Sugar Strikers Win Big Improvements In Wages, Pensions and Job Security

Triumphant Local 142 sugar negotiators and strike committee members included (seated) Eddie Lapa, International President James Herman, chairman Tony Veriato, spokesman Lou Goldblatt, secretary William Kennison, vice chairman Joe Norman, and State director Frank De Coca, (standing) Frank De Costa, Orpiano Gandia, Sabas Torres, Kenji Tanigawa, James Watari, Louis Oclaray, Ralph Cordoban, Tokuo Sugikyo, Herbert Viera, Takeshi Yugawa, Warren Toriano, Local 142 President Carl Damazo. Not shown is Regional Director Robert McElrath.

HONOLULU—Hawaii ILWU members ratified a new sugar agreement November 21, ending a 100% effective sugar strike of 7,200 workers at 15 companies.

It was the shortest strike in 32 years of industry-wide bargaining. It began November 2 and produced an agreement November 19, which, according to negotiating committee chairman Tony Veriato, included the main union objectives of a long-term wage increase, better pensions and job security.

ILWU president Jim Herman was active in negotiations. Union spokesman was Lou Goldblatt, who negotiated the first Hawaii sugar settlement in 1946 and took part in every settlement since then.

ILWU Regional Director Robert McElrath, who assisted in negotiations, said that Governor George Ariyoshi “was helpful in bringing a hui a‘oalua a‘oalua o‘e o‘e” and that Wayne Hirvitz, director of the ILWU’s Union Section, “helped to get the talks off dead-center.”

CONTRACT TERMS

The 15-month agreement, which will expire January 31, 1978, raises wages 80c across the board November 19, 1977 and 10c more July 1, 1978. This will bring the labor grade I rate to $4.59, the labor grade II rate to $4.76.

Minimum pension benefits are increased to $8.50 for each year of service up to 35 years, and $4.55 for each year in excess of 35. This was done by amending a pension agreement which was not due to expire until January 31, 1978. Prior to the amendment, the benefits were $7.00 for each of the first 30 years of service and $2.00 for each year in excess of 33.

Under the old formula an employee who retired with 40 years of service got $897.50. A 40-year employee who retires after this agreement will get $1,137.50. As amended the agreement will run to January 31, 1989.

LTC

LONG OVERDUE

The 15-month agreement also includes modest increases in health and welfare benefits. Unions promptly held stopwork meetings and cast a 97% vote to authorize a strike if no agreement was reached by midnight, November 1.

Goldblatt says, “There was no collective bargaining until a couple of hours before the strike deadline.” After the strike got underway, the employers made a few minor moves.

“The basic pattern of stonewalling continued...”

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Grain Inspectors to Strike?

Medical Care in Canada

see page 2

see page 3

see page 4
Canada 20 Years Ahead of US in Medical Care

The continued staggering cost increases of a health system in deep crisis and the inability of millions of Americans to obtain decent hospital and medical care is spurring renewed demands for the establishment of a national health insurance plan in the United States.

In Canada, however, the system is working. It is a system that in and out of government, the labor movement and consumer groups are supporting, is working and it is a system that is working toward comprehensive health care. Canada has been in the Congressional hopper for several years.

It has been compared to Canada's national universal health insurance plan, which provides hospital and medical services to 99% of Canada's 25 million people in all ten provinces and two territories.

US Department of Health, Education and Welfare Secretary Joseph Califano de-clared on a recent visit to Ottawa that Canada is 20 years ahead of the United States in providing hospital and medical services to its people. The US will soon have some form of national health insurance and it will be based on the Canadian system, Califano said.

