoffs?

The layoffs also posed a challenge for the remaining workers and their union; should they watch quietly and sit on the sidelines, or try and do something and question the layoffs? Although many longtime employees knew the layoffs would immediately impact only the newest-hired work-

ers, they decided it was in everyone's best interest to challenge the layoffs. They launched a campaign to inform everyone in their plant and surrounding community about the layoffs and encourage everyone to join the fight for good jobs at Bayer.

Reason for optimism...

During the recession, layoffs have become routine in many workplaces. But until this summer, Bayer didn't seem as vulnerable to layoffs because the company's biotech and pharmaceutical operations have experienced strong growth. Bayer's facility in Berkeley has also benefitted from producing a popular and profitable drug called Kogenate that's used to help people with a blood clotting disease called hemophilia. The drug is experiencing record sales.

...and reasons to be concerned

Despite Bayer's healthy profits and record drug sales, the recession and high unemployment has made it easier for companies to exert more leverage over workers. It's now easier for most employers to demand concessions and squeeze out higher productivity through speed-ups and layoffs. And there's less pressure to share profits with workers, even when productivity increases significantly.

The other factor in the Bayer layoffs could be that the Local 6 contract with Bayer expires next summer. While the timing of the 29 layoffs could be just a coincidence, it could also be part of a calculated move by the company to lower worker expecta-

tions and prepare employees to accept concession bargaining

Playing workers against each other

Because Bayer operates sites in the US and around the world, it's easier for the company to play workers in one plant against another. That's what happened in Berkeley last year, when the company made noises about transferring some of the Kogenate production process to a non-union facility in New Hampshire. Workers and government officials in Berkeley knew that Bayer could just be bluffing about moving, but nobody could be sure and the consequences of losing good jobs – especially during a recession – seemed unacceptable.

Making a deal to save jobs

After Bayer threatened to transfer work, union and local government leaders decided to support a package of tax incentives that the company wanted to ensure work at the Berkeley plant would stay put. The boundary line of an "Enterprise Zone" in nearby Oakland was extended to include the Berkeley plant, providing tax breaks for Bayer that they said would incentivize the German investors to spend \$100 million on new equipment in Berkeley.

The Enterprise Zone caused local and state governments to lose valuable tax revenue that is desperately needed. These kind of revenue losses due to tax cuts have increased as powerful corporations and wealthy individuals have



Photo by Roseanne Ward

ILWU members and their families are taking a stand for good jobs in Berkeley, CA.

used their political power to demand and receive more tax breaks – leaving working families with a larger share of the tax burden. It may have been a form of blackmail, but there didn't seem to be any other way to protect badly-needed jobs from leaving.

Back in New Hampshire, Bayer enjoys the same kind of "Enterprise Zone" arrangement that provides the company with tax subsidies that were obtained using the same kind of "we might have to leave" arguments that worked in Berkeley.

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National Day of Action Calls for an end to the "Health Care Rip Off" at Rite Aid

Union members, retirees and community supporters in three cities participated in a national day of action on Oct. 6th in solidarity with Rite Aid workers fighting for a contract in Lancaster, CA. The activists targeted three of Rite Aid's Board members in Bellingham, WA, Los Angeles, CA and New York City. The solidarity actions were inspired by demonstrations by Rite Aid workers in Lancaster, where a group of workers marched from the lunch room outside of management's offices..

The demonstrations focused attention on a proposed health insurance scam that would overcharge employees who work for the nation's third-largest drugstore chain. They blew whistles and carried signs reading "Stop the Health Care Rip off at Rite Aid."

Rite Aid's controversial proposal would overcharge employees for their share of health insurance by up to 28 times above the actual cost. Rite Aid first proposed the overcharge scheme last month to a group of 500 employees at the company's southwest distribution center in Lancaster, CA. The plan could affect thousands of Rite Aid employees nationwide if it goes forward.

"We've been negotiating now for two-and-a-half years. It is starting to get down to the crucial part of the contract," said Ed Calleros, Vice President of ILWU Local 26. "Kaiser increased their cost 1.5 percent yet they are trying to give their employees a 37 percent increase. That's just ridiculous and we are going to continue to stick together and fight this." Calleros and other members of Local 26 joined members of ILWU Locals 13A, 56 and the IBU along with United Students Against Sweatshops at the demonstration in Los Angeles at the offices of Rite Aid Board member Jonathan Sokoloff.

