Union-buster 'Consultant' reforms, spills beans

Marty Levitt always flew first-class. He always stayed at the finest hotels. Nothing was too good for Levitt, known for 28 years as one of the nation's pre-eminent union busters.

But that was before. These days, Levitt is trying to piece together a new life on the other side of the fence.

In a dramatic rebirth late last year, Levitt walked away from his $250,000-a-year Ohio management consultant practice. His company, Human Resources Development Institute, Inc., specialized in crushing union organizing drives.

In an act of professional contrition, Levitt has formed a consulting and lecturing business called Justice for Labor Foundation, Inc. through which he now teaches union organizers and employees the tricks of the union-busting trade, politely called "union prevention."

Levitt is also at work on a book called "The Dirty Business" to be published later this year. The book details some of the unsavory tactics of an industry he once built on lies and populated by bullies.

"Union-busting is a form of terrorism," Levitt said in an interview at his new home in Lafayette, California which he is using as the base of his pro-union operations while he looks for office space in the area.

"Everything is distortion and manipulation," Levitt noted that management consultants are subject to no professional code or licensing requirements. In effect, he said, the legions of anti-union consultants that have cropped up over the past decade answer to no one.

Describing himself as a "reformed union buster," Levitt is as angry as he is penitent, and speaks of his "disgust" for the villainy of his former vocation.

To earn his redemption, the one-time darling of union busting has traded in the plush corporate board rooms for stark union halls. There, with the same sanctity and zeal that he used to wring union sympathies out of compassionate supervisors, the former union buster expose the alleged evils of his craft.

Bay Area management attorneys familiar with Levitt did not want to comment on his apparent change of heart. Some dismissed him as an opportunist who has found yet another way to make money.

But somebody is listening. On May 5 Levitt appeared on the Today Show ringing a Southern California nurses association fighting to organize their hospital and speak of his "disgust" for the villainy of his former vocation.

Major contract negotiations covering more than three million members will open this year, in industries ranging from communications and health services to construction and local government. That's a lot more than in 1988, when about 1.8 million workers, covered by major settlements the first year wage gains of 3.5% when lump sum payments were included in wage calculations.

Private sector bargaining in 1989 will involve mostly workers in manufacturing industries, including 535,000 members of the Communications Workers and Electricians at AT&T and Bell system operating companies, and more than 116,000 members of the United Food and Commercial Workers at grocery and drug chains nationwide.

Of the one million public workers involved in contract talks, 502,000 are state employees and 467,000 are employed by local governments, predominantly in education.
Telling the ILWU's story

By JIM HERMAN ILWU International President

The January meeting of the ILWU International Executive Board featured an extremely important discussion about education—about the need to pay more attention to teaching new members of the ILWU what this union is all about. The discussion took off when some Board members commented that many members have little or no real knowledge of the union's history, or how it works. It's not their fault. And it's not as if many union tradition bearers have not tried hard to pass the story down. The point is that our efforts in this area have to be much more systematic and thorough.

In the absence of information to the contrary, its natural to assume that our wages and benefits come from the sweat of the employer's heart, rather than from the strength of the union and the hard work and sacrifice of those who have come before.

In the absence of any information to the contrary, it's natural to assume that union contracts have been handed down from on high. The story of how things got to be the way they are, any history, is too often untold.

And in the absence of any information to the contrary, members often cannot fully understand how the ILWU was established, and may underestimate the need to tell.

Other Board members raised the issue of leadership. How does the union survive if stewards, business agents and other leaders fail to tell the story? Some of the leadership committee members face complex issues like health and welfare and pension bargaining, to handle union finances, to develop the personal skills that are necessary in a leadership position. In the absence of an ongoing educational program, it's easy to see how the union can be seen as just another big, impersonal institution, requiring no commitment or participation besides a dues payment once a month. It becomes another target for corruption, or for righteous anger and frustration when things get hard.

Experience is still the best teacher. The best trade union education is going to be obtained on the job, on the picket line, in the union meeting, and across the bargaining table. But it's not enough. When we are simply fighting to establish an union and put a little bit more meat and potatoes on the table, things were pretty straightforward. That's long, long ago. Our enemies are more sophisticated. The legal system and the entire framework of labor law has been booby-trapped. Issues like drugs on the job don't lend themselves to simple solutions. And our members are constantly bargained by anti-union propaganda. So many unions have realized they have to develop a thorough education in the history and values of the trade union movement, and provide the skills to back them up.