The achievements of Canada's health insurance program include:

- Universal coverage of virtually all hospital and medical costs for every Canadian.
- Creation of a climate encouraging to health care workers, consumers and the labor movement to form of national health reforms such as group medical practice, provinces' medical councils, consumer-sponsored and controlled services and facilities; ambulatory care (now excluded in the Canadian system); payment of doctors by salary rather than the current fee-for-service method; and emergency care service on a 24-hour basis.
- In 1975, the last year for which figures are available, Canada spent 7% of the nation's gross national product on health costs as against 8.3% in the United States.
- Improvement of the lives of underpaid hospital workers whose wages have risen sharply in recent years.
- Canada's national health insurance program is known as Medicare, but is not to be confused with Medicare in the United States. Here, Medicare is limited to people over 65 and has premiums, deductibles, dollar limits, time limits and substantial exclusions on services.
- Medicare is for everybody. It covers all medically required doctor and hospital services free of charge to provinces and in some places covers dentistry and other vital services. Some provinces charge low premiums and deductibles. There is no time limit on a hospital stay, or how many times you can visit your doctor. You choose your own doctor and switch to another when you wish. Doctors bill the provincial government for fees which are set through negotiations between medical societies and the governments.
- Canadian doctors are not government employees. They remain private practitioners and are free to accept or turn away patients so they see fit and as their workloads allow.

WHAT CAN WE LEARN

The Canadian system, evolving from earlier insurance programs established in several provinces, was launched with the enactment of the Hospital and Diagnostic Services Act of 1966. Together with the Medical Care Act of 1966, the system covers virtually all medical and hospital costs. Medicare is paid for by contributions from the federal government in Ottawa and the provincial governments, which administer the programs. Although the ratios vary, the contributions are made on an approximate 50-50 basis.

Canadian hospitals are not reimbursed for individual claims. They are financed on a total budget, prepared and agreed to in advance through negotiations between the provincial governments and hospital associations. In some cases hospitals negotiate their budgets on an individual basis.

The Canadian experience has shown that administrative costs of a national health insurance program can be confined. In Canada, administrative costs are 2.3% of the health dollar, compared with 12.8% in the US where the system is largely dominated by private insurance companies.

Canadian Medicare has not been as successful in coping with rising health care costs. Although costs are now showing signs of levelling off they jumped sharply with the inauguration of the insurance program. The increase in cost is attributed by experts to a variety of causes.

Part of the increase is due to the Canadian system doing what it was intended to do—improving access to health care for all. Part is due to inflation in equipment, supplies and construction. Part is due to the fact that doctors are still on a fee-for-service payment system.

In 1967, during the first full year of Canadian Medicare, the net income of physicians rose 14.1% due to increased usage of their services and government guarantee of payment.

In Quebec, there were 40 and 50% jumps in doctors' incomes when the plan was first introduced. Quebec Province has now clamped a ceiling on doctors' earnings, a move seen as the first step to putting doctors back on salary.

Wages of Canada's badly underpaid hospital workers have risen since Medicare's inauguration in 1961.

At the sound of the tone, that will be another $1,000,000

High health care costs brought cutbacks in federal funds last year, resulting in the loss of some jobs in the health care field. Hardest hit were those in social service work.

The Canadian labor movement, critical of some of the shortcomings of Medicare's health care delivery system, is pushing hard for health insurance to be tied more closely to preventive medicine through community health clinics and health maintenance organizations.

"We must be able to say Medicare has been a complete overhaul of our medical delivery system," Tommy Douglas, member of Parliament from British Columbia, said. "We must place the stress on preventive medicine."

Despite a former Premier and Minister of Health of Saskatchewan Province, introduced the first Canadian hospital insurance plan in his province in 1947. He was national leader of Canada's New Democratic Party and has strong ties with the Canadian labor movement.

US Health Care Costs Up by $1 Million per Hour

"At the sound of the tone, that will be another $1,000,000"

WASHINGTON, DC—Hospital costs in this country are increasing at the rate of $1 million an hour, Joseph A. Califano, Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, has told the Congress.

"If Americans receive exactly the same amount of care today that they received yesterday, they will pay $24 million more for it today," Califano says.