ILWU Locals 7, 19, 25, and 32, pensioners from Bellingham and Seattle, folks from UFCW Local 21 and Jobs With Justice members carried out a similar action in Bellingham, WA outside the offices of Rite Aid Board member James Donald. The New York action attended by members of the UFCW Local 1776 and SEIU Local 1199 was held outside the posh Metropolitan Club where Board member Philip Satre was to be honored by other executives.

At all three actions, activists sought to deliver a letter to Mr. Satre written by workers at the Lancaster distribution center in California where Rite Aid first proposed the health insurance scam.

Included with the employees' let-



Stop blowing those damn whistles! Executives in Bellingham, WA hold their ears while demonstrators blew their whistles 28 times—the amount Rite Aid is trying to overcharge workers for health insurance.

ter was an "Investor Alert," detailing Rite Aid's past mismanagement and underperformance. The report called on management to change its failed labor relations approach and urged Rite Aid to work with employees and solve problems together in a more constructive manner. It was written by the International Longshore and Warehouse Union's Research Department.

Rite Aid Board member Philip Satre was being honored by the Out-

standing Directors Exchange (ODX) as "Director of the Year" at New York's posh Metropolitan Club. Protestors assembled outside the club and greeted dinner guests with information detailing Satre's dismal performance as a Lead Director of Rite Aid's Board of Directors. All three Board members were asked to stop the health insurance scam and take action to get Rite Aid "back on the right track."

A more perfect union

LEAD Institute seeks to improve the ILWU from the bottom up

Rank-and-file leaders and elected officers from across the ILWU gathered in San Diego from September 20th-25th to attend a series of workshops, seminars and to collaborate on interactive group projects. The goal of the week-long Leadership, Education and Development (LEAD) institute was to provide participants with tools to be more effective leaders in their work in democratic unions and to make them more effective in implementing organizational goals.

"This requires two skills: problem solving and the ability to build agreement," said Retired Education Director, Gene Vrana, who helped to organize this year's institute.

The LEAD program draws participants from throughout the ILWU and the workshops throughout the week are designed to maximize interaction between participants. The goal is to promote solidarity and broaden their understanding of the different struggles and challenges faced by locals throughout the ILWU.

"They moved us around in different small groups and different lessons with a new set of people. That really

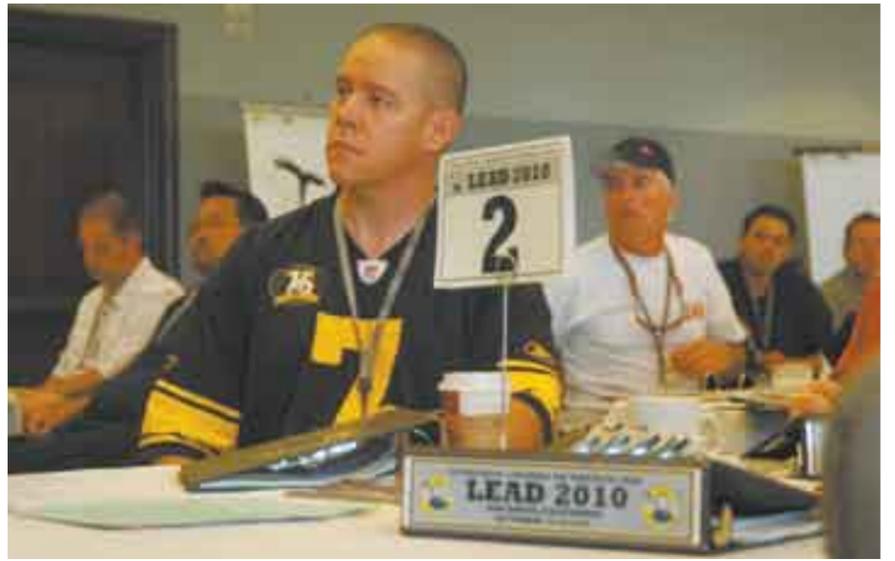
helps us to engage with a wide variety of people throughout the week," said Leslie Lincoln of the American Radio Association. Many participants felt that this aspect of the training was particularly valuable.

"First and foremost what I will take away from this is the fellowship with all of the other locals—learning about their struggles and what we have in common; what our differences are and how together we can increase member participation," said Local 13 member Donovan Russell.

