Setting the Record Straight

ILWU TAKES ON THE PRESS

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Caucus: Quid Pro Quo

BY DAVID ARIAN
ILWU International President

The ILWU Longshore Division Caucus held here last month was a testimony to the traditional democratic process upon which this union was founded.

Not that union democracy is easy. And in the case of the Caucus, the 10 delegates— from different locals and with different views— considered, debated and voted on more than 250 resolutions. In the end, almost 100 were adopted, including about 30 dealing with health and safety.

For its part, the Coast Committee prepared a report which, I think, zeroes in on key areas for bargaining—benefits, pensions, job security and technology—in a way that not only benefits workers but also the industry. The usual issues, such as vacations, holiday pay, steady employment, etc., were also addressed.

The Number One strategy we outlined in the report, and fought for at the Caucus, focuses on how this union will deal with the advancement of electronics. We must maintain our standing, top to bottom: that is, employers must use longshoremen, clerks and foremen as part of an overall operation.

The second part of the strategy takes aim at interim facility transfer, facilities, rail-dock transfer, and their relationship to our jurisdiction. These are critical issues for the union. In these arenas especially, the employer not only has the ability, but the obligation to hire ILWU longshore labor in return for our cooperation.

In fact, the best way employers can protect major investments in technology and operations is to "invest" in us. Our teamwork is essential to their goals, especially during periods of transition. By doing so, they can enhance technology, thus boosting productivity.

This union has decades of experience adapting to change, particularly since the first Mechanization and Modernization Agreement (MMA) was negotiated:

• In 1961, the average longshoremen earned about $2.90 an hour; twenty years later $12.20; and, by 1991, $21.78.
• As wages and pensions increased, so did the work load. In 1970, there were approximately 60 million tons moving across the waterfront; by 1990, the tonnage had more than tripled.
• But man-hours during that period dropped from about 22 million to around 16 million—and the work force with it. In 1970, there were almost 16,000 longshoremen, clerks and walking bosses; 9,800 by 1980; and, today, the registered work force totals approximately 8,500.

It doesn't take Albert Einstein to calculate the bottom line: left to their own devices, employers would gladly see us disappear altogether. The question is: can we afford to shrink even further?

For the best and prepare for the worst.

If the employers are reasonable, we can and will achieve a contract without a disruption of work on the West Coast. But, at this time, it's unclear what the employers' position will be. Will they go after our benefits? Will they insist on replacing us with electronic gizmos? Will they want confrontation or compromise?

As in all contract negotiations, we should hope for the best and prepare for the worst. Each longshore division member should at this very moment be making plans to safeguard his/her family in the event of a strike. This means trying to save two or three months' rent or mortgage and planning for other financial needs.

Meanwhile, certain actions adopted by the Caucus will maximize our effectiveness:

• We are attempting to build a reserve to assure the continued operation of the Coast Committee during a job action.
• We are strengthening international alliances. The Caucus has lent its full support to the April 22-24 Pacific Rim Dockers Conference, sponsored by the ILWU and longshore unions in Japan and Australia. And many ILWU locals have expressed an interest in sending delegations to longshore unions abroad so that we can explain our position, consider the impact of our bargaining on their unions, and establish a mutual basis of support.

• The new Corporate Campaign Department approved by the Caucus is now busily at work researching and analyzing the industries and employers we'll be up against.

Are we in good shape for a showdown? I think so, especially given our dominance on the docks from Alaska, to Canada, to the West Coast and Hawaii. But I hope it doesn't have to come to that, and neither does the Caucus. That's why we've fashioned a package of contract proposals that will address the employers' needs as well as ours.

• As in all contract negotiations, we should at this very moment be making plans to safeguard our families in the event of a strike. This means trying to save two or three months' rent or mortgage and planning for other financial needs.

More news:
• Higher wages at unionized companies spur greater investments in new technology, thus boosting productivity.
• Union wages and working conditions attract highly-skilled workers, who are more productive than non-union workers.

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Unions Improve Efficiency

A recent survey by researchers at Carnegie Mellon University shows that unions are increasing company productivity, job security, the level of employee participation programs, researchers found that those at nonunion companies did not increase workers' productivity, job security, or the level of employee participation programs. At unionized companies, however, workers have a strong, formal mechanism to voice concerns and resolve conflicts.

More news:
• Higher wages at unionized companies spur greater investments in new technology, thus boosting productivity.
• Union wages and working conditions attract highly-skilled workers, who are more productive than nonunion workers.

Unionized companies generally have lower employee turnover and keep trained workers on the job. Dr. Maryellen Kelley, associate professor of management and public policy at the University and co-author of the study, said that, privately, many US managers recognize the value of unions. But, "I don't know how people who said those things in private were ready to speak out in public," she adds.
LONGSHORE CAUCUS MEETS

ILWU gears up for new coast-wide agreement

SAN FRANCISCO—The Longshore Division of the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union met here March 8-19 to prepare for bargaining with the Pacific Maritime Association on the coast-wide contract due to expire June 30.

Over 100 delegates from the West Coast, including fraternal delegates from Alaska, Canada and Hawaii, attended the meeting in which over 250 contract proposals were submitted, debated and subsequently voted on.

With far too many injuries and deaths occurring since the last contract was signed three years ago, health and safety issues were a top priority; over 31 resolutions addressed container safety alone.