We don't have to reinvent the wheel. Many locals already have their own educational programs in place. Local 142 for example has a back to school program. They have a series of excellent workshops on a wide variety of issues. Those programs are continually being expanded and brought up to date. Other locals have developed their own workshops and other programs. Health and welfare and pension workshops for delegates to the longshore caucus over the years have also been extremely successful.

There are also great resources outside the ILWU. Universities, state colleges and community colleges have, over the years, set up labor studies programs which have proven to be extremely useful. Many international union locals have developed their own programs, some of which are so good that we have to adapt to our purposes. The AFL-CIO itself is a great resource, especially the courses and materials provided by the George Meany Center.

The availability of these resources will be a solid benefit of our affiliation with the AFL-CIO.

It was the general feeling of the Board members that we need to do more to move on some of these programs. So this column is an attempt to open that discussion, to solicit ideas from the locals on programs which we can develop to do it. How can existing educational programs be improved? What kinds of materials need to be developed? What can the locals do? What is the International's responsibility? Most important, how do we propose to fund such a program?

There are some real constraints, having to do with both finances and manpower. But I hope that by the time the Board meets again, we will have had some further discussions and begun to put together a comprehensive program to deal with the issues we are raising here. Our officers and staff welcome any and all suggestions and thoughts on the subject.

We have a great story to tell. Every division, every local of the ILWU has a tradition of struggle and sacrifice which needs to be handed down, which can and should be a source of enormous pride and power for our members to develop the leaders who can carry those traditions forward, and protect the fruits of this half-century of effort.
ILWU Canadian Area pensioners picket British Columbia Maritime Association Officers in Vancouver, BC.

**Local 26 workshop focuses on petroleum hazard protection**

The ILWU has joined the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America and other US unions in officially protesting Haiti's policies toward workers and in asking the US government to bring political pressure to bear to end abuses.

Abuses of workers in the poverty-ridden country of Haiti have prompted an outcry of protest from labor unions in the US. As good jobs here are reported to be the low-wage minimum in the US, the ILWU has strongly condemned the situation in Haiti.

In its 184-year history, Haiti has been described as a state of lawlessness and disorder. Throughout its history, Haiti has been characterized by corruption and mismanagement. The government has been accused of being inefficient and corrupt, with widespread lawlessness and human rights abuses. The country has been plagued by political instability, with frequent changes in leadership and civil unrest.

**BARGAINING ISSUE**

Local 26 vice president Barry Jeffries, along with the ILWU's national executive board, has met with representatives of the General American Transportation, a company that operates in the West Coast region. The meeting was held to discuss the bargaining issues and to come to an agreement on the terms of the new contract. The meeting was constructive and productive, and both sides expressed a desire to reach a fair and reasonable agreement as soon as possible.

**PACTOW STRIKE CONTINUES—IBU strikers picket adding to financial pressure**

The ILWU has joined the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America and other US unions in officially protesting Haiti's policies toward workers and in asking the US government to bring political pressure to bear to end abuses. The ILWU has condemned the situation in Haiti and has called for an end to the repression of workers and their unions.

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SAN FRANCISCO—It was the second demonstration in two months where the city's janitors made it clear they were mad as hell and weren't going to take it anymore. "It's no language, Italian, and in Spanish we say 'basta'—enough!" Service Employees International Union Pres- ident Paul Varacalli told the demonstrators, "We went to work to do some work. It's not money we want. We want jobs and we want dignity.

Emphasizing the point, janitors on strike against the San Francisco Main- tenance Association, a group of employers supplying maintenance services to the city's biggest and most profitable building owners, held a lively protest in Union Square then marched to the offices of attor- ney John Portman, Atlanta's top property manager, demanding "deal with the union." One janitors, a woman who had just gotten its money's worth. Rather than come up with creative solutions to resolve points of contention, Ford seems to rely on the same old tactics used by dozens, if not hundreds, of union busters before him: more work, less rights, stonewalling the union—nothing new.

But what is new is how the janitors are fighting back. These are the among the city's lowest paid workers, whose compensa- tion comprises less than 5% of the rental income big building owners receive; these are the "invisible people" who clean and maintain the city's skyscrapers, the ones who can least afford to be without work—yet they voted by over 80% to hit the bricks. But Portman is not alone. They belong to a world movement spawned by the SEIU to improve the lives of America's working poor. In the summer of 1981, some 11,000 con- sumers specialized in anti-union campaigns—Tate, the Air Traffic Controllers Organization (ATCO) jumped the union to "deal with the union." A number of convention delegates wore "Justice for Janitors" T-shirts; others boy- cotts, which, the lawyers say, are illegal.