"There was great interaction with people from up and down the coast—people we had never met before the conference are now family," added Mario Medina, also from Local 13.

The participants were tasked in the final days to create a membership action plan based on the tools they acquired in the first half of the week. "Getting more members involved has definitely been an issue for us," said Local 6's Pedro De Sa, who was excited that everyone would emerge from the retreat with some actions items that could be implemented once they returned home.

"We need to be growing as a union but because of the economy we aren't. We are all concerned about that—we want security for ourselves and our families and with a program like this, we have to tools and resources to make our locals better able to deal with the



The LEAD Institute emphasized group participation, collaboration and collective problem solving skills.



issues we are all facing," said Victor Gasset of Local 26.

All of the ILWU International officers attended at least a portion of this year's conference.

The International's support and networking with all members from



The LEAD Institute graduates left San Diego with new tools to make their local unions stronger and more effective.

across the ILWU was not lost on Local 5 member Katy Imbrone. The experience, she said, made her feel that she was part of something very big. "I feel very supported," said Imbrone. "I've always said that if we need them, the International will have our back. So for me to have that personal experience and to come here and see folks from the International and all of the other locals—that's very powerful and very reassuring. I will definitely take that back with me in my everyday work in the union—knowing that there is an organization behind us, that there is a greater goal we are working towards and that we are doing this for the right reasons."

Local 23 honors its founding members

On March 22, 1986 the Tacoma local held their first memorial service for the 1886 founding members as well as for pensioners, widows and actives who passed away in 1986. Dozens of old timers and actives from Tacoma and Seattle attended. Every March 22 since 1986, Local 23 has gathered to pay homage to the founders and those who left us in that year.

During Tacoma's 125th anniversary celebration, the last of 23 new grave markers for the founders will be installed. The charter members were from many nationalities—American, African, South American and Hawaiian. On the morning of March 22, 1886,

they struck the ship Ivy for recognition of their new union. They also bought a section of Old Tacoma Cemetery that they named The Sky Gang. The accident rate in the early years was horrendous. Seven of the 23 were killed on the job.

Tacoma Local 23's grave marker committee is made up of actives and pensioners who have worked for three years to fundraise for the markers replacement and settings. They have designed and sold union made t-shirts with historical photos. Also, individuals and families have donated \$400 each toward the project. Benefactors will be listed on the final marker. On the front of the final marker will be a depiction of the Ivy and its history by Dr. Ron Magden, honorary member.

—Holly Hulscher, Local 23



Pictured above are some pensioners who have been attending memorial services for many years including John and Emma Ehly who have never missed a service since it started in 1986.

Coast Longshore Division supports Peruvian longshore union under fire from DP World

A push to privatize Latin American ports is putting union longshore workers and their communities at risk

Since its beginnings in 1537, Peru's Port of Callao has been flattened by earthquakes and tidal waves, burned by pirates, used as a wartime military fortress, bombed by Spain and occupied by Chile. After each disaster, Callao was rebuilt and continues to be South America's most productive Pacific port.

Today, Callao is under a different kind of attack that's hitting ports in Costa Rica, Columbia and across Latin America: A privatization scheme that promises modernization but delivers poor working conditions, unemployment, and violations of federal and international labor laws that ultimately devastate communities that depend on good jobs.

"DP World took over at Muelle Sur (the 'south dock') last year, and has refused to negotiate with the union," said Esteves Morales, the general secretary of Callao's longshore union, SUTRAMPORPC. "Instead of following federal law and hiring experienced registered longshoremen, they're picking people off the streets and putting them in our place."

The Peruvian Government, far from enforcing Port Law #27866, has taken a George W. Bush-like approach to the union: In May, when longshore workers struck against DP World's poor treatment at Callao, Peru's government declared a state of emergency to allow the military and police to step in and restore port operations, just as then-President Bush threatened to do at West Coast ports when longshoremen were locked out by the Pacific maritime Association in 2002.

Without enforcement of the federal laws that are meant to protect them, Callao's longshore workers agreed to return to work, but they have since been drawing international attention to their plight. In June, a lifelong longshore worker who's elected to Peru's Congress, Luis Negreiros, met with Coast Committeemen Ray Ortiz, Jr. and Leal Sundet in San Francisco to update them on the situation in Callao.