JOBS FOR THE FUTURE

Other key resolutions adopted by the caucus covered pensions, maintenance of benefits, jurisdiction and "jobs for the future" in a changing industry. An extensive report prepared by the ILWU Coast Committee updated delegates on a number of issues facing members up and down the coast.

"It was a very successful and unifying caucus," said ILWU International President David Arian, who will be heading up the union's negotiating committee, which will include Vice President Brian McWilliams, Coast Committee members Rich Austin and Jim Spinosa, and representatives from various west coast ports.

"The Division is very focused on what needs to be done," Arian said. "A new contract gives both the union and the PMA a chance to move forward in such vital areas as technology and productivity and, at the same time, preserve and expand work opportunity for our people on the waterfront. The ILWU has a good, balanced program to accomplish just that; and we expect that our negotiations will be a success for the entire industry."

As this is written, delegates are preparing and presenting detailed reports of caucus actions to their respective local memberships. Meanwhile, the ILWU and the PMA are coordinating a negotiating schedule. Bargaining is expected to start sometime in May.

Larry Wing, longshore Local 10, San Francisco, was caucus chair; Nick Pou, clerks Local 63, Wilmington, was caucus secretary; and Bill Sample, longshore Local 19, Seattle, and John Espinosa, Sr., longshore Local 13, Wilmington, were sergeants-at-arms.

Lending their expertise were Coast Committee assistant Lucienne O'Keefe, ILWU Research Director Russ Bargmann, ILWU legal counsel Richard Zuckerman, corporate campaign consultant Zack Nauth, health care consultant Tom Moore, Coast Committee members Rich Austin and Jim Spinosa, and the Titled Officers.

SAFETY COMMITTEE

The Safety Committee Report was prepared by Philip M. Lelli, longshore Local 20, Tacoma; Bill Watkins, longshore Local 10, San Francisco; Timmy Chavez, longshore, clerks and foremen's Local 29, San Diego; Frank Whitlock, longshore Local 8, Portland; Richard Cavalli, clerks Local 34, San Francisco; and Bob Rogers, walking bosses and foremen's Local 92, Seattle.

Special guests included ILWU Northern California District Council President LeRoy King, Local 142 President Bobby Lapenia, and Hawaii Longshore Division leader Nate Lum.

The caucus was dedicated to the memory of Nate DiBiasi, the longtime Local 13 and Pension Club leader who died recently. Caucus delegates also voted to convey their respects to former Coast Committee member Bobby Olivera and his wife, Georgia.
In Our Own Defense

Innovative pact protects Alaska jobs

Brian McWilliams
International Vice President

After fourteen months of intense and sensitive negotiations, the ILWU and five Japanese tramper companies operating in Alaska have reached what I think is a real “win-win” agreement to close loopholes in immigration laws.

As we've previously reported in The Dispatcher, the 1990 Immigration Act contains certain provisions which are supposed to protect the work of American longshoremen. In the past, there has been a number of exceptions which allow foreign shippers to use their crews to perform some types of longshore work in US waters.

ALL OR NOTHING

Despite the exceptions, the Japanese tramper (refrigerated cargo vessels) were having difficulties transporting fish from Alaska to the Far East. As observed by Vince Addington at Alaska Maritime Agencies, the exceptions were "difficult to obtain, and, without them, the cargo must be loaded by American longshoremen whether they are available or not."

Everyone was in a bind. For one thing, when the fishing season is at its peak, many Alaskans are busy pulling fish out of the sea; they can't afford to hang around on things like waiting to load cargo. And then there's the problem of finding a trained work force in many of the remote locations where fish is loaded onto the trampers from onshore processors or offshore factory trawlers.

MIDDLE GROUND

ILWU and ILWU members in Alaska, had their concerns, too, and rightfully so. The law was driving the trampers away from the more popular Alaskan ports. And they complained about the low foreign shippers had to pay their workers.

Given the difficulties — and confusion — of the “all or nothing rule,” everybody realized we had better find a middle ground. And we did.

The primary and unique feature of our agreement with the tramper operators is that both sides are required to lobby for a "State of Alaska Exception" to the 1990 Immigration Act. We have until December 31, 1993 to convince Congress to adopt the exception, which memorials procedures ac-
ceptable to all parties. In the meantime, the carriers and the union have extended an existing contract allowing tramper crews to perform loading operations when American longshore-
men are not available.

In my opinion, this new agreement represents "collective bargaining" at its best. It's a win-win agreement. We debated, listened and learned, with one objective in mind: finding a solution. Our deliberations included almost every public and private entity involved in the issue — from the Alaska longshoremens, union officials, stevedores, and Japanese tramper companies, to the State of Alaska.

THANK YOU

I especially want to acknowledge the ILWU National President Burrril Hatch, Local 200 representative John Bukoskey, ILWU attorneys Richard Zuckerman and Beth Ross, and the ILWU Washington Representative Lindsay McLaughlin. Their work, expertise and sheer determination helped us accomplish what seemed like the impossible: securing opportunities for workers and employers and sponsoring legislation to protect both.

Foreign crew caught in the act

Local 13 gang #22, left, was all smiles after quick and efficient action. Longshore Division locals in Wilmington got them work on the Mammoth Western’s MV Voyager. Above, the gang signs off.
Local battles press on in search of fair coverage

ASTORIA, Ore. — ILWU longshore Local 50 has been fighting an uphill battle with the press here for the hearts and minds of the citizenry. But it's more than just a public relations challenge. It's a dispute that cuts to the quick of who controls the news and why.

