Greetings from Brothers and Sisters in Hawaii

ILWU Nineteenth National Convention
Honolulu, April 19, 1971
THE CARTOON above was published in The Dispatcher exactly 20 years ago and should stir the memories of some of the old-timers who attended the Ninth Biennial Convention of the ILWU in 1951, at Honolulu — the first International Convention to be held in paradise. Now, ILWU delegates return for the third time. That cartoon expressed the spirit and quality of our rank-and-file, emphasizing the unity of people of all races, creeds and origins who work together under the ILWU banner. Those who remember the 1951 and 1961 Conventions, may also become aware of the truth of that old saying: "The more things change, the more they remain the same." In fact it's remarkable how many issues and struggles of the past are still with us.

As we see the present, we find ourselves faced with some of the same government and employer tactics. This includes attempts to solve economic problems by taking it out on the hides of working people; attempts to destroy working people's organizations by cutting off their leadership; attempts to divide the working people along racial lines; attempts to destroy union power by reactionary legislation; and always, now as then, there is the overriding problem of war and peace.

WE HAVE SEEN a variety of administrations who have always tried some gimmick to control and keep down workers' wages. In 1951, the leadership of this union was under dire attack, as witness the Bridges case. Now we have the imprisonment of Jimmy Hoffa. And there is much difference between Taft-Hartley and the whole raft of anti-labor laws now before Congress. But what's the difference between Taft-Hartley and the Teamsters.

Whatever else the Convention spends its time on, and front contract will undoubtedly occupy some time at the ILWU Convention in Honolulu as well as at the caucus in San Francisco.

A high point of the Convention will be the appearance of official spokesmen from the International Longshoremen's Association (ILA), who will represent all the major organized ports on the East Coast and Gulf. Most of the problems with the coming struggle on the West Coast waterfront.

THE FUTURE of the union and the extent to which it will be affected by the successful outcome of a new waterfront front contract will undoubtedly occupy some time at the ILWU Convention in Honolulu as well as at the caucus in San Francisco.

The last meeting with the PMA—one of many over the preceding weeks—took place the day before we recessed. The Negotiating Committee had met on the previous Saturday to draw up a basic settlement proposal and this was presented to the PMA. The last thing we did was to present us with a comprehensive answer covering their entire position.

Although the employers' answering document covered practically all the issues in dispute, it was far from adequate. There's no doubt that the last statement of their position will be carefully studied by the coming caucus.

JOB SECURITY is the key issue. This means nailing down longshore work jurisdiction—especially stuffing and unstuffing containers. And this means building in, as a part of the job security aspect, a work opportunity or pay guarantee for the entire longshore work force. This means all registered men, Class "A" and "B." Tied closely to job security and guaranteed work-or-pay demands is the union's pitch for substantially increased pensions for men retiring after July 1. The reason pensions become so important is that if it becomes necessary to allow the work force to shrink—not only by attrition but even by stepping up the number of retirements—such an approach will help make our demands for an industry-wide guarantee more palatable to the employers.

Tied to these issues are a whole string of items—ranging from $1 an hour wage increase to welfare and vacations and paid holidays and several other fringe benefits. These are all important in the scheme of things, but at the same time they are all subject to negotiation and compromise.

The important point about the basic issue of job security is that it does not lend itself to compromise. You either have job security or you don't. Thus, it becomes a showdown issue.

In the case of the waterfront it can be a sticky issue as well because we don't want to take the position of fighting for job security—even if it means an industry-wide strike—by trying to take jobs away from other unions, for example, in this case the Teamsters.
United Foam Talks Grind To a Halt

OAKLAND — Progress toward the settlement of the 1971 6 strike against United Foam ground to a complete halt last week when Federal conciliators Joseph Vavrus called a recess in negotiations.

The talks, which had been dragging on for months but January 26, were getting nowhere fast. The Los Angeles-based employer had refused to meet more often than one a day, and no progress was being made.