Departing from testimony on an Administration proposal to provide health care for children, Califano was lobbying for President Carter's plan to bring hospital costs under control.

"In the hour since I left my office to come over to this hearing room," Califano told the panel, "the country has paid nearly $1 million more for health care than they would have paid for the very same care the hour before."

Califano has called the nation's hospitals "obese" and "gluttonous"—characterizations that hospital trade groups have called scare tactics.

Carter wants to limit hospital revenue increases to an annual rate of nine to 11 per cent, compared to the current 15 per cent.

Califano testified that the President told House leaders last month, "our important current priority will be hospital cost containment."

The health subcommittee before which the secretary appeared was headed by Rep. Paul Rogers (D-Fla.) will consider the hospital proposal shortly.

If approved by Congress, the plan could cut the $24 million daily increase in hospital cost inflation to as little as $10 million, Califano said.

He said that since the Administration bill was proposed in February, the cost of an average stay in the hospital has increased from $1,300 to $1,800.
Rather Than Bargain in Good Faith, Gov. Straub Asks Feds to Bail Him Out

Tuna Fishermen on Demand: 'Get Off Our Backs!'

Executive Board Aids Sugar Strike, Other Business

SOVIET GUESTS—A group of Soviet trade unionists touring the United States have been involved in trade union activities throughout the country. They have been working closely with the International Longshoremen's Association through a fact-finding mission to the United States. The mission was to study the security situation in this country and to learn about the methods used by American trade unions in their activities. The Soviet trade unionists were invited to visit the United States by the International Longshoremen's Association, which is a national trade union representing longshoremen and other workers in the United States. The visit was intended to promote understanding and cooperation between the two countries, and to foster the development of trade unionism in the United States. The trade unionists were welcomed by the local union organizers and were provided with a tour of the local union's facilities. They were also given the opportunity to meet with local union leaders and to participate in local union activities. The visit was well received by the local union organizers, and it was hoped that it would lead to further cooperation between the two countries in the future.
New ILA Pact Improves Wages, Fringes, Security

NEW YORK—Rank and file members of the International Longshoremen's Assn. (ILA) on the East Coast and Gulf Coast ports have voted to accept a new agreement, concluding their two-month strike.

The master agreement covers seven bargaining units. Wages, benefits, and welfare plans are covered under the agreement. The new agreement includes a new "Job Security Program." Pay scales, shift differentials, automatic and break-bulk cargo, and job security are all covered under the agreement.

The three-year agreement takes effect October 1, 1977, and expires April 30, 1980. Wages are increased by $5.26 per hour each year, bringing the base rate up to $8.30 per hour the first year; $9.60 the second year and $10.40 the third year. Increases are retroactive to January 1, 1977.

Employer contributions to the health and welfare plan go up by 12c the first year, 12c the second year and 24c the third year, bringing the total contribution to $1.50 per hour.

Employer contributions to the pension plan go up by 15c, 15c, 15c, and 15c, bringing the total contribution tax to $2.25 per hour.

JOB SECURITY

The Job Security Program is intended to protect ILA members from shortfalls in local Guaranteed Annual Income. Wages, benefits and welfare plans are covered under the JSP, agree to accept liability for these shortfalls, and to establish a ton-age assessment, effective December 1, to meet the needs of all three plans for the next six years.

The amount of the assessment— to be initially set at 35c—will be adjusted annually on the basis of automated cargo, 12c on each ton of break-bulk cargo, and 3c on each ton of bulk cargo—will be reviewed by the WACS and revised to make sure it covers any potential shortfalls.

The funds shall be in custody of a Job Security Program Agency, under the control of the employers. The ILA reserves the right to strike any carrier not subscribing to the Job Security Program.

Thanks from ILA

"I wish to take this opportunity to thank all those who have supported ILWU for their untiring efforts during the recent strike," the Officers and membership of the East Coast send their best wishes in celebration of the three-year agreement also include a new "Job Security Program." Wages, benefits, and welfare plans are covered under the agreement.