"What we're seeing in Callao and across Latin America is a corporate drive, backed in full support by the

United States Government, to extract a profit at any cost, and that means workers pay the price," said Coast Committeeman Leal Sundet. "The tool of the trade is loan shark lending by the World Bank and the IMF with terms that are designed to dismantle social contracts to allow looting of the country's resources by foreign corporations."

The Coast Longshore Division has communicated with other longshore unions about the crisis in Callao, and invited Morales, the SUTRAMPORPC leader, to tell the union's story to other dockworkers at the Global Network Terminals Seminar in Long Beach, held during the week of October 15, 2010. Though Morales fulfilled the requirements for obtaining a travel visa, the United States Government denied him access to the United States based on the claim that Morales had insufficient ties to obligate him to return to Peru.

International President Robert McEllrath has sent a letter to Peruvian President Alan Garcia, demanding that DP World respect national and international laws overseeing collective bargaining rights:

To date, DP World, the terminal operator for Muelle Sur in the Port of Callao, continues to refuse to deal with SUTRAMPORPC, leaving domestic workers completely unprotected and subject to the caprice of the foreign port operator now running Muelle Sur. We have seen this before. Without the basic protection that union recognition and collective bargaining provide, DP World will extract massive corporate profits at the expense of the Peruvian public and Peru's unprotected dockworkers.

Until DP World comes into compliance, labor unions and their affiliates worldwide will join in the fight to defend the basic rights of Peruvian dockworkers – whatever that support entails.

McEllrath pointed out to Garcia that the United States – Peru Trade Promotion Agreement, which took effect in February of 2009, requires that both countries follow national and international laws that protect the right to collectively bargain, including the adoption of the International Labor Organization's Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and its Follow-Up.

[McEllrath's letter is available in its entirety, and also in Spanish, at the Coast

Longshore Division's news web site, at www.longshoreshippingnews.com.]

Costa Rican dockworkers have similarly suffered under a trade agreement and privatization scheme and sought help from the Coast Longshore Division.

"Multinationals go to Latin America promising to build a 'world class port,'" said Coast Committeeman Ray Ortiz. "But these foreigners from half-way around the world are there for one reason: to make money. They have zero stake in the community's wellbeing, and promises get broken."

Case in point is the Port of Caldera, on Costa Rica's Pacific coast, which was privatized in 2006 with lofty promises of investments in new highways, docks and grain silos. But time has shown a long list of documented failures in Caldera, including longshore wages that have plunged by two-thirds, a lack of safety precautions, and increased poverty in the community of Puntarenas.

After seeing the crisis that followed privatization in Caldera, longshore workers on Costa Rica's Caribbean Coast ports of Limón and Moín rejected a similar privatization scheme. Their SINTRAJAP union leadership was subsequently overthrown by henchmen endorsed and supported by the Costa Rican government in January 2010. The sham board quickly signed a privatization agreement in exchange for a \$137 million bribe.

With help from the Coast Longshore Division and fellow Costa Rican unions, the rightfully elected SINTRAJAP union leaders told their story to the Costa Rican public and to dockers worldwide. In August, a high court decision restored them to their posts and threw out the \$137 million privatization agreement made by their sham replacements.



During a news segment in July, Costa Rica's Minister of Public Works, Karla Gonzales, announced that the Port of Limón "will have a dock that has absolutely no relationship with collective bargaining agreements or unions."

The restoration of the legitimate union leaders was a victory for union democracy, but they face another election in January 2011 – and the privatization forces have promised to return to power.

Like Costa Rica, Peru has also had a taste of how its foreign concessioner will treat workers, and it has a choice to make moving forward. Peru's Minister of Transport and Communications, Enrique Cornejo, recently announced that the government's investment agency, ProInversion, is accepting bids for a similar concession of Muelle Norte (the "north dock") as soon as December. Despite the ongoing labor violations, Cornejo cites DP World as a model operator.

Elsewhere in Latin America Seattle-based SSA Marine is on track to build a new \$40 million container terminal in Barranquilla, Columbia. The port is close to the Panama Canal, positioning it as a key transshipment hub for cargo bound for East Coast ports when the canal expansion is completed in 2014. SSA, a Goldman-Sachs subsidiary, recently signed a memorandum of understanding with Sociedad Portuaria del Norte, the operator of the port of Barranquilla, to build the terminal. It is unclear whether or not SSA will follow the same pattern DP World.