The strike involves 81 members of Local 6 and seven Teamsters Local 70 truck drivers who were bargaining jointly for their first contract. They have the warm backing of virtually all of the 8,000 or more Alameda County Central Labor Council, AFL-CIO.

Negotiations can be resumed either at the request of the unions, the employer or the conciliator.

Jobless Figures Challenge Nixon Claims

WASHINGTON, DC—Despite all the Nixon Administration's huffing and puffing to the effect that the all-out war on poverty has been a success, there are still 9.5 million unemployed men and women in the United States.

The number of the unemployed fell by 1.2 million last month, but even though the United States population itself climbed back to a rate of six percent in March after declining in January and February.

There were 5.2 million unemployed men and women in March. The increase in unemployment occurred largely among teenagers and those who have been laid off. Many unemployed are being rehired.

Between February and March the employment of white men rose from 53.5 to 5.6 percent. Black male unemployment remained unchanged.

The unemployment rate of white men fell to 5.3 percent. Black male unemployment remained unchanged for the third straight month at 9.4 percent.

CALIFORNIA

In California, the figure for March was 7.1 percent, up from February's 6.7 percent. The rise was attributed by state officials to a continued decline in the aerospace industry.

The unemployment rate was 5.2 percent.

Also the Labor Department has added 20,000 unemployed men and women in the metropolitan areas of substantial unemployment jumped to 50 in March. This is the highest number of unemployment in 15 years.

The delegates called for a Presidential pardon for Teamster President James Hoffa, and expressed concern over his latest turndown by the parole board.

The delegates told the Nixon Administration, "You have him right where they want him, and they intend to keep him there," a delegate said.

The CRDC responded to pleas for financial assistance for the striking workers by recommending by appropriate action be taken by affiliates.

The County Commission support for SB 285, a legislative measure designed to keep Oregon draftees from being drafted for foreign combat in undeclared wars.

The bill will die in committee unless the Simpson-Long bill, currently heard, CRDC lobbyist John Olson told the delegates. "If you can get rid of that we can keep your locals behind this bill, now is the time."

A similar bill was passed last year in the Massachusetts Legislature.

SEAFOOD WORKERS

The delegates heard a plea from Edwene Van Sickle, president of ILWU Seafood Processing and Allied Workers Local 10, for help in locating a portable oxygen tank or respirator, commonly known as a "bird," for an out-of-work member of the union.

Coos Bay Seafoods, one of the plants in which the local has jurisdiction, is being accused of refusing to assist.

The unemployed workers, at first, were denied welfare help, Mrs. Van Sickle said, but after a prolonged struggle with the company, helped the workers to manage to have five cases "evaluated."
Increasingly militant and self-conscious welfare recipients successfully demonstrated on the Las Vegas "strip" last month protesting attempted cutbacks in relief.
OAKLAND — A rather remarkable ship made its appearance early this month at Pacific Coast ports—and lots of longshoremen decided the shape of things to come is here!

It's the Paralla—the first roll-on/roll-off general cargo ship ever to serve the West Coast. The 20,000 ton engineering marvel was built in Gothenberg, Sweden, her home port, and though she flies the Swedish flag, the ship won't see Sweden for a long time.

The Paralla, which discharged 2700 tons of freight in record time at the Port of Oakland, Saturday, April 5, is owned by the Pacific Australia direct line, which the owners call “the PAD highway.” Its roll-on/roll-off cargo handling technique is so efficient that—along with the 21.5 knot speed of the 653-foot ship—it is scheduled to reduce round trips from the West Coast to Australia from about 120 to 60 days.

Local 10 longshoremen, Local 34 ship clerks, and Local 91 bosses working at the Port of Oakland that day were amazed at the innovations they discovered in this ship.

The ship pulls in alongside the dock and its 150-ton angled stern ramp lowers on to the wharf. Unlike most roll-on/roll-off ships its stern does not have to face directly into a dock. Inside, the ship has ramps connecting each of its four cargo decks. This makes it possible to drive cargo from the lowest hold all the way up to the top deck, which is a flat, clear area as long as a football field.