Thank you to each and every one of you I had optimism under the economic suffering of the Coasts. Send in your best wishes in celebration of the three-year agreement also include a new "Job Security Program." Wages, benefits, and welfare plans are covered under the agreement.

Thank you for your support and commitment. All the officers and men of the ILWU for this agreement.

ILA reserves the total contribution to $2.25 per hour. To protect ILA members from shortfalls and to establish a ton-age assessment, effective December 1, to meet the needs of all three plans for the next six years.

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**Compromises for Labor in 1977**

The building trade unions and the Cargo clause or index was defeated. Most important to allow the minimum wage to rise was the original version drawn up by the labor movement, and the sums of money that it is able to cadge out in attempting to deal with unemployment, and a recession, produced little inflation, and a recession, produced little

In 1976 elections corporate Political Action Funds under legislation to pass legislation important to the labor movement, this becomes very difficult after an uncritical blanket endorsement of a Democratic Party President and Democratic Congress.

One of the things that occurs is that a trade union is defeated. When the anti-union ads were voted, the issue was not even debated in the House Committee on the Floor of the House.

**MINIMUM WAGE COMPROMISE**

The minimum wage, which was finally adopted by the House and the Senate was a compromise. The original labor demand was $3.25/hour, but the compromise arrived at was $2.65. Additionally, the effort to raise the minimum wage to $6,760 for a family of four.

**Low wage workers need more than $3.25**

It is the 'new right.' In addition to huge corporate Political Action Funds, the labor movement, this becomes very difficult after an uncritical blanket endorsement of a Democratic Party President and Democratic Congress.

**ANALYSIS OF CURRENT SITUATION**

...to top the government's poverty line of $2.65... Additionally, the effort to raise the minimum wage to $6,760 for a family of four.

**End to OSHA**

Dr. Eula Bingham, Assistant Secretary of the Consumer Product Safety Commission and the former OSHA. According to Bingham, the current system of OSHA standards for the workplace is not effective, and a new system is needed.

**POLITICAL ACTION FUND—This poster, by ILWU Local 8 member Bob McGinnis.**

**Economics for Labor and Community Organization—LABR. 79, meets Wednesday, 7-10 p.m., begins January 31.**

**Grievance Handling and Arbitration—LABR. 71, meets Thursday, 7-10 p.m., begins February 1.**

**Health and Safety in The Workplace—LABR. 78, meets Wednesday, 7-10 p.m., begins February 1.**

**Labor and Community Leadership—LABR. 74, meets Monday, 7-10 p.m., begins January 31.**

**Labor and Politics—LABR. 71, meets Thursday, 7-10 p.m., begins February 1, Labor and The Law—LABR. 72, Section 1.**

**Meetings**

- Meets Monday, 7-10 p.m., begins January 31.
- Section 2. Meets Wednesday, 7-10 p.m., begins February 1.
- Section 3. Meets Tuesday, 7-10 p.m., begins February 1.
- Section 4. Meets Thursday, 7-10 p.m., begins February 1.
- Section 5. Meets Monday, 7-10 p.m., begins February 1.

**Senators Join Opposition toMinimum Wage Increase**

**Compromise for Labor in 1977**

**Safety Bill Will Be Forwarded to President**

**Preference Bill that would have created a right-wing campaign or cause.**

**Labor reform legislation, which passed the House of Representatives with the President's support did not include a fight to eliminate section 14b, the so-called 'right to work' for unions. When the watered-down version was adopted, the issue was not even debated in the House Committee on the Floor of the House.**

**The Huffman-Hawkins Bill was to be considered next year, in the Second Session of the 95th Congress.**

**However, many of the legislative representatives around the labor movement recall that this situation is a repeat in US political history.**

**Although leading labor officials and bodies consistently refer to the need for an independent political role of the US labor movement, this becomes very difficult after an uncritical blanket endorsement of a Democratic Party President and Democratic Congress.**

