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SPECIAL PULLOUT SECTION

'How The Union Works'
West Coast walkout shuts down shopping

Statement of the ILWU INTERNATIONAL OFFICERS
August 8, 1995

On August 7, 1995, our members in the ILWU Longshore Division have contumaciously stopped work in West Coast ports. We have been advised that the employer's response may require a number of long-simmering disputes, including the following:

**SMALL PORTS:** The Pacific Maritime Association (PMA), with which the ILWU Longshore Division has had a coast-wide contract that has served shippers, ports, workers, communities, and the public so well for more than six decades. Privatization opens up public port services to outside, unaffiliated longshore operators who have no stake in the surrounding communities; who pay no wages, provide few if any benefits, and undercut prevailing wage and work standards; and who inevitably export the benefits of their lower wages to their families and their communities into economic chaos.

**JURISDICTION:** PMA employers have repeatedly tried and repeatedly failed to eliminate marine clerks' jurisdiction by assaulting the ILWU's computer contract language. In numerous legal and binding arbitrations, the ILWU's position has been consistently upheld. Yet employers continue to attempt unilateral implementation of what they cannot legally gain at the arbitrator's bench or at the bargaining table.

**INTERFERENCE:** PMA continues to interfere with or otherwise intervene in internal union matters. Attempts to discipline local union officers acting on behalf of the rank-and-file have a chilling effect on labor operations. Elected local union officers' ability to confront employers as equals and to enforce the collective bargaining agreement is eroded, thus exacerbating disputes instead of resolving them.

Our members maintain that PMA and its affiliates are violating both the letter and the spirit of the coast-wide contract that has served the interests of all workers, communities, and the public so well for more than six decades. Privatization opens up public port services to outside, unaffiliated longshore operators who have no stake in the surrounding communities; who pay no wages, provide few if any benefits, and undercut prevailing wage and work standards; and who inevitably export the benefits of their lower wages to their families and their communities into economic chaos.

**PRIVATIZATION:** The "privatization" trend that has hit West Coast ports, large and small. Parcelling off public port lands and/or operations to private employers threatens the coast-wide contract that has served shippers, ports, workers, communities, and the public so well for more than six decades. Privatization opens up public port services to outside, unaffiliated longshore operators who have no stake in the surrounding communities; who pay no wages, provide few if any benefits, and undercut prevailing wage and work standards; and who inevitably export the benefits of their lower wages to their families and their communities into economic chaos.

**SUSPEND MARDI DIVERSION:** The diverted funds will be contributed only on behalf of those members who have volunteered to have part of their per capita payment diverted to the Political Action Fund. No one else will be coerced or in any way forced to do so if those ports are to remain "secure" anything. Workers united in a labor organization can. Working together for the good of the whole, they can "secure" progressive legislation that, when enacted, provides a measure of security for them and as well as the organization.

**WHAT'S THE MESSAGE?**

"Okay," you may be saying, "I understand the terms. But what's the message here?"

Here it is:

To do the opposite of working to fairly unite other workers into the ILWU sacrifices the security that only unity can achieve. When individuals think or behave as if their personal interests are paramount to achieving unity, they weaken the organization.

We see evidence of this afflication every day:

- People suing the union because they want something special, something beyond what the ILWU Constitution or collective bargaining contracts guarantee.
- Individual gain at the expense of the collective body.
- Rumor-mongering and other tactics reminiscent of the McCarthy Era's "guilt by accusation" plays.

**ILWU Objectives**

Delegates to the 28th Triennial Convention of the ILWU, meeting in Seattle, Washington, June 3-7, 1991, amended Article 3 of the International Convention to read:

"**SECTION 2.** The International shall establish a Political Action Fund which shall consist exclusively of voluntary contributions. The union will not favor or disadvantage any member because of the amount of his/her contribution or the decision not to contribute. In no case will a member be required to pay more than his/her pro rata share of the union's collective bargaining expenses. Reports on the status of the fund and the use to which the voluntary contributions of the members are put will be made to the International Executive Board. The voluntary contributions to the Political Action Fund shall be collected as follows:

- One Dollar and Twenty Cents ($1.20) of each March and August per capita payment to the International shall be diverted to the Political Action Fund where it will be used in connection with Federal, state and local elections. These deductions are voluntary, and individual members are free to contribute more or less than that guideline suggests. The diverted funds will be contributed only on behalf of those members who have volunteered to have part of their per capita payment used for that purpose. The Titled officers may suspend the March diversion, if in their judgment, the financial condition of the International warrants such a suspension.