The ship carries her own cargo handling equipment for all loading and discharging operations. There are four straddle carriers, six forklifts, and a side loader for 40-foot containers. The ship also has two 18-ton cranes at the aft end.

While containerized cargo may be an important part of the ship's tonnage, a large number of products that do not lend themselves to containerization are distributed throughout. These include such items as heavy earth moving machinery and farm equipment, lumber, wood pulp, sheet steel, pipe, and a large variety of palletized and strapped items.

This makes for a flexible and self-sufficient ship which can probably load and discharge anywhere a wharf can be found to tie up. Dockside cranes are not needed.

Longshoremen working the Paralla here and elsewhere on the Coast, were impressed by the lift machinery, mostly made in Finland and Sweden. This included two 20-ton forklift trucks, which handle long steel and parcels, packaged goods, rolled steel and much else. The ship also has considerable space for freezer items.

Longshoremen driving up and down the ramps into the bowels of the ship and up to the top deck agreed this was a first-of-its-kind experience for all of them.

And, as one of them commented, "Everybody keeps talking about the changes that are coming. Well, here it is."

Night scene, with angled 150-ton stern ramp down.


One machine is going down, another up. Note car driving through ship.
Construction Workers Are SACRIFICED to Nixonomics

WASHINGTON, DC — President Nixon has come under increasing public criticism for his handling of defense and aerospace industries to peace-time, useful industry. While the SST helped bring home the very real threat of suspension of the act as a sop to the construction unions; leaders; also, according to the Wall Street Journal, the President will now be able to test the intentionality of suspension of the act as a cool down of the battle against “inflation.”

Removing the suspension was seen as a test of the union leadership’s intentions. Secretary of Labor James Hodgson said he expected the boards’ machinery to be at work by late this month. Some 300 to 400 construction contracts will be up for settlement around that time.

SANCTIONS

If the Construction Industry Stabilization Committee which will be committed to the retention of workers from the labor force, four from management, and four public members — believe that a work stoppage was referred to it for decision violates the six percent criterions, it could:

• Recommend the Secretary of Labor impose fines of up to $50,000 or get injunctions under the Economic Stabilization Act of 1970.

• Recommend the Secretary of Labor impose a wage freeze on any government agencies which would be required to examine and possibly suspend government construction contracts in the area in which the violation occurred.

UNFAIR

Construction union leaders seemed particularly upset that although wage controls were spelled out rather elaborately, controls of prices and profits were left vague.

According to the Secretary of Labor, the “machinery for holding down wage increases is much more defined at the moment than the plans for administering price controls.” He declined to say whether the executive order might put some restraints on the profits of contractors and other employers in the construction industry to the “dear儿 market price,” he said, and one industry spokesman.

John P. Henning, executive secretary-treasurer of the California Labor Federation, AFL-CIO, and California Building and Construction Trades Council President James S. Lee said: “There’s a fundamental unfairness involved in the Presidential executive order that purports to impose involuntary restraints on wages and prices in the entire construction industry to curb inflation but spells out explicit limits only for wages.”

Henning and Lee noted that the executive order itself contains a loophole for unlimited price and salary increases for industry executives when it declares that “until criteria have been developed and applied and prices and compensation are determined to be unacceptable, prices and compensation shall not be deemed in violation of this order.”

How Do You Convert the US Economy from War to Peace?

From the ILWU Washington Office

WASHINGTON, DC — The defeat of the SST by Congress has focused attention on the real threat our economy faces — defense and aerospace industries to peace-time, useful industry. While the SST helped employ hundreds of millions of “little people” who expressed their concern about the environment and related social priorities — it also brought home the very real threat of workers from heavy industry.

Killing the SST meant thousands of layoffs in the California construction industry to focusing upon the reordering of our national priorities — so did the TV cameras and substantial numbers of conference participants.