**The Congress, in informal recess until November 29, sought unanimous consent to allow House conferences on the Social Security Bill named with the desire to meet during the recess so that the final Senate-House conference report could be acted upon.**

**A spokesman for the Social Security Administration indicated that if the law is not enacted before January 1, 1979, "there will be some extra administrative costs"—to be paid for by the US taxpayers.**

**SF Labor Studies Spring Program**

**SAN FRANCISCO—The Labor Studies Program of San Francisco City College is offering ten courses in labor education for the Spring 1977 semester, beginning January 30.**

**The courses are available free of charge to interested ILWU members and may be taken for three units of college credit.**

**A certificate in labor studies is awarded to students completing twenty-one units, and units are applicable to both an AS degree and Bachelor's degree. Instructors throughout the program and the president take specific steps to reach that percentage.**

**During a press briefing, one of the Cabinet Secretaries conceded that the Bill, "Doesn't in itself do anything."**

**A White House aide was reported to have wondered aloud why the bill's supporters had accepted a new watered-down version.**

**The original Bill would not only have established a national goal of 4% unemployment within 5 years, but it also would have required specific steps to reach it.**

**Unemployment is a matter for collective bargaining; and**

**Most important, the new minimum wage, although rising 45% in four years, still falls short of the government's poverty line.**

**LAW WAGE WORKERS NEED MORE THAN $3.25**

"It is the 'new right.' In addition to huge corporate Political Action Funds, the labor movement, this becomes very difficult after an uncritical blanket endorsement of a Democratic Party President and Democratic Congress.

**The labor movement will continue to support the measure — we can generate millions of dollars a year."**

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**Conflict Resolution and Collective Bargaining—LABR. 78, meets Thursday, 7-10 p.m., begins February 1,**

**Economics for Labor and Community Leadership—LABR. 74, meets Monday, 7-10 p.m., begins January 31,**

**Grievance Handling and Arbitration—LABR. 71, meets Thursday, 7-10 p.m., begins February 1, Labor and The Law—LABR. 72, Section 1.**

**Meetings**

- Begins January 30; Section 2. Meets Wednesday, 7-10 p.m., begins February 1.
- Section 3. Meets Tuesday, 7-10 p.m., begins January 31.
- Section 4. Meets Thursday, 7-10 p.m., begins February 1.
VANCOUVER, B.C.—Canadian Area ILWU past presidents this month—Ben McDonald and Dave Larson, officers and walking boss-employees of the ILWU, are mourning two past presidents this month—Ben McDonald and Carl Walter. Both of these brothers were among the builders of Local 13, serving not only as fulltime officers but also as councilmen and convention delegates. McDonald was also Area Welfare Director for the ILWU, and Walter played a major role in bringing organizing efforts in the Los Angeles-Long Beach Harbor Area into the ILWU.

President Lenard Benard and secretary-treasurer B. A. Michael Frith have both been re-elected for the next two years. Wallace Colby was elected vice president and George Ellenberger, recording secretary. Sergeant-at-arms is Ronald Edison; union trustee is Steve Hershko.

Mike Martin, a linesman, was a member of Local 500 and had been active in the union since 1961. He was a familiar figure at conventions and caucuses and was a Local 500 trustee for 10 years. "Mike was a fine union member," said Alex Point, Local 500 secretary-treasurer. "He spent a lot of his spare time around the union and the office helping anybody who needed help. When we were on strike, we not only put in our shift as picket, we would stay around the whole day helping his union in any way he could. We will all miss him."

Funeral services were held November 21 at Mount Pleasant Funeral Chapel, with Canadian Area vice president Dave Lomas speaking for the union.}

**Organize!**

Do you know some workers who don't make union wages? Have you no fringe benefits? Who have no security on the job? In other words, do you know workers who want to be organized into the ILWU? If so, please write or telephone information to one of the following.