The most recent dispute involving SEIU Local 87 in San Francisco is the third of the same: a struggle for control. While rental income from the city's building's some $2.5 billion, janitors continue to make greater demands on the predominantly minority and female janitor- ial workforce. "We know we clean the equivalent of 18 large houses per eight hour shift! That's more than 35,000 square feet!" a rally organizer boomed into the crowd, "That's what we are making, but that's not the issue here. We're in the midst of a two-year war... and this is just for what we want even more."

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"Justice for Janitors" T-shirts; others boy- cotts, which, the lawyers say, are illegal.
Decent drive defeated

Feisty Local 6 unit goes through "hell" to beat back union busters at Bio-Rad

BICHTMEND, Ca. — "They went through hell," said local warehouse president Jim Ryder. "But after 7 years of battling the union busters at Bio-Rad, the little people have proven they can handle just about anything."

While some companies run into a variety of brave and dedicated Local 6 members successfully beat back a push by Bio-Rad Laboratories to establish a "union-free" environment at its plants in Richmond and Hercules, California.

The final vote, 71-54 in favor of the ILWU, is a tremendous victory for the beleaguered unit which has absorbed equally tremendous pressure from its enemy.

TAKING THE HARD LINE

Local 6 organized Bio-Rad in 1979, bringing 13 new members into the ILWU. Over the next decade, the unit grew to over 100 members and labor-management relations proceeded normally. But all that changed in 1982. New management came onboard, taking a hard line approach with the union. Grievances piled up, and union supporters were systematically harassed.

By November 1985, Bio-Rad and Local 6 were at war. The contract was up, and negotiators were forced by management demands.

"It's a sad situation, we were faced with multi-tier wages and takeaways," said Chief Steward Leo Gomez, "even though the company was earning record profits. They never said they couldn't afford our contract, just that other companies were paying less and they wanted to be competitive."

The union struck, immediately establishing picket lines. Within days, three picketing companies were ordered by the National Labor Relations Board to Bio-Rad supervisors and scales. After three weeks, the ILWU was returned to work without a contract under the threat of permanent replacement.

The company anesthetized its troops. Like a shark in a feeding frenzy, it went on a binge of corporate terrorism, hoping to devour the last remnants of faith in the ILWU. Health and welfare benefits were eliminated, union sympathizers were targeted for surveillance and harassment, and members were questioned and fired for their union involvement.

In May 1986, the Board ordered the parties to cease all hiring and firing, and Bio-Rad laboratories was targeted for seeking union representation.

Bio-Rad was not to be denied. It embarked on a campaign to decertify the ILWU, and sued Local 6 for $1.5 million on the grounds that the strike had caused the company financial harm. Although the lawsuit was subsequently dismissed by the court, the Local continued its battle against the company's assault on the unit's bargaining rights.

At first, a victory. In August 1988, the NLRB rejected the petition for a decertification election and ordered the company to return to the bargaining table. Bio-Rad appealed the decision, and the NLRB reversed itself. The decertification election was set for February 2, 1989.

DECENT CAMPAIGN

Instead of a "disinformation" campaign to discredit the union, managers and supervisors called workers into captive audience meetings, threatening promises to discourage union activity.

Known union supporters were constantly watched. "They went through hell," said Ryder, "They had put up one hell of a fight."

The election is now history. Despite the threat of permanent replacement, the unit went on to win the vote by a 71-54 margin, making national news.

The members have sent a clear message to Bio-Rad that they have the guts, the imagination and the commitment to fight back and win," said Local 6 president Jim Ryder.

Ryder also acknowledged the efforts of former Local 6 president Al Lannon, BA, Larry Morrison, secretary-treasurer Leon Harris and the Bio-Rad stewards led by chief steward Leo Gomez. "And thanks to our attorney George Tichy, the NLRB reversed its earlier decision and set the election for February 2, 1989."}

Holdiing a strategy session at the Local 6 hall in Crockett, California, ILWU representatives and members discuss future plans for dealing with Bio-Rad Labs. Pictured, from left to right are: Local 6 BA Larry Morrison, secretary-treasurer Leon Harris, member and supporter Leon Jackson, chief steward Leo Gomez, international rep Abba Ramos, and steward Ed Owens.

