

WATERFRONT WORKER

VOLUME IV NUMBER 8

SAN FRANCISCO

FEBRUARY 24, 1936

ARE WE RETREATING -

OR ARE WE STEPPING BACK TO GO AHEAD?

The present policy of tactical maneuvering of Local 38-79 against the shipowners has been classed by some Rank and Filers as a retreat and are afraid will lead to serious consequences.

In this historical period events occur with such rapidity and with the constant changing of conditions it is necessary to change the union tactics to meet these new changes and new conditions. However, our main union policy or strategy remains the same; that is, to build a stronger labor movement, to maintain and improve our working and living conditions.

The only way in which to find out if the tactics you are using are correct is to look back at the results obtained and to look at your present position.

Let us do that.

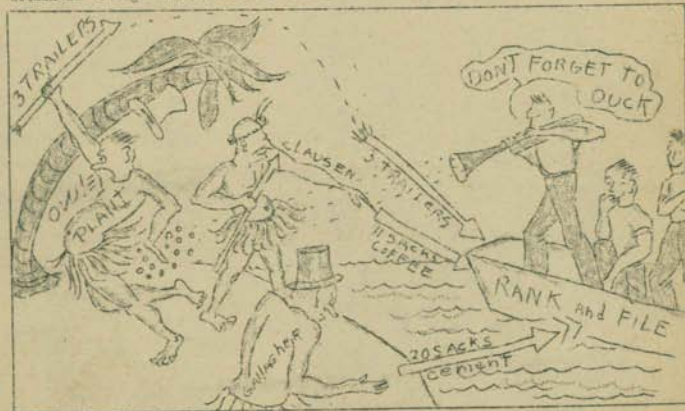
It has often been said "that a fighting retreat is a general offensive". How can that apply to the waterfront? For instance, if you raise a load of sacks from 18 to 20 and produce less tonnage an hour winning 20 sacks this is a reduction in tonnage and therefore indirect

ly an increase in wages as you do less work for your wages.

Some workers will raise the question that the men on the job will not slow down because it is natural to meet the hook. Realizing the natural fairness of the individual worker to perform a good day's work and we know that the average longshoreman is not a chiseler, he is not willing to lay down on the job, he is not desirous in going down to the job to put in time and a GO SLOW POLICY is a policy that cannot be applied forever; however, neither does a longshoreman want to see the maddening speed-up return, but a happy medium can be reached to satisfy both worker and shipowner.

To adopt and use a GO SLOW policy could only be a temporary measure to meet the speed-up offensive of the employers. Such a policy would not be difficult to initiate and carry through as long as we have our organization and ability to maneuver under the protection of our agreement.

For the employers to put through a gen (Continued on Page 5, Col. 1)



NEWS IS WHAT WE WANT --

Since The Waterfront Worker is being quoted so extensively in all of the ship owners' news releases including the little epileptic paper, The American Citizen, it is quite necessary that we get all the news on the San Francisco waterfront. You know and I know that it would not be doing the right thing by "Tear Gas" Plant if we did not get in touch with and print every last bit of news we could find. News, you know, about Plant's stool-pigeons, fence-riding bosses and agents the shipowners have planted in the unions. The shipowners dearly love The Waterfront Worker so to make their love stronger, you can help by writing in about conditions on your dock - or if you plug in write in about things that happen on a lot of docks.

Write your letter tonight - Mail it to P.O. Box 1158.

READ THE SUNDAY WORKER

A working class paper for the entire family. Funnies for the kids - magazine pages for the women - real honest-to-goodness labor news for the manfolk and for the whole family. Buy a Sunday Worker, read it and we will guarantee you will never miss another copy.

Buy your Sunday Worker from the newsboy on the Front or from The Loop Book Store, 15 Barbareadero St.

RADIO WORKERS ANSWER

Organized radio workers, 30,000 strong have given their answer through their convention to the splitting tactics of the A. F. of L. executive council.

The radio workers say strongly in effect: "We wish to remain within the American Federation of Labor. We want a strong, united A.F. of L. The executive council criminally blocks such a development by sabotaging industrial organization. We will listen to any reasonable arrangement by which we can function, within the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, as a self-governing, democratic industrial union department. We cannot agree to a proposal which would split us up, paralyze us and prevent the continued organization of our industry".

Can the A.F. of L. executive council continue to aid the big financial and industrial interests by the blind and selfish policy of attempting the destruction of such fine unions as the radio workers have built up? Those workers appeal for unity, for that unity that will build and strengthen the labor movement.