- For three consecutive months prior to each diversion each dues paying member of the union shall be advised of his/her right to withhold the One Dollar and Twenty Cents ($1.20) payment or any portion hereof otherwise made in March and August. Those members expressing such a desire, on a form provided by the International Union, shall be sent a check in the amount of One Dollar and Twenty Cents ($1.20) or less if they so desire. In advance of the member making such determination, they are not entitled to have part of their per capita payment diverted to the Political Action Fund, but wish to make political contributions directly to either the Political Action Fund or their local union, may do so in amounts however small that they will.

- Attorneys lining up to represent a few disgruntled members—disgruntled because they didn't get what they wanted.

- Opportunists (luckily, very few) who wrap themselves in a cloak of union militancy to disguise their self-serving intentions.

Fortunately, a vast proportion of the membership embrace the democratic principles of our Constitution. They know that, through the give-and-take of honest, principled discussion and debate, we find solutions.

They know that deception and trickery deprive them of the opportunity to hear the facts or to make constructive choices.

**The BOTTOM LINE**

The bottom line is this: Members of this union deserve facts, not fantasy. They deserve facts from elected representatives at every level of this union, from International Officers, to local officers, to committee members. Anything less is a disservice. True political action is a disservice.

So and as are membership meetings designed to last till the middle of the night: They lose attendance and allow the few to make decisions that are by and for the many.

Passive objection to such manipulation won't get the job done. Silence in the face of self-seeking opportunism won't serve the interests of the body united. Apathy as an answer to the politics of division will only bring more of the same.

It makes little sense to sit by and allow such shenanigans to go unchallenged. The democratic principles of our union will suffer if a few are permitted to stack the deck against rank-and-file decision-making.

Each of us has something to contribute to the workings of our union. Within our body-united—the ILWU rank and file—we will find the solutions to difficult problems. We have an essential premise here at the ILWU, that one has served us well for six decades: Given the facts the membership will always make the right decision. Now, that's what I call unity in action! That's what upholding the objectives of our union! That's the proud heritage of the ILWU!

**Important Notice on ILWU Political Action Fund**

"There shall not be any removal of dues, or part thereof, to the ILWU Political Action Fund without the consent of the majority of those members whose dues are to be removed."

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A subscription to this additional section is free of charge. Contributions are not deductible as charitable contributions.

ILWU Titled Officers
BRIAN McWILLIAMS
President

RICHARD AUSTIN
Vice President

LEONARD HOSHIJO
Vice President

JOE IBARRA
Secretary-Treasurer

Return to: ILWU, 1188 Franklin Street, San Francisco, CA 94109-6898, The Dispatcher welcomes letters, photos and other communications in the above address. EML, 9/95.

**ILWU Objectives**

"First: To unite in one organization, regardless of religion, race, creed, color, sex, political affiliation or nationality, all workers within the jurisdiction of this International."

"Second: To maintain and improve the wages, hours and working conditions beyond what the members have been able to achieve through their own efforts..."

"Third: To educate the membership of this organization in the history of the American labor movement and in present day labor problems, making it aware of its place in this struggle..."

"Fourth: To secure legislation in the interests of labor and to oppose anti-labor legislation."

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ORGANIZING LEADS

What they are, why we need them, and how to get them.

By LEONARD HOSHIJO

ILWU International Vice President, Mainland

SOMETHING'S HAPPENING

There’s ILWU organizing action up and down the west coast. In recent months, locals welcomed new units: 50 members in Northern California recyling, 14 at the Humboldt Bay Harbor; two Bay Area IBU wins; and LA ship planners. Local 6 awaits results on 30 telephone researchers.

The flame is lit. Thirty-five cold storageworkers in Columbia River vote in late September; petitions are in for a refinery, optical and additional ship planner units. ILWU is in multi-union “LAMAP” planning for a major LA offensive, and San Francisco hospital and other leads are being checked.

We, you, rekindled the flame. Local initiatives, International stimulus and experience; rank-and-filers volunteering. Be on double duty, new organizers in the field, and a new organizing brochure—all this following Convention action, the vote for the “2-4-24” organizing assessment, “talking it up” ILWU style, taking a hard look at ourselves, and moving on it.

We, you, need to keep the flame growing with new organizing leads—those all-important connections we need with nonunion workers, in order to start an organizing drive. So, what exactly is a lead? Read on.