Typical headlines: "Concerns aired over Dispute shapes up in wake of labor dispute" and "Labor union dispute costs Astoria with Little Attention".

POOR, LITTLE AT&T

The stories were worse:

• Most of an article by Ken Hamburger of The Oregonian devoted to interviews with and portrayals of the ILWU and the SeaFarers, "scaring away" (as one columnist put it) much-needed work from the community. In general, business interests—local merchants, the Port of Astoria, even poor, little AT&T—are portrayed as unwitting victims caught in the middle.

• Every story written by staffers of The Daily Astorian framed the issue as two competing unions, the ILWU and the Teamsters, bitterly bickering, "scaring away" (as one columnist put it) much-needed work from the community. In general, business interests—local merchants, the Port of Astoria, even poor, little AT&T—are portrayed as unwitting victims caught in the middle.

• One editorial branded the ILWU "a threat to the old days," and urged a "legal challenge" to the coast-wide agreement. The author, uncharacteristically, repeatedly refers to as "the ILWU contract"—as if the maritime industry neither bargain nor benefits from it.

Conclusion: Longshoremen are the "bad guys."—break out the black hats. Fortunately, a vigilant Local 50, a supportive ILWU International Executive Board member, and a respected member of the community challenged the newspapers to set the record straight.

Here are excerpts from a press release prepared by ILWU member Norm Parks for Local 50:

"Since 1968 ILWU longshoremen have had a flawless record of handling marine operations on the West Coast from San Diego to Bellingham. Even though ILWU has been called upon again in the recent past to handle different cargo from Japanese vessels at the Port of Astoria, AT&T (a company of vast wealth) wanted to utilize cheaper and safer methods of transportation.

PORT'S MISTAKE

"In discussions with AT&T, the Port of Astoria—interested, at the time, in short-term tariffs—failed to assert that its employees (ILWU longshoremen) must be utilized to handle the cargo. There was no substantive discussions with the ILWU prior to the vessels' arrival at the dock.

"Upon the vessels' arrival, a Greyhound-sized bus arrived on the dock filled with the non-ILWU workers from Seattle—workers intended to steer the vessels and displace the local work force. The bussed workers were billeted on the vessels. They did not rent local motels or eat in local restaurants; any wages they earned would be taken back to Seattle.

"When the Port of Astoria saw, first-hand, the degree to which AT&T was circumventing the community, it stopped AT&T from handling its cargo on the dock. AT&T chose to leave rather than use local workers.

"This incident was not a case of competing labor unions but of a large company purposefully disrupting long, trusting, local relationships to squeeze profits."

Paul Molino, who teaches career planning at the local community college, blasted an editorial in The Daily Astorian which labeled the dispute a clash between "the old and the new Astoria." Here's a little of what he had to say:

"BACK TO THE FUTURE"

"The people supporting the ILWU represent over 100 local consumers and wage earners who are raising families, paying mortgages, sending children to school and doing what all families would like to do. They pay the bills and make a living the old-fashioned way: through productive work. They make things and make things happen. It is called getting dirty, loading and unloading dangerous cargo, sweating and getting rained on. Their work involves high skills and it pays high wages."

"Such work is not making sandwich makers or coffee roasters rich! The only other tapioca minimum-wage offers that are the result of hotels on other waterfronts. People who are proactive and are able to work with high skills and high-wage jobs have a right to speak out, and be offered by people who would subject their families to a future of poverty.

"AT&T gave Astoria a chance to step back in time and the people who work for them gave them the door. As- toria made a good choice by putting AT&T back to the future.

BRUSHED-OFF AND BURIED

Both missives made the papers, but with none of the fanfare—nor the attention-grabbing headlines—that characterized stories and columns in the commercial press:

Molino's eloquent editorial was printed with the headline, "Move Astoria ahead without baggage of past!"—which does little to alert readers to the subject matter. Taken out of context, it can be difficult to establish the very sentiments Molino objects to.

"Parks' press release, which provides details of ILWU's requests and information relevant to the dispute, was re- dacted, and not paraged, as noted in The Oregonian's "letters to the editor."

A paragraph story by Michele LaBeaute in The Daily Astorian started off with a page one headline, "Longshoremen—Cable Ship Leave Town in Wake of Labor Dispute"; "This incident was not a case of competing labor unions but of a large company purposefully disrupting long, trusting, local relationships to squeeze profits."

Bottom line: Setting the record straight isn't easy, especially in a nation which values business so much and workers so little. That's why we need the courage to talk for a populist, progressive, pro-union message.

The commentary is broadcast during morning and afternoon "rush-hour traffic" times. Here's a taste:

"Jim Hightower here at the Chat & Chew Cafe reading this good news headline saying that, 'Worker output jumped in 1992.'

"So, the State Street economist: 'It's an extraordinary impressive performance,' this pipe smoker tells.

"That guy ought to be arrested as an Accessory to Deletion.

"...It's not that factories are actually producing more waffle irons, whirlie bins or whatever, but that there are now far fewer workers to do the jobs in those plants. Same thing in the service industries.

"...So when the headline says 'worker output jumped,' it's only because the corporate brass jumped to many working people."

San Francisco—The ILWU and the Teamsters issued a joint statement March 25 denouncing a story in the Journal of Commerce which declared that the two unions face a "showdown" and are "on a collision course over short-hand trucking." The story implies that the unions are "reaching a point of no return" and that "it's just not so.

"It was completely surprised by the tone of the article," said Teamsters Joint Council 7 President Chuck Mack. "It suggests a dispute, and that's not accurate."