Trade unionists! Members of the craft unions! Act now for the real unity of the movement! Let the voice of the union membership be raised against the ingross, suicidal policies of the executive council!

SEAMEN FOR STRUGGLE

No one can doubt that the East Coast seamen have decided not to renew the 1936 low wage contract. The early partial reports of the balloting just ended show a practically unanimous vote to fight for wage increases and overtime pay.

The top officials of the union, who count the votes, are now engaged in "war on the West Coast sailors" at the month old convention in Washington, but if pressure by an impatient rank and file forces them to think at last of the needs of the seamen themselves, there must come an announcement of the ballot, overwhelmingly against the old pay and conditions.

Then what? A fight for such demands as are raised by the East Coast Rank and File means a struggle like that of 1934 on the West Coast; it will require the whole union and all organized labor back of it. The fight of the Eastern seamen to get what the Western seamen won two years ago is bound up with the struggle of the Western sailors to stay in the International Seamen's Union.

Either the officialdom of the I.S.U. has decided to betray the seamen on both coasts, to break the struggle on the East Coast, or it must see that the "war against the West Coast" is stopped. In any case the Rank & File must make sure that Eastern conditions are raised to the level of the West, and not that the West is crushed down to the Eastern level.

AN ODE TO SCHARRENBERG -

An ode to Scharrenberg an unfit man
Who pulls charters when e're he can
He strives and schemes and plots galore
To break the workman's strength for
evermore.

The militants, may they live long
Stepped forward to voice their song
"Solidarity, Unity is our power
The workman's weapon in every hour".

So bring on your machine guns, and
bring on your gas
We'll stand up and fight 'till the
very last

We have nothing to lose and all to gain
In this great struggle toward our aim.

Now, Mr. Scharrenberg, you funny man
Plot and scheme all you can
You're not going to break us, despite
all your threats
Go back and repeat that to your ship-
owner pets.

For many years you have had your say
BUT AT LAST WE CAN SEE THE DAWN OF A
NEW DAY

So take our warning and take heed
A man like you the sailors will never
need.

A Couple of Seamen.

(Continued from Page One)

eral speed-up policy is going to be difficult; witness, their past and present inability to do so. However, that does not mean that they cannot do it.

In applying a GO SLOW policy, as already stated as an emergency measure, this could not or should not be applied in a general way all over the waterfront GO SLOW to be applied only to those companies that insist on the speed-up. Companies may succeed here and there but eventually they will tire and cease the campaign through the continuous and constant offensive of the workers.

As an example, take an army that occupies a flooded encampment and they institute a retreat to higher ground in order to have good footing and to have their feet on solid ground and at the same time drawing the enemy into the flooded area. To better explain this the shipowners, along with Green, Ryan, the press and other employer-controlled sources, have raised a constant squawk that the I.L.A. was breaking the award. We can resist this united front offensive by consolidating our gains, by solidifying our position, by staying strictly in the confines of the award, by forcing the shipowners to break the award which they hold so sacred(?) and which they have already broken many times in the past. They will be forced into breaking the award if they follow through with their new offensive. The shipowners have their feet wet now, but let the water get up around their knees and you will hear them bellow.

How can the award be used in the fight against the shipowners?

1. If gangs are fired for refusal to speed-up. This is a violation of the award which plainly states that there shall be no discrimination and already this case has been tried and the ruling was in favor of the I.L.A.

2. Safety rules to be made effective, slow down speeding jitneys, abolish the use of unsafe gear, etc.

3. Enforce the 12 hour day with absolutely no lee-way.

4. Taking away the preferred gangs from some companies.

Through maneuvering and using these tactics the united offensive of the Waterfront Employers has been split and unless we give them a good issue to unite, they will remain split.

The present tactical maneuvering cooperated with proper discipline and understanding on the part of the membership can offset the offensive of the shipowners and maintain our present conditions. The present policy is NOT a policy of retreat but a policy of entrenching ourselves and to maintain our position while rest of the coast catches up.

WHAT'S DOING LOOK AROUND YOU

And write what you see to the Waterfront Worker. Maybe you think things ARE NOT going just exactly right; maybe things ARE going right and you want to have your say about it - well, pick up a pencil and drop a line. The address is P.O. Box 1158, S.F. We print 'em so get going.