PEOPLE LEADS

A lead is a person or persons an organizer can talk with confidentially. Organizing wins involving hundreds of workers have started with one person. That first contact may not turn out to be an activist, but instead put us in touch with workers who will. Realistically, only one lead in ten may develop, so bring ten. We need you—the active and down the west coast. In recent months, locals welcomed new units: 50 members in Northern California recyling, 14 at the Humboldt Bay Harbor; two Bay Area IBU wins; and LA ship planners. Local 6 awaits results on 30 telephone researchers.

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Things to consider:

• Are there nonunion workers at your company? Locals 6 and 17, for example, found nonunion recycling sorters in ILWU warehouses—and organized 50. There are also many nonunion clericals in companies we know and do business with.

• How about nonunion companies competing with your employer, holding

you down when you negotiate? How about a nearby branch of your company?

• Do you know which companies in your town are nonunion?

• Is the company stable? Naturally, a near-bankrupt company poses problems. On the other hand, a change in ownership or management may spur workers to think about their future.

• How large is the company’s work force? While small groups have done well in the ILWU, we get more impact for our resources with large units. Furthermore, a 50-worker unit has a bigger pool to recruit leaders, than a unit of ten. Companies expected to expand make sense, too.

• Are there pressure points on a company, or to otherwise neutralize the company’s power over the workers? Is the company vulnerable to political or community pressure, for example?

FOLLOWING UP

At minimum, when you know a nonunion worker who’s willing to talk, or you sparked interest at a target company, contact a full-time ILWU officer with all the information you have. Locals should consult with International staff; on a larger drive, we aim for joint planning and assistance.

Other steps you can take:

• Help your lead and/or worker contact. Make a confidential appointment with an ILWU International Rep, Organizer, Business Agent of Local Officer, to accompany your lead/contact to the meeting. If she wants to bring a small, trusted group of co-workers, that’s great.

• Keep it confidential. Don’t alert the company into pouncing on pro-union workers, who, after all, don’t have democratic rights on the job until they have a union contract. (The organizing can’t stay small and secret forever, but the first meeting will provide workers the facts, and the choice to move ahead or not.)

• More is better. Information, that is: names of the owners, managers and more—well beyond our longshore origins. No one should hesitate to speak the ILWU name, stepping forward. Don’t keep getting those leads. They’re worth their weight in gold—and so are you!

Our flame isn’t roaring across the horizon yet. It’s a real-world beginning, complete with fits and starts. We’re working to mend local and International programs, and setting standards for doing things right. Locals and new organizers are gaining experience every day.

We have a great union. ILWU pricples have provided exceptional representation for workers in warehousing, manufacturing and food processing, white collar, health care, service and more—well beyond our longshore origins. No one should hesitate to speak the ILWU name, stepping forward. Don’t keep getting those leads. They’re worth their weight in gold—and so are you!

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The IEB has set up a strike support fund for Local 26 members striking GS Roofing. The company has imposed layoffs and substandard conditions; since hiring new "security," it now looks like an armed camp. Right, in session are IRT Sec. Travis; Joe Barra, staffer Suzanne Doran, and IEB members Gordon Westrand, John Bukoskey and Joe Cortez. Above, GS strikes Frank Angon, Joe Infante, Phil Espinoza, Cesar Canizalez, Lou Krebs, Pete Magdaleno, Jimmy Sala, Joaquin de la Camera, and Joe Ferrell (pose with IRT President Brian McKillops, V.P. Mainland and Rich Austin and Local 26 President Luisa Gratz.

Organizing results set upbeat pace as board member's tackle packed agenda.

By SUZANNE DORAN

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By SUZANNE DORAN

SAN FRANCISCO—The initial results of the new ILWU Organizing Program lent an upbeat note to the International Executive Board meeting held August 17-18 in the union's headquaters. Adopted by majority vote of the ILWU rank and file, the new program—including the 2-4-24 organizing assessment—has generated "excitement and activity" up and down the West Coast, reported ILWU International Vice President-Hawaii Leonard Hosjiho.

A detailed organizing report, presented by Vice President-Mainland Rich Austin, demonstrated the point. Organizing is taking off all over the coast, he said, and the most successes are in locals that vigorously pursue— and get—organizing leads.

**BY THE BAY, IN THE VALLEY**

Northern California has been especially active. In the past few months, workers at the Humboldt Bay Harbor Recreation and Conservation District were organized into the ILWU family through the combined efforts of International Representative Abba Ramos, Local 14 President Mike Mullens and Steward Matt Wardynski. Union recognition and a collective bargaining agreement resulted.

Rank-and-file member Tony Miller played a leading role in the organizing drive at the Pacific Institute for Research. Local 6 succeeded in adding workers under new classifications to an existing contract with Smurfit Recycling Company. A drive at Selux was won as well.