Ed Owens

Sandy Nichols

William Sartain

"If you believe in something, show your face. I didn't use to go to union meetings or wear union pins, but when things started getting rough, I too had to be seen being watched over me since. People would say, 'What if you lose your job?' and I'd say, 'Hey, I can lose my job anywhere.'"

"Bio-Rad is like any other multi-million dollar corporation. They make us work hard for money; they make the more money they want. They don't want people to have freedom to speak for themselves. The little people don't mean nothing to them."

"I don't mind being the little people, but I let me survive."

Ed Owens

Sandy Nichols

William Sartain

"My boss noticed me hanging out with the union people and questioned me about it. He said he was worried that I was leaning toward the union. I was so stupid, I thought he was trying to help me. But it just got worse."

"One day she breathed down my neck. They constantly watched and questioned me. I was a basket case. Thanks to management, I was fired. I was to be a single parent with two kids, struggling, but didn't care."

"If it weren't for the union, I don't know what I would have done—they stuck me with all the way."

工业园 busting spills the beans

Union-buster spells out the techniques

"You have no idea of the destruction that (union-busting) does to an entire organization," Levitt said.

"Bio-Rad is like any other multi-million dollar corporation. They make us work hard for money; they make the more money they want. They don't want people to have freedom to speak for themselves. The little people don't mean nothing to them."

"I don't mind being the little people, but let me survive."

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SAFETY SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS—Safe operations resulted in the award of the $1000000 scholarships to the children of ILWU members here by Stevedores Services of America (SSA). The scholarships come from a fund jointly administered by SSA and the ILWU, and is based on hours worked without injury or death to workers by ILWU members. Local 10 winners, shown above with Local 10 President Tom Lupiter were, from left, June Powells and father Emil Leonard Higgins. They will serve with holdovers John Curtis, Russ Fowler, Jim Justice, John Bird, Pender Bay, John Godfrey and John Nolet. Following are the members-at-large: Barry Blyth, Terry Chee, Bob Gaudry, Alan Haldane.

Local 508, Merit Pronym
President, Richard Jones; 1st vice-president, Alan Russell; 2nd vice-president, Brian Bock, secretary-treasurer and 1st dispatcher, Garry Middlemens; 2nd dispatcher, Doug Wright; Sergeant-at-arms, Sue Gaudry; secretary, Terry Eastman, Jim Irvine Jr., Terry Whitefield.

Local 514, Vaughan
President, Doug Sigurdson; 1st vice-president, Bob Pickering; 2nd vice-president, Don Mooney; Local 500, Stockton
President, Jim J.Johnstone; 2nd vice-president, John Talbot; 2nd vice-president, Lorna Paget, financial secretary, Jean Le, record secretary, Heather Mah. Trustees are: Judy Bevilacqua (1-year); Joyce Chris- tendal, Andy Anderson is on the Canadian Area board. Bock Pickering is the Canadian Area safety representative. Bill Leach will represent both the Labour Council and the Brock Newsletter.

Local 517, Vancouver
President, Jim Maclean; vice-president, John Talbot; 2nd vice-president, Lorna Paget; financial secretary, Jean Le, record secretary, Heather Mah. Trustees are: Judy Bevilacqua (1-year); Joyce Chris- tendal, Andy Anderson is on the Canadian Area board. Bock Pickering is the Canadian Area safety representative. Bill Leach will represent both the Labour Council and the Brock Newsletter.

Local 518, Vancouver
President, Kent Birmingham; vice-presi- dent, Michael J. Intong; secretary-trea- surer, Barry J. Campbell. The business agents are Tom Dufrene, David Jinger, Lee Jutzi

Local 502, New Westminster
President, Larry F. M. Mannix; vice-presi- dent, safety representative, George Kout- siotis; Local 500; 2nd vice-president, An Margiottello; secretary-treasurer/dis- patcher, Howard Old; sub-dispatcher, Clare Nordmann; warden, Brian Hem- mingsen. Trustees are Gerry Bonta and Brian Dobkin, secretary-treasurer and 1st dispatcher, Grant Williams.

Local 503, Port Alberni
President, David Cole; Mark Mooney, son of Dan Mooney, Local 514; Tyler Thompson, son of Charles Thompson, Local 503; Terry Whitefield.

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Northern California ILWU-PMA Alcoholism and Drug Recovery Program coordinators in session in San Francisco last month.

San Francisco, George Coobs, Local 10, San Francisco, now leads coastwide ILWU-PMA Alcoholism and Drug Recovery Program.