SHIP CAULKERS STRIKE AGAINST "KICK BACK"

About 100 workers, members of the Ship Caulkers' Union are out on strike in the yards of the Kness Boat Building Co. here and in the East.

Although they were supposed to be working under the union scale and were paid union wage of \$7 a day, the men were forced each Monday morning to hand back \$3 of each day's pay. The strike was spontaneous and was called, it is understood, over the heads of the union officials.

The officials had ignored conditions under which the workers were employed for a long period. The strikers have established picket lines but have neglected to call upon other unions for support.

CITIZEN SANBORN, WE DON'T NEED SPECTACLES!

That little epileptic paper, The American Citizen, has again made its appearance on the door steps of San Francisco workers. It still shrieks for violence against all militant union members, who dare stand up and fight for better living and working conditions.

The little scab sheet tries to give the impression that it has some union principles by praising "the higher type of men leading the Central Labor Council" and by declaring that it stands for unionism as exemplified by the A. F. of L.

Citizen Sanborn are you aware that there are two kinds of unionism in the American Federation of Labor? One kind exemplified by the "higher type of men leading the S. F. Labor Council", who do nothing to organize the unorganized, or who at the best only pay lip service to building the A. F. of L.; who hold back the workers from struggling for higher wages to meet the high cost of living, who kill the fight for shorter hours to liquidate part of the 11 million unemployed, and who discourage the struggle against the terrific speed-up which has turned the American worker into a drudgery driven animal. The other kind of unionism which will be found in the American Federation of Labor is the kind that fights for ORGANIZING THE UNORGANIZED INTO INDUSTRIAL UNIONS; WHO FIGHT FOR POLITICAL EXPRESSION FOR THE WORKERS THROUGH A FARMER-LABOR PARTY, TO STOP ALL FASCIST MOVES, SUCH AS YOU ARE ENDEAVORING TO ORGANIZE. FOR HIGHER WAGES SHORTER HOURS AND AGAINST THE MADDENING SPEED-UP, to give the class in society who produces everything an opportunity to enjoy some of the good things they produce by their sweat, blood and their very lives.

Citizen Sanborn we do not need spectacles to see which way is right or to see which way we are going. We are going the way millions of workers in America are going. We are all going forward together. We don't need spectacles to see a liar, nor do we need specs to see what kind of vile garbage is in a paper that must be edited in a sewer.

The American Citizen with its fascist minded editor will lie in the dung-heap alongside of Willie Hearst and other carrion when the millions of American workers will be marching forward to victory through struggle.



"YES!" - MR. HEARST - A THOUSAND TIMES
"YES!"

Hearst continues his pro-Mussolini campaign in his chain of papers. "Do you think "Mussolini's rule" an editorial asks, "would be worse for these primitive tribesmen than the slave-raiding rule of Halle Solansie and his gangs of Arab-slave traders?"

If you're asking us, Mr. Hearst, YES!

THE SNAB SHEET IS WONDERRING???????

The American Citizen wants to know:

If it cost us thousands of dollars to get out the last issue of the American Citizen, where did the Reds get their money for the thousands of copies of the "Baby" Western Worker?

Rest easy Citizen Sanborn, the money did not come from Robert Dollar nor from the shipowners nor from the Industrial Association.

TANGLEFOOT AUGUST BAD INFLUENCE -- VERY BAD

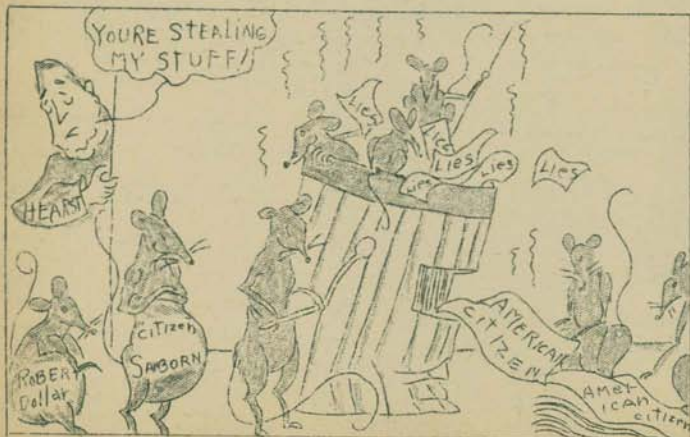
Benny Marcus used to be a star down at California, but now he works preferred at the Grace.