Longshore workers in Callao, Peru protest poor treatment of the Dubai-based private operator that's taken over their port and hired inexperienced, non-union labor to do their jobs. Their signs say that DP World is making a mockery of union longshore workers and abusing Peru's federal port laws.

ILWU pensioners warn younger workers

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the benefits due thereafter, even if no changes are made to the current system. Ending the cap of taxing only up to \$106,000 of earned income would solve the problem entirely.

Deficit Commission shrouded in secrecy

The President's Deficit Commission lacks transparency which is raising many questions. Its work is done in total secrecy and the members of the

commission refuse to talk to the public about what they're doing. Its recommendations will be released in December, after the mid-term elections which insulates Congress from any potential voter backlash. The noted economist James K. Galbraith stated before the commission in July:

"Your proceedings are clouded by illegitimacy. . . First, most of your meetings are secret, apart from two open sessions before this one, which were plainly for show. There is no justification

for secret meetings on deficit reduction. No secrets of any kind are involved.

"Second, that some members of the commission are proceeding from fixed, predetermined agendas. Third, that the purpose of the secrecy is to defer public discussion of cuts in Social Security and Medicare until after the 2010 elections. You could easily dispel these suspicions by publishing video transcripts of all of your meetings on the Internet, and by holding all future meetings in public.

"Conflicts of interest constitute the

fourth major problem. The fact that the Commission has accepted support from Peter G. Peterson, a man who has for decades conducted a relentless campaign to cut Social Security and Medicare, raises the most serious questions."

CALL TO ACTION

You can add your voice to the effort to protect Social Security for American workers. Contact your Congressional Representative and Senators and tell them to keep their hands off of your retirement.

Pensioners tackle Social Security, health care, and a secure retirement for all at annual convention

The Pacific Coast Pensioners Association (PCPA), representing ILWU retirees and their spouses, held its annual convention this year in San Francisco, from September 12-15. Local 10 retiree, and San Francisco Pensioners Club President, George Cobbs, hosted the event. Delegates enjoyed visiting with members of their union family from every ILWU state in the US, as well as British Columbia, Canada, and then got down to work.

This year's convention met at a very opportune moment—an election year in which an elevated level of political turmoil is being driven by a well-funded radical reactionary ideology determined to tear down government at every level.



Joe Lucas received the Jesse and Lois Stranahan Award for his service and contribution to the union and PCPA. The award honors an outstanding labor person from the area in which the convention is held and is selected by the host committee on behalf of the PCPA. Joe served as a Business Agent and President of Local 10 and also served as the President of the PCPA for 5 years in a row as well as the treasurer of the San Francisco Bay Area Pensioners Club.

ILWU leadership was well represented at the event. International Vice President Ray Familathe, International Secretary Treasurer Willie Adams, Coast Committeeman Ray Ortiz, Jr. and International President Bob McEllrath all addressed the delegates. President McEllrath spoke to the urgency of our need to be aware of the continued attempts being made to undermine or change our current Social Security system. Future retirees, our children and grandchildren, would be hardest hit by those changes.

“At this conference we are talking about the pension plan, the welfare plan, Social Security, and Medicare. They all have two things in common. [The pensioners] are involved in them and the politicians have all got their hands on them,” McEllrath said. “Unfortunately, we’ve got politicians trying to put their hands in the cookie jar. Instead of making them stronger and adding to them, they are taking from them.

“Now they are trying to push back the retirement age. Now we don’t have a national health insurance, now they are going to tax the health care plans that we’ve fought for, that we went on strike for, and that just galls me. Now the government is saying that we’ve done such a great job in winning health care benefits, they are going to tax us. That’s wrong.” McEllrath also said the ILWU will be sending a delegation to Washington, including six pensioners, after the November elections to lobby on these important issues.



Willie Adams, International Secretary Treasurer, speaking before the convention.



Barbara Lewis stepped down as Treasurer of the PCPA. She was honored at the conference for her dedicated service and is seen here receiving flowers from George Cobbs.

If we want to hang on to the benefits we have, assure benefits for future generations, and maintain a voice in our government’s actions, we are going to have to pitch in and work hard with legislators who have been there for us.

We must all actively support the rights of workers to have jobs with

fair pay and adequate benefits. We need to work harder than ever to get the right people elected. Also we must make sure that legislators—now and in the future—are aware that we’re watching and listening and that we have a big voice and the power to act.