Gypo's, the union contends, work opportinity and wage and benefits standards in the community. "Both unions understand that we—organize labor—are the best, in fact the only, chance workers have to protect themselves and their families," Arian said. "That's why Teamsters aren't our enemy, and we aren't theirs."

"SO WHAT?"

In Southern California, Mike Riley, Chairman of the Western Conference of Teamsters and President of Joint Council 42, said he was curious about why the Journal of Commerce would be interested in fanning nonessential flames when he just got back. They're not my story here. We're talking, that's all. So what?

Whatever problems the gypo press, Riley said, will be worked out, "but not by the newspapers, and certainly not by the business interests they serve."

Shortly after the joint statement, the Journal of Commerce ran a story clarifying the unions' positions.

Hightower Radio hits the airwaves, racks up rave reviews

It's hip. It's hot. It's Hightower Radio. Will the airwaves ever be the same? Let's hope not!

Jim Hightower, former Texas ag- riculture secretary turned political pundit, is racking up rave reviews for his two-minute radio commentaries currently aired on 29 stations in the U.S. and Canada.

"The calls and letters the stations are getting are overwhelmingly pos- itive," reports AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Tom Donahue. "This show offers a completely new perspective for a populist, progressive, pro-union message."

The commentaries are broadcast during morning and afternoon "rush-hour traffic" times. Here's a taste:

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Beware managed care!

Health care is a hot issue — especially among longshore division members, attoneg last month's contract caucus in San Francisco. It was no surprise, then, that delegates asked that the remarks of our readers should find interesting:

"I want to try to clarify something that came up earlier about the managed competition and the single payer systems in terms of the current debate in Washington."

YOU ARE TO BLAME

The idea of managed competition is roughly this: It's based on the assumption that you are to blame for high costs because you have consensus that the highest priced health care that is available in the market. So, if the managed competition system is in place, what will happen is that your trust fund, or your employer's, actually, will be basically taken out of the

decision-making process — will be faced with a series of plans: Kaiser, contract caucus in San Francisco. Delegates asked that the remarks of two or three other managed competition plans, like Qual-MED, HMO and so on.

"And if you don't choose the cheapest one that is available to you in the area, you will pay the highest price on, that can be paid by your employer, or, if it is paid, the amount of money that is paid will be taxed as income. The object is to draw people into the lowest cost plans by imposing an out-of-pocket penalty if you choose the higher cost plan.

STRAIGHT FORMULATION

"In my view, it's a very strange formula, because it's basically collective bargaining. You don't get national health insurance, and you lose collective bargaining. That's the result. You need to be very watchful of this idea, because it's enormously attractive to lots of people, mostly to the managed care industry, of course, which sees an opportunity to get into purchasing groups that they have been unable to reach.

"The big difference, the main difference between that and the single payer system is that in the single payer system, the negotiation will be done by a government agency that holds all the money. When they go to the bargaining table with the doctors and the hospitals, as they do in the hospital system, they say, 'Here's the budget, folks.'"

"Now, all of us — patients, providers, hospitals, everyone — are left to live within this budget. Let's figure out how we use that money."

There is a long and proud history of supporting the principles embodied in the American Health Security Act introduced by Representative Paul Wellstone (D-MN). This legislation would guarantee every citizen, regardless of employment status, affordable and comprehensive health care, regardless of a person's employment, income or health status. Unfortunately, our country currently tolerates 37 million people with no health insurance, and many more are uninsured. Meanwhile, insurance companies boosted their profits by redlining out of the system those persons with pre-existing conditions and disabilities. The best, perhaps the only, way full accessibility can be achieved is to kick insurance profiteers out of the system.

"Another guiding principle is that benefits must be comprehensive. Preventive care, primary care and long-term care are part of an overall benefit package, as well as hospital care, prescription drugs, dental, vision, mental health and substance abuse services. Union members, who have comprehensive health care coverage under a collective bargaining agreement should not have to worry that their benefits will be reduced to pay for people without insurance. This legislation provides quality and comprehensive health care benefits to everyone.

The only way to go: Single payer health care offers affordability and accessibility

By LINDSAY McLAUGHLIN

Once every twenty years, there appears a glimmer of hope that the political conscience of the nation will rise to the occasion of health care and the American health care system. Now may finally be the time — since virtually every interest group in America has publicly acknowledged that doing nothing to control the nation's runaway health care costs would be intolerable.

The President's Health Care Task Force, headed by First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton, is expected to submit a recommended health care package to Congress next month. We must continue to press the Administration for a proposal to Congress for a health care reform package that encompasses the principles of a single-payer health care proposal to offset the self-serving lobbies of the health insurance industry, drug companies and the American Medical Association. We must tell the Administration that the health industry's scare tactics will not work this time.

HEALTH CARE GUARANTEED

The ILWU has a long and proud history of supporting the principles embodied in the American Health Security Act introduced by Representative Jim McDermott (D-WA) and Senator Paul Wellstone (D-MN). This legislation would guarantee every citizen, regardless of employment status, affordable and comprehensive health care through a publicly funded and publicly accountable system.

FINANCING

The fourth principle is affordability. By financing the system through employer payroll taxes, corporate and personal income taxes, state and local resources, and modest co-payments by consumers, middle-income workers end up paying much less for health care.