**Northwest Regional Office**

G. John Perry, Regional Director

401 N.W. 18th Ave.

Portland, Ore. 97209

Phone: (503) 223-1955

**Seattle Area**

John Bukoskey, Organizer

2612 Lawson

Black Diamond, WA 98010

Phone: (206) 186-1299

**Canadian Area Office**

Craig Prichett, Regional Director

2681 E. Hastings St.

Vancouver, B.C.

Phone: (604) 254-6141

**Southern Calif. Regional Office**

Donald Wright, Regional Director

5253 South Figueroa St.

Los Angeles, Ca 90037

Phone: (213) 735-3374


Lorenzo Gonzalez, Organizer

Northern Calif. Regional Office

1188 Franklin St.

San Francisco, Calif. 94109

Phone: (415) 274-9523

Felix Rivera, Int'l Rep.

Karl Leipnik, Organizer

Paciﬁc Area: Crockett Area

(415) 787-1717

Saratoga Area: (916) 371-5638

**Hawaii Office**

Robert McElrath, Regional Director

411 Atkinson Dr.

Honolulu, Hawaii 96814

Phone: (808) 449-631


Thomas Trask, Int'l Rep.

13% were operatives.

About 3.2 million minority women were employed in 1976. The number of minority women workers and 59% of minority men in the population.

**Women's Families**

Although the total number of children in the population has grown relatively little since 1970, as a result of the overall decline in the birthrate, the number of children with mothers in the labor force has risen by 2.6 million. The increase occurred mostly in female-headed families, from 2.4 million in 1970 to 5 million while there was a rise of 108,000 in husband-wife families.

**Council Blasts Oregon Utility Rate Hike**

NORTH BEND — The Columbia River District Council in letters to Governor Robert Straub and his appointee, State Public Utilities Commissioner Charles O'Neil, said recent increases in utility rates increases grabbed Pacific Power & Light.

Council Secretary Everett "Tuke" Bacharach wrote Straub to the CRDC's attention that PP&L was to receive yet another increase in what seems to be a never-ending upward spiral of profits to a company that wishes to attract more investors with public money.

"It is so very, very noticeable when you "live in an area adjacent to a public utility district," he noted. "The "fortunate" are able to pay nearly twice as much to heat their homes as a family in PUD Land."

The report asked to preserve power, he pointed out, and as a result was hit with a rate increase "while their consumption lowered prices." He suggested the private utilities try "biting the bullet themselves."

"This Council, and I am sure the rest of the public at large, feels that Mr. Davin's job should be to see to the welfare of the public just as diligently as he seems to be going to the public utilities."

The unfairness of the rate gouge was being pointed out in the attention by the Southwestern Oregon Pensions Club.

"We experienced a good year here in the Seward stevedoring industry, primarily because of the offshore exploration for oil and gas in the Northern Gulf of Alaska, which has been the only portion of the Gulf leased by the Department of the Interior to this point in time. The oil companies have completed eight (8) wells in that area and 10 are currently being drilled by Exxon and Texaco."

"Although it is known that the area to the north is being developed by the Bureau of Land Management, it is believed that Seward's importance in the exploration, development and production of this oil will be continued. Some of the development of the Gulf's huge oil and gas reserves will continue to expand. Although the Gulf's huge oil and gas reserves may well exceed the federal government's leasing program of the Western Gulf of Alaska for the year, it will only mean more inflation and increasing costs for the American public."

Balance of Payments problems, and im-

**Alaska Report**

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Alaska Report

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As Congress Still Stifles Expansion

US-Soviet Trade Drops 25% in '77

Donald E. Munger, Local 6, member, with trout.

In the course of writing columns for national labor publications, we occasionally get interesting letters and snapshots from union members who are working on some sort of project in a foreign country. Here's an over-the-shoulder look-at one received from Clyde M. Baker, a member of the Carpenter's Union:

"I've been living for over three years down here in Caracas, Venezuela, where I'm working on the Guri Dam. The fishing here is outstanding. Enclosed is a picture which shows me with a lunker of a catfish I caught from the Caroni River. This baby tipped the scales at a mere 12 pounds and was almost as long as I am tall."