—Verna Porter, Columbia River Pensioners



From left to right; Joe Cabrales, ILWU-PMA & Warehouse Benefit Plan Nor. Cal. Area Welfare Director; Wesley Furtado, International Vice-President, Hawaii; Robert McEllrath, International President; George Cobbs, President, Northern California Pensioners; Rich Austin, President, Pacific Coast Pensioners Association; Jerry Garretson, President, Southern California Pensioners; Ray Ortiz, Jr., Coast Committeeman.

President’s Report to the PCPA Executive Board – 9/12/10

One of the tasks I perform is keeping in touch with pensioners from other unions from here in the US and from other nations. I’ve learned not all of them have the same level of support from the active workforce that we in the Pacific Coast Pensioners Association enjoy.

We have unparalleled backing from the ILWU, and for that we are grateful. In return, we do what we can to help our union.

I remain active in the Democratic Party where I live. I support it financially and I pitch-in and help do the work that needs to get done.

The Republican Party has embraced a mean-spirited agenda and is playing

an obstructionist role in Washington D.C. They want to continue to reward their friends and benefactors on Wall Street, and corporate chieftains who are responsible for the financial mess that is confronting our nation.

They are trying to blame President Obama for the national debt that was created by the Bush Administration. When Bush took office the national debt was \$5.7 trillion. When he left office it had ballooned to over \$11 trillion, and much of the increase in the national debt since President Obama was sworn-in is from carry-over policies of the Bush years.

There is an anti-incumbency mood. Some of our friends may be swept out of office this coming November if working class men and women allow themselves to be seduced by the

false promises of the GOP. It is essential for us to continue to be engaged and to involve ourselves in the political process. In California, Senator Barbara Boxer is in a tight race, and in Washington Senator Patty Murray has a real fight on her hands.

One myth that is being peddled is that the Obama Administration has not accomplished anything. Despite opposition from the GOP and some in his own party, much has been accomplished by President Obama.

- The last combat troops departed from Iraq. The President has said that the remaining 50,000 troops acting as advisors will be out in a year, and a drawdown of troops in Afghanistan will likewise begin.
- The Stimulus Bill helped create about 3 million jobs while lowering taxes

for the working class Unemployment remains too high, but without the Stimulus Bill it would have gone up to 11 or 12%.

- Health Care Insurance for children was expanded.
- We have a credit card holders’ Bill of Rights.
- Some financial regulatory reform has occurred, with more to come.
- There was the cash for clunkers program that helped save jobs for tens of thousands of autoworkers.
- Improved Student Aid programs were established.
- The President signed the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act that requires equal pay for equal work for women.

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Women who rock the boat without being thrown overboard



Photo Credit - Pat Williams - Local 501 - Operating Engineers

For the first time, the women of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) organized a conference designed to honor and inspire women to step up into union leadership. More than 100 women from the Southern California longshore and warehouse divisions of the ILWU attended the event on Monday, September 27th in San Pedro. The day's theme: "Where His-story Meets Her-Story," was woven into three main sessions and three workshops focusing on issues relevant to women on the waterfront and beyond.

The conference was organized by "sisters" from Locals 13, 63, and 94 with the goal of bringing women together to educate and inform them about the possibilities that exist in union leadership. Conference co-chairs were Patricia Aguirre, Franca Grove, and Tanya Scotlan.

"I wish they had programs like this when I was up and coming in the union," said Aguirre. "There's something to be said about women educating women; there's a camaraderie that takes place because of a mutual understanding between the teacher and the student." Aguirre, a Marine Clerk with Local 63, is the first woman to chair a committee in the longshore division,

currently serving the West Coast Longshore Division Education Committee.

"It's important for us to unite because our union is so big," said Grove, a foreman in Local 94. "If the women in the union work together, the entire union will benefit. It will bring the whole family together and we won't be so divided and separate at our various divisions and locals."

Local 13 member Tanya Scotlan had originally volunteered to assist with some of the workshops, but quickly stepped up to fill a need in the longshore division of the planning committee. "This is long overdue," said Scotlan. "Once I realized what the vision of this conference really was, I didn't want anything to stop it from becoming a reality." The three co-chairs worked diligently and saw to that.