ILWU CHALLENGE

Urban Coalition Chairman Sol Linowitz proposed a “counter bargain” for the nation, including supplementing unemployment benefits to make 15 percent of wages for workers displaced by conversion. He was challenged by ILWU Washington Representative Al Lannon who said that the problem is to provide real unemployment for workers.

“My work experience is that the corporations, Lannon said. “They’ve been able to take care of themselves pret-ty well up to now.” Lannon asked, “What incentive towards conversion does the receipt of wages provide?”

Even so, the McGovern proposal, which is at least a start in the right direction, provides only for 100 percent of regular, 40 hour week, wages. For millions of workers forced into de- pending on overtime to meet the basic necessities of life, even this provides little incentive if there is the option of a regular job. If the drive for conversion is to have a mass base — which this conference does not represent — then the immediate demand must be raised of guaranteed jobs or income now for all workers.

Also critical of the conference was the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom who said that the proceedings were “overwhelmingly dominated by middle and upper class white people.” Government and corporate solutions are without the support of these people — the have-nots of American society included.

On balance, the conference was at best a slow, faltering start towards a real national Plan for Peace and conversion. But it was at least a beginning. Senator Mark Hatfield, a strong supporter of the move for conversion bill, perhaps best summed up the need in a statement of support for the conference.

“While attempting to make the world safe for democracy, we have failed miserably. It is our responsibility by letting our streets become unsafe, allowing children to suffer from malnutrition, allowing a harsh environment on which we depend for life. The failure has come for the reordering of our national priorities from that of emphasizing acts of de-stroying the peace of the building of our nation. We need to have the same determination and effort directed toward the real wealth of America as we have devoted to the war effort in Southeast Asia and our massive defense budget. Such a task is not impossible.”
According to a letter and photograph from Al Morgan of Coos Bay, Oregon, fellow ILWU member Alex Palica—former member of Local 13 in Wilmington, California, now a member of Local 15 at North Bend, Oregon—is singing the praises of the Beaver State, "loud and clear," especially since he’s partaken of a generous portion of its piscatorial resources, Morgan writes.

"Enclosed is a photograph of my friend Alex Palica, recently moved here to the Coos Bay-North Bend area and a member of our Local now. Alex has really caught on to the good fishing areas around here and as you can see by the enclosed photograph he’s getting his share of the salmon. He’s holding a pair of bright specimens—a 16-pounder (Coho) and a 25-pound Chinook.

"Both of the fish were caught from New River in the Coos Bay area. He’s also discovered the joys of clamming and caging so when the tides are right, and the fish move in from the ocean, guess where Alex is?"

\[ ... \]

Below Bonneville Dam which spans the Columbia’s banks from Washington to Oregon Portlender Wayne Bonell caught this giant sturgeon which measured slightly under six feet.

Large tributary of the Columbia, a Gargantuan in its own right, is the Snake River which rises in western Montana, flows through central and southern Idaho, eastern Oregon, and southeasterly parts of Washington. The Snake joins forces with the Columbia in southern Washington, 323 miles above its mouth, and 274 miles below Grand Coulee Dam.

The Columbia serves many masters. It has been estimated that about one-third of the potential water power in the United States is in the Columbia basin. The North-west’s great irrigation projects also depend on Columbia waters.

How’d you like to have a shiny new fishing lure to start off the trout season with? We’d be happy to trade one of the illustrated BOLO spinners for a clear photograph of a fishing, hunting, or any other outdoor scene and a few words as to what the photograph is about. Send to:

Fred Goetz, Dept. TD
2833 E. 33rd Place
Portland, Ore. 97204

Please mention your Local number. The offer is open to all ILWU members, members of their families, the members of their families, and, of course, retired members. It doesn’t necessarily have to be a professional photograph. A good, snapshot — either in color or black-and-white will be fine.

\[ ... \]
Isle Unions Join in Peace Plea

HONOLULU — In a joint statement issued April 7, Hawaii's major labor unions called for an end to U.S. involvement in the war in Southeast Asia. The statement said the conviction of Lieut. Calley should make Good Friday a time to face up to the fact.