I guess he can't get away from the influence that "Tanglefoot August" once had on the gentleman because he sure hits the ball around there. He was working the Pennsylvania last week and he was speeding things up in a general way hollering for a bigger load and so on. I think that "Gentleman Benny" should be cooled off a bit, maybe stay on the bench for a week or two -- it may help -- just time to forget the "Tanglefoot August" influence. Old August had quite a hold on the boys, with his stinking feet and all. Anyway, Benny, you're not working at California any more and "Tear Gas" Plant doesn't come around any more to glare at you, so take it easy, you will last longer, at least so say some of the boys of 38-79.

**** CHECK UP ON DEAD BEATS

It has come to the attention of the Waterfront Worker that some of the members of Local 38-79 are running up bills along the Front and are refusing to pay their honest debts. In most cases the money owed is for food as for one example, Mrs. Clarke has something like \$240 standing out.

Now we fully realize that the union is no collection agency. However, this running up of food bills and refusing to pay does the organization no good. These bills are made by men who work regularly and they can easily afford to pay their honest debts. Remember, boys, many of those businessmen along the Front stuck with us 100% and they helped us out when we needed it! Let's play fair and pay up. Let's build solidarity and unity with the business people as well as with the worker.



PRESENTING TWO LABOR LEADERS

THE FOLLOWING APPEARED IN THE N.Y. TIMES
FEB. 2ND

"Gains under Bridges' leadership since the 1934 strike have given maritime labor on the coast the highest wages and best conditions enjoyed by any similar groups in the world. Longshoremen, for instance, are paid 95 cents an hour for six-hour day and \$1.40 an hour for all time worked over six hours. Sling loads have been greatly reduced, the shipowners say by half, and hiring is controlled by the union, through halls that were to have been operated jointly but are under complete union control.

Bridges and his aides charge that frequent job action (short strikes) were necessary during the early months of the award to force shipowners to abide by its terms."

This news item REALLY appeared in the N.Y. Times, Sunday, Feb. 2nd, as stated above.

A WARNING TO A DRINKING BOSS

Editor Waterfront Worker:

Just a word about a gang boss who worked last week on the Silver Ball docked at pier 23.

He had better watch out about drinking on the job as the gang did not like his attitude after he had put that quart of whiskey under his belt. He not only had it under his belt but he had it under his hide as well and he was mean as hell.

I am writing this as a warning and I hope he sees it so he don't continue such a thing as drinking on the job.

From One Who Believes in Doing Right.

THE FOLLOWING NEVER APPEARED IN ANY PAPER

But wouldn't you drop dead of surprise if you woke up one morning and found the following in the N. Y. Times, or, for that matter, in any other paper.

PRESIDENT RYAN LAUNCHES DRIVE AGAINST SPEED-UP.

RYAN URGES MEN TO STRIKE FOR THEIR DEMANDS.

PRESIDENT RYAN CRACKS DOWN ON UNITED FRUIT CO

But, brothers, its only because Bridges HAS fought the Company, and HAS battled against speed-up, and for full-sized gangs, it is possible to see such things printed about him.

It might not be possible to make Ryan into a leader of Bridges' type, but it is only by us fellows on the docks acting like the West Coast men do, sticking together, and getting our delegates to act like Bridges, that we will gain what the West Coast has, even if it means getting rid of Joseph P.

(Reprinted from N.Y. Shape-Up)



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THE I.L.A.

LOCAL 38-79.....

SEND ALL NEWS TO.....
P.O. BOX 1159, S.F.....

.....



THE MAIL BAG

ORGANIZE THE UNORGANIZED

RANK & FILE PUBLICATIONS AMONG THE CARGO

Dear Editor:

I work on the sand and gravel barges and am unorganized. There are about 60 of us fellows that work on these barges and we want some kind of organization. We have approached the Bargemen's Union to join us up and I understand that it was bucked on the floor by a bunch of guys who did not want to take us in. For what reason I don't know. It seems to me that those fellows must be very poor union men or something that will deliberately keep out of the union a group of men that are so important to the bargemen's trade as the men who work on the sand and gravel barges. I sincerely hope that something will be done in the Bargemen's Union to get this little matter straightened out and that we will be admitted into the Union.

Sincerely,
An Unorganized Bargeman

.....

WAGE SCALE ENFORCED BY RANK & FILE

Dear Editor:

There is a little point I want to bring up and that is about the carpenter's wage scale that was handed down a while back and which the papers around the Bay area so loudly hailed as a peaceful settlement of disputes, etc.