Clyde Baker and Caroni River catfish, Venezuela.

"There are many varieties of fish down here in this river, Fred, but as far as I know from information I gathered, this big 'caty' is the largest fish ever to be caught from around here on rod and reel. I used a Mitchell 320 spinning reel and an 8½-foot surf casting rod."

"We have a record for that species—a 29-lb., 4-oz. monster."

One of the nicest guys I met in my travels around the country to various out-door conferences and sport shows was Frankie Carle, famous piano man and author of "Sunrise Serenade." Frankie liked to talk about fishing and, of course, so do I, so we hit it pretty well during my visit to Portland where we were demonstrating the then, relatively unknown spinning fishing method and Frankie was the rower. He never wet a line before—he started in to fishing after Carle's breakdown, he was hos-

"I might well be, that if it wasn't for fishing, I never would have started walking around, had I never wet a line before—he started in to fishing after Carle's breakdown, he was hospitalised for months and his progress was painfully slow. When he was strong enough to walk around, his doctor prescribed a

"stay" at a lake resort and suggested that he go fishing."

This column would like to trade one of the illustrated BOLO fishing lures for a clear snapshot of a fishing or hunting scene—and a few words as to what the snapshot is about. Offer to open in all members of the ILWU, members of the family and, of course, retired members. Send it to:

Clyde Baker, 3701 SW 30th Ave., Portland, Or. 97210

Xmas Trees to Hawaii

SEATTLE—Nearly 200,000 Pacific Northwest Christmas trees will be shipped to Hawaii this year, starting with the unloading of the Matson container ship SS Californian from Seattle, Thursday, November 17, with 12 container loads.

The trees, mostly Douglas firs, are packed into 34-foot refrigerated containers (900 trees to a container) which keep them fresh and green for the Hawaii market. The ship will be the SS Hawaiian Legislator and the SS Hawaiian sailing December 1 with 61 containers.

Next Dispatcher Deadline — December 9
ILLU Local 142 sugar workers in Hawaii are among the best paid agricultural workers in the world. The ILUW is asking the government to set wages for unorganized workers on the mainland at the minimum level enjoyed in Hawaii.

Herman Tells Government:

Bring All Sugar Wages Up to ILUW Standards

San Francisco—The ILUW has asked the Department of Agriculture to use its authority to raise the minimum wage for unorganized sugar field workers—located mainly in Texas, Louisiana and Florida—to the base rate received by members of Local 142 employed in the sugar industry.

In response to a request by the Department of Agriculture for comments before it sets the minimum wage, ILUW International President Jim Herman recalled that under the old Sugar Act, which expired in 1974, the Secretary of Agriculture’s authority to set minimum wages was never used to raise the minimally low standards on the mainland.

Rubber Stump

The ILUW, he said, always participated in the department’s wage determination procedures “but we never once came away satisfied that the Department of Agriculture did any more than rubber stamp the lowest wages being paid in the industry.

“Of course, the unorganized field workers continually lagged far behind those of organized workers in Hawaii, and generally fell far short of the government’s own definition of a billion of what constitutes a minimally acceptable standard of living.”

With the survival of the domestic sugar industry assured by recent federal action to support domestic sugar prices the Agriculture Department “is now in a position to propose that historical trend” and “to correct the intolerable standard of living to which field workers were confined, in detriment of minimum wage determinations,” Herman said.

Not Just for Industry

Herman pointed out the campaign for federal subsidies to keep the industry alive, in which the ILUW played a critical role, “a decisive argument used in support of such payments is that the taxpayer is entitled to the industry profits.”

“Must also be used to improve the standards of living of workers in the industry.”