> Alcoholism volunteers sharpen up

Northern California ILWU-PMA Alcoholism and Drug Recovery Program coordinator George Coobs, Local 10, "They do an outstanding job, and they need to stay on top of what's going on in the field so that they can pass it along."


The three day session concluded with visits to treatment facilities at The Camp and Azure Acres.

Cobbs to head coast ADRP program

In his new capacity, Cobbs will be responsible for coordinating the activities of the program in all longshore division states. He replaces Coast Anger, Washington, Oregon, Northern California and Southern California. His major focus, he said, is to make sure the program keeps pace.

"There will always be something new developing," Cobbs told The Dispatcher, "New treatment modalities, new concepts continue to evolve from the old. I want the ILWU to be current rather than catching up with it." Cobbs' appointment was made jointly by the ILWU, the PMA and the trustees of the Benefits Plan.

COLUMBIA RIVER PENSIONERS, 1989—The new officers and executive board for the Columbia River Pensioners, Portland, are (from left to right): Richard Goberts, Pete Flannery, Chuck Perry, Florian Schmitz, Harry Dunn, Jack Schmidt, Mike Fisch, J.K. Stranahan (secretary), Frank Reich (guest from Tacoma, administered office of home), H.M. "Dutch" Holland (president), Howard "Thalidomide" Franklin, Fred Cooney, John Pitman (vice president), Bob Coffey, Lee Howton, and LeVan Johnson (new retiree).

February 10, 1989
Behind the flap over Congress's pay

By Mike Lewis
ILWU Washington Representative

It isn't often a page-one topic, but the recent pay hike for Congress is one. Congress came within an inch of giving itself a 5% pay hike this month. It backed off at the last minute, but the issue won't go away. The bad news is that our lawmakers also failed to eliminate "honoraria"—fees they never receive but which rampant special-interest groups can treat them with. These fees are a major threat to our democracy because they lead to travel back and forth to special-interest audiences who can afford to pay. This is the worst part of Congress; it makes us want to vote ourselves a 30-50% pay hike. They get free health care. They get the regular Congressional salary. The record is irrelevant. The job should then be valued like any other—by the skills it requires and the physical and mental demands.

A STRAIN

There's no doubt that being a member of Congress is a strain in many ways, especially if you're a member in a long way from home. D.C., for all the glamour, you have to travel back and forth often, sometimes weekly. Your days and nights are long. You have a high-profile job in a high-priced Washington, and one in your state. You don't see much of your family. Your family scorns your extraordinary scrutiny and your own political need to be visible in public. You have to be up on all the issues.

But no member of Congress has ever been forced to run for office. For people who want to make a lot for doing little, there's always been an easy route to power. For people who value a relaxed quality of life, there are plenty of other livelihoods. There's no way that policy-making for the United States could be an easy job.

If the work is hard, the pay isn't exactly bad. Members of Congress already get $52,500 a year—a lot more than most of us. They have superhealth care. They get expense allowances for much of their travel. They get government computers, gas stations and credit cards they get a $3,000 tax deduction for their Washington home. The pay raises in 1989 are: Dutch Holland as regular and alternate treasurer Brian McWilliams; ILWU Northern California District Council Director LeRoy King; bearing the Local 34 standard is the son of a Local 34 member, Pat Callahan, who drove over 150 miles round trip to participate in the protest. In the case of the ILWU, he argues, the consistently strong positions of the ILWU have been the work of both the membership and a responsive leadership. In evaluating Harry Bridges, whom he clearly admires, Kimeldorf concludes, "The exploration and utilization of ILWU's social, class, and community and local, position, for owner hostility, working-class resistance, and communists molded Bridges even as he in turn, molded the union. The relationship was dialectical. Bridges no more made the ILWU than the ILWU made him. In the end, he was as great a leader as the rank and file allowed."

The weaknesses of the book are few. While the generalizations about the experience and composition of the rank and file appear accurate, this information is too often stated in terms of sociological theory. Instead, these historical descriptions could be better made through actual historical evidence about the ranks—and the evidence does not exist.

NARROW FOCUS

Secondly, Kimeldorf's conclusions about the ILWU are made and sustained primarily within the experience of the longshore division—and to be proven they must be reflected against the experience of warehouse and Hawaii.

Finally, there is a preoccupation with the Communist party—as though finding and measuring the strength or influence of the party members in the ILWU and its local, union, employer associations, radical and conserva- tion, and labor market conditions. From this broad view, which he presents more completely for the ILWU than the ILA, it is clear that—in democratic unions—union policies and strategies are ultimately set by the membership.