What I want to say is this. I have been a carpenter for many years in and around San Francisco and I have never received the scale since the '27 strike. The Building Trades Council officials along with the newspapers and building contractors may hail this recent wage scale as a great victory for labor, but the facts speak otherwise. What if some building contractor refuses to pay the scale, then what? If an individual carpenter quits because the scale is not enforced, he will be replaced in a couple of hours and no doubt it will be one of the business agents who will send the new man down.

In order to enforce any wage scale or to make working conditions it is done by the men on the job, which means THE UNION MUST BE RANK & FILE CONTROLLED WITH OFFICIALS WHO TAKE ORDERS FROM THE MEMBERSHIP.

That is why the stevedores have such good conditions which I hear and read so much about. I take my hat off to the Frisco stevedores. Keep up the fight.

A Veteran of the '27 Strike.

Dear Editor:

I just came back from a trip on a Swayne and Hoyt ship that touched the Gulf and I want to say here and now that the longshoremen on the Gulf think that the West Coast maritime workers are "the tops". Especially do they think well of Harry Bridges. Do the Gulf longshoremen hate Ryan? You're asking me? Boy, they despise that guy and everything he stand for.

There is one thing that almost every longshoreman told me and that was "they wanted more papers placed in the holds of ships". They said that the paper helped a great deal and they wanted more of them. They asked for the "Waterfront Worker", "The Voice of the Federation" and "The Western Worker".

I know the longshoremen will keep the good work up and flood the holds of the Gulf bound ships with plenty of good Rank & File news. And by the way, placing papers in the East coast ships is not going to hurt anything either. These East Coast maritime workers need it and plenty of it. Keep up your good work and put lots of papers among the cargo.
A Deck Engineer.

.....

WHAT'S THEIR GAME? UNION WRECKING!

Dear Editor:

At the last Bargemen's meeting the question of auditing the books came up and two bids were submitted. One from the firm of Ernst and Ernst for \$300 and the other from the Pacific Coast Labor Bureau for \$125. The Pacific Coast Labor Bureau has direct contact with over 25 different unions in S.F. and handled the case of the longshoremen's arbitration; in fact, they handle most of the legal work for the other maritime unions.

The small clique of Baptiste, Hurley, and Al Johnson with the aid of two members of the board of trustees were in favor of hiring the firm of Ernst & Ernst which was \$175 higher than the Pacific Coast Labor Bureau's bid.

The board of trustees reported that the union was low on finances and then this same small clique proposed that the recording-secretary be let go and also get rid of the patrolmen. These steps would weaken the union, yet when it came to auditing the books they suggested that the highest bidder get the job. Just what is their game? Did I hear someone say - UNION WRECKERS? Well, that's what I think - UNION WRECKERS.

A River Boatman.

"FEDERAL TROOPS" PADDY - WISH OLD DUCK

PINK CLERK SMELLS BAD

Dear Editor:

There's an Old Saying something about "If it's no good you can't give it away" I have in mind the publication called the "Pacific Coast Longshoreman". The guiding hand of this alleged longshoremen's sheet is an old acquaintance of mine -- I know him so well I call him "Federal Troops Paddy".

Paddy's favorite past time like that of Hearst, Groen, Ryan and Scharrnberg, is attacking anything that smacks of honest Rank and File. Like the famous Greek general of olden days who said, "Nothing good comes out of Rome", so doesn't this present day general (of federal troops) decide nothing good can come out of San Francisco - the port where Rank & File really means the membership.

Paddy's latest issue of the "Longshoreman" is an example of what I mean. Paddy tries to give the impression that a committee representing the shipowners, and the S. F. maritime unions went to Washington arm in arm asking for a Congressional investigation of the employer's plans to smash the maritime unions.

You know were it not for the fact that I know where Paddy stands, I would just consider him another one of these so-called "rugged individualists" who can only see one union meeting ahead of them but Paddy is a wise old bird, so wise he knows he will last only as long as he can keep the Rank & File confused.

You see -- Paddy never did at anytime think a union was meant to call strikes to gain decent conditions. His past record speaks for itself.

Paddy says, "A strong leadership would have taken care that unions would be prepared in advance of any such emergency that some may fear the employers are forcing upon them".

Like chasing the longshoremen through the lumberworkers' picket lines? And what has Paddy been doing since the 1935 District Convention? What happened to the resolution calling for the standardizing of loads coastwise? How come the great "militant" with the rest of his tribe of stooges, Pedro Pete, Thurston, and Lindron haven't gotten the same conditions that exist in S.F.?