The single-payer model, such as the Canadian system, has been proven to control costs, eliminate duplicative administrative waste, and greatly reduce profit-seeking, i.e., insurance and drug company practices. We currently spend 14 percent of our gross domestic product on health care. A single-payer system can control these outrageous medical costs, thereby making health care more affordable.

The fifth principle is accountability. For too long, working people have been squeezed by the lobbying of the $840 billion health care industry, which has refused to control costs and provide universal coverage. It's time to treat health care as a fundamental right, and for the public to take control of the system. The single-payer model best achieves accountability to the public.

PETITION THE TASK FORCE

You have an opportunity to petition the Administration's Health Care Task Force and the Congress to address the basic principles embodied in the single-payer health care bill. I encourage you to write to the Health Care Task Force, asking them to closely analyze the McDermott-Wellstone American Health Security Act and incorporate the principles of accessibility, affordability, comprehensiveness and quality, consumer choice, and public accountability into their health care proposal to Congress.

You may want to add that current proposals to tax comprehensive employee benefits to pay for the health care program would discriminate against union members who have been able to obtain excellent benefits through collective bargaining agreements — sometimes at the expense of better wage increases. This is unfair to working people. Progressive financing is the key to ensuring equitable distribution of the cost.

Save lives, prevent injuries: reform OSHA

Since the Occupational Safety and Health Act became law in 1970, much progress has been made and American workers are better protected. But every year 10,000 American workers die from job-related injuries; tens of thousands of other working men and women are year in and year out diagnosed with occupational diseases.

In 1991, more than 1.7 million workers were seriously injured on the job. Preventable tragedies like the fire at the Imperial Foods chicken plant in Hamlet, NC, and the building collapse at L'Amicance Plaza in Bridgeport, CT, continue to occur.

TIME TO ACT

These grim and deadly statistics show that it is time for Congress to act. That is why the AFL-CIO is strongly supporting the Comprehensive Occupational Safety and Health Reform Act (HR 1280 and S 575). HR 1280 was introduced by Representatives William Ford (D-MI) and Austin Murphy (D-PA), and S 575 by Senators Ted Kennedy (D-MA) and Howard Metzenbaum (D-OH).

The almost identical bills will make major, long-needed improvements in the OSH Act. The legislation also has special provisions which apply to the unique hazards in the construction industry. A separate bill, HR 115 introduced by Rep. William Clay (D-MO), would provide OSHA protection for federal and postal workers.

The bills require the establishment of worker and employer representatives. The bills also provide for employee training and education concerning workplace dangers. The bills also require the establishment of joint safety and health committees with an equal number of employer and worker representatives.

The labor movement is at the forefront of efforts to combat CTDs. As Lynn Rhinehart, an AFL-CIO safety specialist points out, "We have to show OSHA how the standard must be written."

Dock safety factoid

James P. Conway, clerks Local 63, Wilmington, recently received an award from PMA for working 44 years without an injury. Yes, it can be done! For that little black book Write this number down: 1-800-220-OSHA. It's the 24-hour emergency hotline for the Occupational Safety and Health Administration.

The hotline was installed in 1991 so that workers could immediately report emergency threats to their safety, such as fire hazards, risks of explosion, or releases of toxic chemicals. Open 24 hours a day, the service accommodates both day and "after hours" needs.

Between an e.m. and 4:30 p.m. local time, Monday through Friday, an operator will be available to transfer your call to the appropriate OSHA area office. If an immediate transfer isn't possible, the operator will notify the area office by fax. In any case, a callback is assured.

The new service is a major improvement over the old system, when an operator had to wait for the area office to return your call.

The Occupational Safety and Health Act promises every American worker the right to a safe job. But America's workplaces are far from safe. Each year 10,000 American workers die from job-related injuries, and tens of thousands more die from occupational disease. Nearly two million workers are killed by workplace hazards since the OSHA Act was passed.

On April 28, the unions of the AFL-CIO observe Workers Memorial Day to remember those workers who have suffered and died and to renew the fight for safe workplaces. This year we are fighting for passage of OSHA Reform legislation to give workers greater rights and protections.

Join the fight for safe jobs. Observe Workers Memorial Day on April 28.
By CESAR CHAVEZ
President, United Farm Workers of America

Her bright, dark eyes could light up a room. Her smile came easily and of ten. And, though, she had every right to cry; she wouldn't. She couldn't, if she was to spare her family further heart an guish. No braver soldier ever graced a battlefield. Nor will one.

Her name was Mirian Robles—the 10-year-old daughter of migrant farm workers—and she died as a child, although leukemia prevented her from ever living like one. From age 18 months to death nine years later, deadly cancer savaged her body. Still, trooper that she was, it never so much as made a dent in her spirit.

Mirian's funeral procession stretched more than a half-mile. They came from all walks of life to pay their respects: young and old; rich and poor; Hollywood celebrities and faces-in-the-crowd; some from nearby migrant farms; others from faraway mansions on D.C.

NOBODY SPECIAL

Who was this child for whom so many mourned? Just one more child in a cancer-stricken community paying the ultimate debt for human greed and government indifference. The fifteenth child, in a few, short years, who had to die because she was "nobody special" in the eyes of those who have the power of immediate change.

They came by the hundreds to mourn not just a child, but a society that has come to place a higher value on the price of grapes than it does on innocent human life.

Mirian's death is tragic enough. But a far greater tragedy is that it could have been prevented had California tables and other growers agreed to eliminate some of the most toxic pesticides from their agri-business arsenal: pesticides, which science has proven, have no value other than cosmetic.