"My Lai was the product of official policies which for the purpose of military victory condoned such methods as destroving food crops, shelling and burning, evacuation of entire villages and designating front lines where anything that moves is killed. These policies are carried out in our name and the only way we can end them is to end the war."

The statement was signed by Walter Kupau, president of the Hawaii State Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO; David Thompson, representing ILWU; David K. Burke, Jr., executive director, Hawaii Government Employee Association; and Henry Epstein, state director of United Public Workers, both affiliated with the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, AFL-CIO.

Epstein said that the Hawaii AFL-CIO body is the first state federation to take a position against the Vietnam War. The action was strongly supported by the federation's executive board. It was signed by the union representatives at a TV press conference in state federation headquarters in the presence of Rep. Benjamin Matsumura, who said he will present it to President Nixon and place it in the Congressional Record.

Kupau said that the Hawaii AFL-CIO body is the first state federation to take a position against the Vietnam War. The action was strongly supported by the federation's executive board. It was signed by the union representatives at a TV press conference in state federation headquarters in the presence of Rep. Benjamin Matsumura, who said he will present it to President Nixon and place it in the Congressional Record.

Matsumura, sponsor of a bill calling for withdrawal of US forces by July 4, 1971, said with the recent endorsement by the House Democratic Caucus of a demand for withdrawal, US policy was becoming "very good."

"There is no doubt that what Calley did was a crime and the conviction was proper, but we must look at it in light of the same possibility. The war itself is an atrocity. Sentiments are changing very fast in favor of withdrawal," the Congressman stated.

Epstein observed that the first time such a heavy majority of Hawaii's workers have been represented in a joint peace statement.

All the labor spokesmen endorsed the resolution recently passed by the Hawaii State Senate which calls for withdrawal of US forces by July 4, 1971, and the recent endorsement by the House Democratic Caucus of a demand for withdrawal, US policy was becoming "very good."

"There is no doubt that what Calley did was a crime and the conviction was proper, but we must look at it in light of the same possibility. The war itself is an atrocity. Sentiments are changing very fast in favor of withdrawal," the Congressman stated.

Epstein observed that the first time such a heavy majority of Hawaii's workers have been represented in a joint peace statement.

All the labor spokesmen endorsed the resolution recently passed by the Hawaii State Senate which calls for withdrawal of US forces by July 4, 1971, and the recent endorsement by the House Democratic Caucus of a demand for withdrawal, US policy was becoming "very good."

"There is no doubt that what Calley did was a crime and the conviction was proper, but we must look at it in light of the same possibility. The war itself is an atrocity. Sentiments are changing very fast in favor of withdrawal," the Congressman stated.

Epstein observed that the first time such a heavy majority of Hawaii's workers have been represented in a joint peace statement.

All the labor spokesmen endorsed the resolution recently passed by the Hawaii State Senate which calls for withdrawal of US forces by July 4, 1971, and the recent endorsement by the House Democratic Caucus of a demand for withdrawal, US policy was becoming "very good."

"There is no doubt that what Calley did was a crime and the conviction was proper, but we must look at it in light of the same possibility. The war itself is an atrocity. Sentiments are changing very fast in favor of withdrawal," the Congressman stated.

Epstein observed that the first time such a heavy majority of Hawaii's workers have been represented in a joint peace statement.

All the labor spokesmen endorsed the resolution recently passed by the Hawaii State Senate which calls for withdrawal of US forces by July 4, 1971, and the recent endorsement by the House Democratic Caucus of a demand for withdrawal, US policy was becoming "very good."

"There is no doubt that what Calley did was a crime and the conviction was proper, but we must look at it in light of the same possibility. The war itself is an atrocity. Sentiments are changing very fast in favor of withdrawal," the Congressman stated.