Herman concluded that bringing the minimum rate for unorganized field workers up to the level of the Local 142 base rate would provide “a minimally acceptable division of revenues to the industry, and afford a decent if modest standard of living to base rate sugar workers.”

Vital Signs

a look at the US economy

Protectionism Stalls Economic Growth

GENEVA — A new General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade study warns that growing protectionist trends will impede rather than promote improvement in the economies of advanced countries.

Protectionism, it argues, reflects a refusal to adjust to changing patterns of supply and demand, and is as much a cause as a consequence of economic difficulties.

“By accepting the view that only a more vigorous growth of these economies will make it possible for them to return to freer trade, we might be locking ourselves into a vicious circle,” the 90-page study declares.

The study reluctantly conceded that protectionism is likely to persist although it will simply postpone economic policy changes.

Trade liberalization, on the other hand, would lead to gains in consumption and production, more competitive domestic industries and “a multiplicity of all-time wage and salary employees, up from 15.8% in May 1975. Men were more than twice as likely as women, and whites were more likely than blacks, to have worked over 40 hours in a week, BLS said.

Overtime Up Despite High Unemployment

WASHINGTON, DC — The paradox of high unemployment and increased overtime is being revealed in a report released today by the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

About 13.5 million wage and salary employees worked longer than the standard 40-hour week during the month of May, an increase of 1.5 million, or 9%, from the year earlier, BLS said. The longer weeks were worked by persons in both goods-producing and service industries.

Workers putting in more than 40 hours weekly comprised 27.6% of all full-time wage and salary employees, up from 25.8% in May 1975. Men were more than twice as likely as women, and whites were more likely than blacks, to have worked over 40 hours in a week, BLS said.

Cal Labor Pushes Ban on Forced Overtime

SACRAMENTO—State legislation to prohibit employers from forcing their employees to work overtime should be enacted this year, a labor leader, as a free individual, should have that choice, but because such a law would help create jobs.

That was the thrust of testimony given by John J. Henning, executive officer of the California Labor Federation, AFL-CIO, at an interim hearing held by the Senate Industrial Relations Committee in Los Angeles Monday on AB 1295.

Citing a study that the hours involved in overtime are really “very small,” averaging three hours a week over the last six months, Henning said that to begin with, that not all employees would object to overtime.

But, he declared, “in light of the vast unemployment problem that’s the continuing plague of the nation, this is one of the factors that would help reduce it and the bill should be enacted.”

Henning recalled a study conducted by Walter Reuther of the United Auto Workers more than a decade ago which indicated that just 25 percent of the amount of overtime worked were allowed to remain it would create 650,000 jobs.

“Validity of that analysis remains valid today,” Henning said, however, “because California represents roughly 10 percent of the nation’s labor force it could result in the creation of 65,000 jobs.”

Clearing the Deficit

He also pointed out that the total cost of the President’s April 3 in 1975 was $32 billion, an amount exactly equal to the deficit in the federal budget that year.

The need for legislation, he said, is evident when one considers the California sugar industry has more than 400,000 jobs a year to keep up with the growth in the labor force. Some 100 of those jobs come into the state’s labor force every year while sugar workers are displaced by productivity increases and must seek other jobs, he explained.

The California AFL-CIO sponsored legislation, introduced by Assemblyman Tom Bates (D-Oakland), would prohibit an employer from firing or disciplining workers who refuse to work overtime.

Occupational Safety and Health Workbook Issued

The Labor Safety and Health Institute, a nonprofit organization affiliated with the Consumer Congress, the California Federation of Health Services, Inc., has issued Occupational Safety and Health Workbook.

The Workbook incorporates the first six LSH/ Guides on such topics as building local safety and health, California Occupational Safety and Health, and the relationship of Health Services’ Quarterly and articles from various sources on occupational cancer, vinyl chloride, and coke ovens.

“The Workbook is available for $8.00 from the California Safety and Health Association, 395 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10016.