Better looking grapes, however; they demand better prices. So growers with a get-rich-at-all-costs mentality spray recklessly in and around fields, schools and playgrounds, contaminating the air, the water, the soil; and the children who breathe it.

FORGOTTEN IN THE FIELDS

Farms are not only for migrant farmers and their children and their children's children; they are for human beings. So migrant workers have been forced by sheer economics to work in these same fields of small farm worker communities such as Earlhart, California, where childhood cancer is 12 times the norm.

Certainly not to me, the scientists, doctors, clergy, farm workers, and thousands of other concerned citizens, who are waging the war for pesticide-regulation to protect children who cannot protect themselves.

The ad agency has also come up with an in-store promotion asking customers to "sneak a grape," while one is looking. This tongue-in-cheek approach to promoting grapes might just backfire given the "guilt" associated with consuming a product that causes suffering and death to innocent farm workers, their families and, potentially, consumers.

Now, the grape commission is attempting to buy public confidence with a crisis management program which includes farm worker scholarships, science fairs, reading programs, and teaching grants. But, as a friend of mine once said, "We're all across America are well aware, a wolf in sheep's clothing is still a wolf.

In an effort to regain their foothold, the table grape growers association fired its advertising agency of 20 years and replaced it with McCann-Erickson of New York. The new agency has positioned grapes as "the healthy snack," an ad slogan tragically ignorant and off the mark. The toxic pesticides used to cultivate California grapes actually invade the fruit's flesh and cannot be washed off.

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Cardenas to keynote fund-raiser in honor of ILWU, Teamsters
SAN FRANCISCO — Cuauhtemoc Cardenas, head of Mexico's Democratic Opposition Party, will keynote a fund-raising dinner recognizing the ILWU and the Teamsters for their leadership in opposing the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

The event, sponsored by the Bay Area Labor Council for Latin American Advancement and the Institute Laboral de la Raza, is set for Friday, May 7, 6-8 p.m. at ILWU Local 10, 400 North Point, San Francisco. ILWU International President David Harry, whose brother, ILWU National Vice President Ken Mees will accept the award, said the contribution from the Teamsters and ILWU is "invaluable in opposing the NAFTA agreement."

Tickets are $25 per person and are in demand. Issue a check payable to ILWU 10, 400 North Point, San Francisco, CA 94102. If you need more information call Espinoza at (415) 889-6770 ext. 723 or Frank Martin in LA at (213) 575-1740 ext. 135.

May Day "March for Democracy" scheduled
SACRAMENTO — The "Americas Democracy" scheduled for May Day is designed to focus attention on the impact of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

"The real purpose behind this North American Free Trade Agreement is not to help Mexican workers, but to use their low wages as a machete to whack ours down: 'Take a pay cut, or we'll take a hike.' The Wall Street today will be on strike, and we'll do the same," said Cardenas.

If the US corporations are moving to Mexico now to cut costs, that's 'beige,' he said. "But NAFTA is 'black' because the condition is that the US corporations do not have to worry about the US labor laws being violated, the US workers being paid, or the environment impacted. Without the US corporations being required to follow our rules, they get a free ride."

The march, Diez said, is "to protest against the NAFT" and "to put us in solidarity with the millions of workers that are in the countries around us." The march is also to unite the workers of the world in the face of an anti-labor attack of the Bush administration to promote the free market and the politics for those who are in the US corporate class. Those who are of the US workers, the marchers said, are "not the ones who are benefiting from this globalization of the American economy, but the corporations who are charging, by using their own dollars as a machete to whack the US workers down."

The march, sunlight said, "is to stop the globalization of the American economy and stop the flow of jobs out to the countries of the world. We're saying that we're not going to be a cattle ranch where we have our best workers and we sell the rest to foreign corporations."

By DON WATSON

As of April 6 we have collected 11,661 signatures for the ILWU's "No on NAFTA" petition. Here's a rundown.

Puget Sound has 1,770 signatures as of April 6. Local 1055, Basic Metal Honors should go to ILWU Local 52, Seattle, which turned in at least 345 signatures. Honorable mention is for in order for Locals 7, 9, 19, 21, 23, 24, 27, and 98. The pension groups surrounding these locals were also active. A set of 119 signatures wound up at the international without attribution. Local 2761 at McCleary gave 170 signatures. The Marine Firemen's Union of Seattle has also contributed.

Columbia Valley has 2,256 signatures as of March 30. The largest amount comes from the Columbia River Pensioners. Jessie and Lois Ball, the special speakers allocated to appear at the "NOT THIS NAFTA!" rally on Saturday, May 1. The demonstration kicks off at 12:30 p.m. at the Westlake Mall and includes free entertainment. Speakers are: Port of Seattle Coalition, Fair Trade and Social Justice, a statewide coalition of labor, environmental and community groups; Washington State Rainbow Coalition; and NAFTA/GATT Justice Committee.

Seattle anti-NAFTA rally set for May Day

SOUTH — Machinists' union pres- ident George Koufopoulos and Friends of the Earth executive director Jane Perkins are among the special speakers slated to appear at the "NOT THIS NAFTA!" rally on Saturday, May 1.

The demonstration kicks off at 12:30 p.m. at the Westlake Mall and includes free entertainment. Speakers are: Port of Seattle Coalition, Fair Trade and Social Justice, a statewide coalition of labor, environmental and community groups; Washington State Rainbow Coalition; and NAFTA/GATT Justice Committee. Cardenas' place, noteled the leader's re- nunciation, does provide for adequate sanctions. NAFTA will actua- lly be a terrific thing because it will represent a first time in modern eco- nomic history that we've actually had an agreement with a developing country that's good for the US and it's good for the world. That is critical to people's economic future.