"I'm here because I want to learn how to properly deal with some of the unfair practices that affect me at work," said Local 13 member Cherlyn Osteen. "There is so much I want to do but I just don't know how to get involved." Prior to becoming a longshore worker, Osteen served in the US Navy for six years and was a letter carrier for the US Postal Service for 14 years. "I had no idea there was so much going on for women behind the scenes of the ILWU, but I like it, and I want to help. The ILWU is the most proactive and progressive union I've ever been in," Osteen said. For years, Osteen was hesitant

about stepping up into union leadership because of family commitments, but now that her children are grown, she believes that the time is right.

Keynote speaker, Maria Elena Durazo, Executive Secretary-Treasurer of the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO, spoke about the life lessons she has learned in her many years in the labor movement as being "commitment, sacrifice, and service to a cause that is bigger than we are."

In her tenure as the leader of the Los Angeles County labor movement, Durazo has met with political heavy hitters bearing impressive titles such as Governor and Senator, and even President, yet she stated that there is one title which commands more respect and reverence in the workplace.

"Union members referring to each other as brother or sister is a great tradition proudly passed down through generations in the labor movement," said Durazo. "It means something special."

Several leading ladies within the ILWU were honored for their union leadership, with a Lifetime Achievement Award bestowed upon Luisa Gratz, the first woman President of the Warehouse/Watchmen's Local 26.

"The ILWU is a rare institution which is why this conference is not just important for women, it is equally important for men. As long as one of us is unequal in the eyes of the employer, we are all unequal," said Gratz.

The first woman foreman on the waterfront, Sharon Espinoza, was forced to raise her three children on her own when her husband, also a longshore worker, was killed in an auto accident more than 30 years ago. When the opportunity to transfer from Local 13 to 94 presented itself in 1995, Espinoza did not hesitate. "I was not scared of becoming a boss; I just did what I had to do to support my family."

The three workshops - titled *Women in Union Leadership*, *Understanding the ILWU*, and *Harassment and Intimidation in the Workplace* - empowered women with practical tools that could be applied daily while on the job. The three main sessions included Durazo's moving keynote address, an inspiring presentation by renown labor educator Helena Worthen, a dramatic presentation of the famous Harry Bridges monologue "From Wharf Rats to Lord of the Docks" by British actor Ian Ruskin, lively closing remarks by Los Angeles Council Member Janice Hahn, and music by local sensation Maiden and the Scalawags. The conference was supported by different locals within the ILWU and the Harry Bridges Institute, and was sponsored by several local businesses. Big plans are already underway for that, with the primary goal of including other ILWU divisions and Northern California locals.

- Vivian J. Malauulu, M.A., Local 13

President's Report to the PCPA Executive Board - 9/12/10

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- A crackdown on Pentagon waste has begun.
- Veteran's benefits have been improved.
- An extension of unemployment benefits for those who lost their jobs was enacted over the objections of Republicans.
- A jobs bill was created and is being improved over the protests of hostile Republicans.

There are two major political parties and that won't change before November. The new health care bill will impose a tax on good health care plans in 2018. We want that changed. It won't get changed if Republicans seize control of Congress.

Yes, there is still plenty more to do. But remember, Bush was in office for 96 months. It is unfair to fault President Obama for not repairing all the damage

of the previous administration in the short 19 months he's been in office.

Our neighbors to the north are also experiencing the effects of an economic crisis. The same neoliberal forces that seek to reward the super-rich are busy in Canada too. Those of us from the U.S. should take the time to learn about what is going on in Canada. The struggles that we share have some commonalities, but there are also striking differences in how our respective gov-

ernments have responded to the needs of people over the last several decades.

We can learn from our similarities, but even more from our differences. That is why international solidarity is so very critical. Through solidarity we can develop alternatives to the unethical, unconscionable capitalism that seeks to keep the working class under its thumb.