BECAUSE THEY HAVE BEEN TOO BUSY ATTACKING SAN FRANCISCO TO GIVE ANY ATTENTION TO THE DEMANDS OF THE MEMBERSHIP IN THEIR OWN LOCALS.

There are a good many Paddy Morris' and Pedro Pete's in the labor movement, but the day of reckoning is coming closer when these so-called labor leaders will find themselves in the garbage can along with the cast of soup bones and dead cats.

A Seattle Longshoreman.



Dear Editor:

We were working at Pier 40 the other day, discharging. We had a good union clerk but every few loads we would get a few cases for the plunder pile where chief fink, Charlie Erickson was the clerk.

My partner and I didn't care much about going never him as the smell was terrible and to top it off two Rank and File in the gang kept giving us their plunder, using as an excuse that we could stand the smell better than they.

Now I realize that we are all brothers and we could not turn our brothers down who were in distress. We wonder that the other brothers think of it. Maybe, we could insert a clause in the working rules covering a case like that.

For instance:

1. The freight could be put in the center of the dock and have "Race Horses" Maloney or Paul Christenson take it from there as no smell bothers them.

2. Or Equip the longshoremen with gas masks.

Let's have suggestions from the membership.

Saved from Asphyxiation.



ATTEND THE LABOR COUNCIL MEETINGS

Dear Editor:


For some little time the Labor Council doors have again been open to the public I have attended some Friday night meetings and find very few women spectators. The meetings are an education and I believe that anyone who is interested in the labor movement should try to be present. The women, especially, should make an effort to attend as in most cases they are more removed from the movement than are their menfolk who are directly connected.

I would therefore urge our women, thru the Waterfront Worker, to better acquaint themselves with the different problems of the various unions throughout the city, and if at all possible to attend the Labor Council meetings on Friday night. Many of us know what is happening on the Front, but we should be posted on what is transpiring in other unions.

Thanking you to print this letter,
Yours,

A Longshoreman's Wife


OUR INVESTMENT




We were boys just twenty one
When we started working on the beach,
With shoulders square, and muscles strong
And rosy color on our cheeks.
Our step was snappy, our movements quick,
We had health in abundance, were never sick,
And in return for these priceless gifts
We were paid in dollars, just enough to live
On Our Investment.

Fourteen years went by, in slavery and pain,
Standing on the sidewalk
Waiting, waiting, for jobs, in wind and rain;
No longer are our shoulders square,
Gone is our snappy step.
They opened plenty of bootleg joints
To revive our dying pep.
The color of our cheeks are gone
Our spirits are also,
They call us bastards, they call us scum,
No, the useful workers, called a bum;
A gave our health, we gave our strength,
And in return for these priceless gifts,
We were paid in dollars, just enough to live
On Our Investment.

But on a historical day in May
We broke and threw our chains away;
We picketed, stovedore, seaman, side by side,
On sunny days and chilly nights.
Our clothes were old, our shoes were worn,
But did it matter? A finer thing was born:
The spirit of us, for a right to live,
For decency, respect, and for some happiness;
Then a storm broke loose, of slander and lies,
Hadn't our Masters invested millions? were their cries
Yes, from our health and from our strength,
And in return for these priceless gifts,
We were paid in dollars just enough to live
On Our Investment.



In these dark and trying times,
With days of bloodshed, terror and loss of lives,
Behold a little ship was sailing, sailing toward victory
With a crew of fifty, of the joint strike committee.
Then the lookout shouted "rocks in sight"
They are rocks of gold, they look so bright".
A soft command came from the Bridge,
"Steer straight ahead, to know these cliffs,
Stand, stand, steady, as the goes,
In unity and solidarity, my boys."
Some gave their health, some gave their lives,
Let's not forget those priceless gifts,
But you, O brothers, might better live,
On Their Investment.



Just another year went by, my Brothers,
Not in chains, of slavery, and pain;
You did not stand on the sidewalk
Waiting, waiting for a job in wind and rain.
But be mighty careful, we like to cry,
Do your duty, protect the I. L. A.
The Masters are still waiting
To take away your gains,
To put you back in irons,
Let's hope they wait in vain.
O guard your great investment,
Of Hall and Union both,
And remember well, these priceless gifts
Of Sperry and Nick Borloise,
And their investment.

By a Stovedore.