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Gratz is "Woman of the Year"

SAN PEDRO—ILWU Southern California District Council officer and Local 26 president Luisa Gratz was honored as the first-ever "Woman of the Year" at a benefit here March 24. Some 500 unionists and labor supporters came out to honor Gratz at the benefit dinner-dance, coordinated by Local 13 executive board member Linda Palacios.

It was a festive night of warmth and anecdotes of Gratz's tale at the Sheraton Los Angeles Harbor Hotel. With her parents at her side, Gratz was showered with praise for her consistent dedication to Southern California labor struggles.

Local 13's Lynn Hay, Local 26's Hector Cepeda, ILWU international representative Alicia Matzger, and ILWU Allied Division chief steward Cathy Moore were among those who gave speeches and presented Gratz with numerous certificates of recognition.

Don Watson of the Northern California District Council, Harbor Area labor attorney and Los Angeles City Council candidate Diane Middleton, and representatives of Harbor Area legislators took the podium.

"What can I say?" asked Palacios after a handful of speakers praised Gratz. "I love Luisa. She's my idol."

Palacios, too, was honored. Matzger presented her a plaque on behalf of the ILWU Pacific Coast District Councils for her outstanding efforts to gather signatures for the union's "No on NAFTA" petition.

Turning to Gratz's parents, Gene Banday of the Southern California District Council said, "You raised a hell of a fighter and we thank you for it."

In accepting the award, a softspoken Gratz praised the ILWU for providing an outlet for activism around the labor struggles she has so intimately supported since childhood.

"The benefit was held for the film Lost Eden, which dramatizes women's labor struggles in Massachusetts textile factories 150 years ago. Given that March is Women's History Month, the International felt that honoring a woman labor leader was an appropriate way to raise money for the film, being produced by Made in the USA Productions."

In keeping with the focus on women, Gratz recognized the accomplishments and potential of women in labor: "Women are dynamite," she said. "You just give us a cause and we can kick ass."

Still softspoken, she begged the group's pardon for the turn of phrase.

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Loretta McEthmar
First woman watch"man" retires from Local 75

BY SUZANNE FORSYTH

SAN FRANCISCO—On April 1, 1993, the first woman member of Gate- men and Watchmen's Local 75 will retire from the maritime industry.

Loretta McEthmar became a Local 75 member in May 1978. She had come to work as a watchperson after she could have worked. "She soon found herself "falling in love with the job because of being able to meet so many people and the pride she felt in performing work that held so much responsibility. She now considers the waterfront "the safest place I could have worked."

Loretta's fondest memory is of being asked to work steady at PASHA Maritime Services in Oakland. She worked there for five years until 1989, when she suffered a stroke which partially paralyzed her.

Her many friends and co-workers will miss her and congratulate her on her retirement.
CALIFORNIA—Active and retired longshore families in the ports will have a choice on change medical plans during the open enrollment period May 1 to May 31, 1993. The change will be effective July 1, 1993. In San Francisco, Los Angeles and Portland/Vancouver, active and retired longshoremen may change dental plans during the month of May.

MEDICAL CHOICE

The medical plan choice is between the Kaiser Foundation Health Plan and the Choice Port Plan for Southern California Localities 13, 26, 29, 63 and 94; Northern California Localities 10, 19, 34, 75 and 91; and Oregon and Columbia River Locals 4, 8, 40 and 92. In the Washington area, the choices for Local 20, 19, 23, 32, 47, 52 and 98 are the Group Health Cooperative and the Choice Port Plan.

DENTAL PLANS

For Los Angeles locals, dental choice is between the Delta Dental Plan and the Jordan-Sakai, Simmons and Sugiyama group plan. For San Francisco locals, dental choice is between the Delta Dental plan and Naimshire group plan. For Portland/Vancouver locals, dental choice is between Blue Cross of Oregon-DentaCare, Oregon Kaiser Dental Plan and Delta Dental Plan.

Information on the dental and medical plans and forms to change plans can be obtained at the locals and the Benefit Plans office. All enrollment cards must be completed and submitted to the Benefit Plans office by May 31 in order for the change to be effective July 1.

Notice to All Current and Future Nonmembers

This notice applies to all current nonmembers of the ILWU (hereinafter called "associate union members") as well as to any ILWU members at any time prior to January 1, 1994 to become financial core members by any means, including suspension or expulsion from union membership in any local or division affiliated with the ILWU under a union security clause.

Please be advised that financial core members deprive themselves of the valuable rights of union membership in the ILWU. A financial core member does not have the right to vote, nominate for office, hold office, or be a candidate for office in the ILWU; nor may he/she participate in or attend ILWU meetings or any functions of the union that are limited to union members. In addition, a financial core member has no right to vote on dues increases or on contracts submitted to the membership for ratification. These rights and privileges of union membership are accorded only to union members in good standing.

Nevertheless, financial core members are still legally required under a valid union security clause to pay the union for the costs related to collective bargaining, contract administration, grievance work, and other activities reasonably related to the effectuation of the union's representational duties (hereinafter called "chargeable activities"). However, union expenditures for nonrepresentational activities such as political activities, lobbying, and union organizing campaigns that compete with union efforts and that employ workers with whom the ILWU has a collective bargaining relationship (hereinafter called "nonchargeable activities")—activities which most workers know help build a better future for all in bargaining with employers and in performing fundamental worker rights—may not be charged to financial core members who file timely objections.