- Rich Austin, President, PCPA

[This report from Rich Austin, President of the Pacific Coast Pensioners Association, has been edited for length. -Eds]

TRANSITIONS

NEW PENSIONERS:

Local 4: Ricky W. Krieger; **Local 8:** Ronnie D. Gardner; **Local 10:** Abu-Bakr A. Madyun; **Local 13:** Roger Valenzuela; Ronaldo J. Zardeneta; Crisostomo T. Romero; Lester Jr E. Johnson; **Local 19:** William P. Fisher, Jr.; Richard C. Vogt; **Local 21:** John D. Malone; **Local 27:** Len A. Gallauher; **Local 32:** Boyce E. Cardell; **Local 34:** Peter G. Koerten; **Local 52:** Mary Lynne Fuller; **Local 63:** James E. Jones;

Herman J. Thomas; Dennis D. Regan; Rose Marie Avila; **Local 91:** Charles Handy Sr; **Local 94:** George Duthie; Harvey M. Bott

DECEASED:

Local 8: Norman Sweider; William C. Hart (Ramona); **Local 10:** Clarence Rhode; Robert Leon; Roy S. Harriss; Raymond G. Chu; Henry H. Gaines; Santos Udarbe; Tommie Neal; **Local 13:** Howard Livingston, Jr.; Leandrus Benton Sr. (Eunice); Robert N. Wilson

(Lou Ann); Stanley E. Newland; Jesus F. Medina; Harold H. Peterson (Betty); Daniel A. Jones; Webster White; Frank Urrutia; Michael W. Borchardt; **Local 14:** Nelson L. Rossig; **Local 19:** Ricardo L. Cettolin; Clarence D. Hubbard (June); **Local 23:** Jim Santino Jr.; **Local 32:** Robert W. Salem; **Local 34:** Jack Berghouse; **Local 40:** Leo D. Benedict; **Local 54:** Norman M. Olson; **Local 75:** James O. McDonald; Bill H. Sisler; **Local 91:** Richard A. Greenblat; **Local 92:** Carl J. Isaksen

DECEASED SURVIVORS:

Local 8: Verlene J. Mc Cowen; **Local 10:** Olivia Isaacs; Ivy Hamilton; Pilar Parraga; Gay L. Salini; Lyla H. Betty; **Local 13:** Evelyn Rego; Geroldine Grgas; Alice Gonzales; Doris Bevan; Jean E. Benson; Nancy J. Collins; Cecilia Beachler; **Local 21:** Norma F. Vandenberg; Shelly L. Hill; **Local 51:** Bernice S. Burns; **Local 52:** Margaret E. Chapman; **Local 53:** Pat C. Minshall; **Local 92:** Darline Monroe

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Bayer workers fight for good jobs in Berkeley

continued from page 3

Returning the favor by announcing layoffs

After Bayer got their Enterprise Zone tax breaks, they did invest money in improvements at the Berkeley plant. The arrangement by which workers and government officials agreed to help Bayer get the tax breaks wasn't fair, but it did seem to be accomplishing the goal of securing good jobs. Then the company announced the 29 layoffs in July, leaving workers, the community, and government leaders feeling angry and burned.

Research, investigation and action

After the layoffs, workers quickly swung into gear with an action plan:

- A rally at the plant entrance was called for September 22nd – the first rally in recent history.
- An education campaign was launched in the plant to boost communication with co-workers, spread the word about the layoffs, and explain the need to fight for good jobs.
- Outreach to community and neighborhood groups allowed workers to reconnect with old friends and establish new allies in the community.
- Discussions with local and state government leaders including Berkeley City Council members and State representatives who helped Bayer get tax breaks, but felt burned by the layoffs.
- Research and communication help was provided by the union headquarters to provide workers with an analysis of Bayer's operations and finances in the US and around the world.

Action proves popular

By September 15, a small delegation of workers was testifying at the Berkeley Labor Commission, helping generate a unanimous vote by the body to investigate the layoffs.

The rally on September 22 was a big success because of solid turnout and positive media coverage on local radio and television, and in newspapers. Bayer officials did everything possible to intimidate workers from attending the rally, including a written directive instructing workers to stay away from the rally area and prohibiting them from talking to the news media. Workers ignored these illegal threats and came to rally, where they were joined by local government representatives and community leaders.

Delegations of workers are continuing to meet with local and state officials, keeping them informed and asking for greater accountability for companies that seek tax breaks but deliver layoffs.

Shop floor concerns

The impact of the layoff inside the plant is an ongoing issue, showing up in the form of speed-ups, mandatory overtime, and greater demands with fewer hands to help. While the company has yet to restore any of the 29 positions that were cut, workers in Berkeley are feeling like they and their union are standing up, fighting back and not being taken for granted any more.

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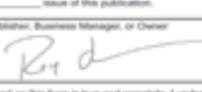
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