In calendar year 1992, the certified accountants have confirmed that no more than 23% of all ILWU International's and no more than 2% of all Coast Pro Rata Committee's expenditures are for nonchargeable activities.

The ILWU International Executive Board and the ILWU Coast Pro Rata Committee have adopted Procedures On Financial Core Members Objecting To Nonchargeable Expenditures (hereafter called "the Procedures"). Such procedures can be obtained from the ILWU International Secretary-Treasurer at 1188 Franklin Street, San Francisco, CA 94109. Under the Procedures, a financial core member has the right within a certain period of time to object to expenditures of his or her per capita and any coast pro rata paid to the ILWU National Committee and/or the Coast Pro Rata Committee based on the ILWU's and/or any applicable coast pro rata's expenditures related to nonchargeable activities. In the event a financial core member perfects such objections, he or she shall receive from the ILWU and/or the Coast Pro Rata Committee an advance rebate of a portion of per capita and any applicable coast pro rata paid to the ILWU's and/or Coast Pro Rata Committee's nonchargeable expenditures to total expenditures.

Under the Procedures, an objection by a financial core member must be made in writing and post-marked within 30 days from the date of this notice or the date of becoming a financial core member, whichever is later, and addressed to the ILWU International Secretary-Treasurer, 1188 Franklin Street, 4th Floor, San Francisco, CA 94109. To be valid, the written objection must specify the objector's name, address, social security number, current wages, the name of his or her employer, and the name of the local union or division which represents the objector. Objections must be made only on an individual basis. A written objection must be timely in order to be valid. Individuals who have become financial core members may file an objection within 30 days of the date they become or should know that they have become a financial core member.

Those financial core members who file timely objections will not be charged from July 1, 1993 or the date they file a timely objection, whichever is later, to June 30, 1994 for expenditures related to nonchargeable activities based on the 1992 percentages noted above and for expenditures related to nonchargeable activities. The vast majority of ILWU represented workers believe that the extra in dues for maintaining union membership and/or Coast Pro Rata Committee representation for each member will continue. The ILWU International and the negotiation of working conditions is quite a bargain. For a few cents more each week, union members enjoy all the benefits of union membership in a truly American union. Future nonmembers, too, will agree that becoming a union member makes the most sense. To become a union member, please contact the ILWU Secretary-Treasurer.

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Local 142 opens housing for seniors

By JOANNE KEALOHA

EWA, HI.—The new 84-unit David E. Thompson Village rental housing project for the elderly, disabled and a giant step toward making affordable housing a reality. The Village was built by the Ewa Housing Foundation, a nonprofit community-based corporation established by ILWU Local 142 to develop low-cost housing for Hawaiians.

In dedication ceremonies held last year, Leonard Hoshio, International Representative and housing coordinator for ILWU Local 142, noted that "Thompson Village was made possible because of the efforts of many people who diligently pursued this dream of affordable housing for the elderly."

In dedication ceremonies were many with a direct role in the completion of the project and others who simply came to celebrate this momentous accomplishment.

FOREIGHT

Hoshio joined his father, Tony Bise, a life-long Ewa resident and retired unit officer from Oahu Sugar, who, in the mid-1970s, saw the need to renew housing resources before a crisis hit, and set out to do something about it. Bise worked with Hoshio on the Ewa elderly project from its inception more than 10 years ago.

"The ILWU stayed with us," Bise said. "Because they didn't give up, we were able to have such beautiful homes for the elderly."

Hoshio said the ILWU went "beyond their job description on the job and into programs and services benefiting the entire community. Ironically, today, Conservative federal courts want to take unions out of this kind of community service."

Frank Fasi, Mayor of Honolulu, congratulated the ILWU for its role in expanding affordable housing resources. The City and County of Honolulu purchased the land and leased it to the Ewa Housing Foundation for $1 a year. They also provided grant and loan monies.

Daniel Lee represented the US Writers Home Association, which provided $4.7 million in mortgage and rent subsidies. The state's Housing Finance and Development Corporation committed subsidies in the feasibility stages; Campbell Estates assisted and helped in the planning.

The Ewa Housing Foundation's board of directors consist of Tony Bise, president; Adrian Lobetos, vice-president; Vernon Pico, treasurer; Leonard Hoshio, secretary; and Petra Bustamante and Gino Estores, directors. All of the 84 units at the David Thompson Village are presently occupied.

PCPA board meets

By JEYSE STRANAHAN

SAN FRANCISCO—At their mid-term meeting March 7 here, the Executive Board of the ILWU Pensioners Association (PCPA) unanimously recommended that all ILWU pension club establish ongoing legislative committees to "work with the International, District Councils and the locals we all retired from." Such a grass roots structure is needed, said the Board, "to help our union and pension clubs become effective in carrying out our political and legislative programs."

In other actions, the PCPA Executive Board voted, as follows:

• To send communications to West Coast members of the US House of Representatives urging their support

Local 98's annual dinner to honor retirees

FEDERAL WAY, WA.—ILWU Local 98 will host its annual dinner honoring retiring and retired foremen on Thursday May 13, 1993 at the Red Lion Inn.

All active and retired ILWU members and their guests are invited to attend. For more information please contact Ray Nelson at (206) 956-3611, or Local 98 at 1-800-824-7945.

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