New organizer Mireya Cazares, based in the Sacramento Valley, has been working with California Rural Legal Assistance (CRLA), visiting labor camps to meet possible organizing contacts.

And the IBU San Francisco Region gained new members in a successful drive for ferry boat snack bar operators employed by Chatzka's.

**SOUTH TO NORTH**

In Southern California, International Representative Mike Diller kept busy in organizing, recording petitions to represent workers at SOLA Optical in Carson and Golden West Refining in Santa Fe Springs.

The ILWU is also participating in the innovative Los Angeles Manufacturing Area Project (LAMAP), a coalition of nine international unions that have joined forces with the AFL-CIO to organize the Corridor. No one union has the resources to organize the Corridor, where industries employ 700,000 mostly low-paid, nonunion, immigrant workers. By sharing resources, the unions can target entire industries and, hopefully, bring the benefits of a union contract to the workers and their families.

International Representative Dick Waddoure and Organizer Emmett Wolde have been hard at work in the Northwest. A majority of workers have signed ILWU authorization cards at a strategically important company that stores frozen food and containers to be shipped over seas. Wolde has started a committee at a plant that has 600 to 700 workers, and he is checking out leads with workers at grain terminals in the Tri-cities, Washington area.

Member John Bukoskey reported that twelve park and recreation workers had joined the Dutch Harbor Unit of ILWU Local 200, Alaska. John Bush headed up the campaign and deserves credit for its success. Local 200 has also expanded longshore jurisdiction in remote areas, that is, a large measure to immigration law changes written and promoted by the ILWU.

**AT THE INTERNATIONAL**

The International Officers continue to manage packed schedules while covering the union's diverse needs.

As the National Organizing Committee continues its round of regional workshops to jump-start the new Organizing Program. Since April, Hosjiho and Secretary-Treasurer Terri Mast have conducted seminars in Concord, Ca., Seattle, Wa., and Portland, Or. As Hosjiho explained to the IEB, "These workshops are also planning seminars where we discuss what leads there are in the area and what steps to take next. Workshops are most effective if people can get plugged-in to action right away."

The Titled Officers have also filled the position of International Representative at the Hawaii field office. Vacated when Hosjiho was elected Vice President last year, the job will be in the very capable hands ofMerrienne "Casey" Sharpe. Starting this month, Sharpe comes to the ILWU with valuable experience garnered during her work with Teamsters.

President Brian McWilliams has haggled his regular duties with important functions overseas: an International Transport Workers Federation (ITF) conference in London; a tour of the Port of Rotterdam and a futuristic, completely-automated "ghost" terminal; and a trip to Japan that included the Pac-10 Workers Union. And in his report, Ibarra stressed that the "picture is improving" for union finances. Most departments came in under budget and the Titled Officers have agreed to another wage freeze. Ibarra has also concluded difficult C&H negotiations but has narrowly averted a Local 6 strike.

An update on the International's Education Program showed great progress. Oral histories continue in The Dispatcher; a past edition contained a full page of information about college labor studies programs, and this issue has a special, four-page pullout, "How the ILWU Works." Two major projects in-process are a professionally-produced 30-minute, multimedia video documentary about the ILWU, and a revised version of the "How to" book. ILWU Story—both targeted for completion by the 1997 International Convention. Also on the drawing board: a guide to AFL-CIO educational resources, and leadership training institutes.

**FLA CHALLENGES TIMES**

Board members' presentations revealed challenges facing the ILWU in every region.

Port privatization is an increasing threat—up and down the coast. From large ports, such as Los Angeles and Seattle, to the smaller portlets of Sacramento and Everett, unions are eyeing "down-sizing" and "outsourcing"—supervisors for getting rid of union workers and lowering the standard of living for many communities.

Gordie Westrand informed the board that the Canadian Area initiated a conference of transportation unions in response to attacks by the current "liberal" government.

IBU Secretary-Treasurer Terri Mast, sitting in for Dave Prebich, thanked McWilliams and Bukoskey for helping to resolve a dispute between Alaska ferry workers and the state govern-

ment. With no wage increases for seven years, the ferry workers reached their limit when the state denied a long-overdue and previously-negotiated pay raise—because the legislature failed to allocate the money. Luckily, an eleventh-hour meeting with McWilliams, Prebich and state officials prevented a strike, with the governor promising to work the funding through the legislature.

Local 142 President Bo Lapania reported on difficult hotel negotiations in Hawaii. The hotels have hired an anti-union law firm well-known to Local 142. Raibees are being held, and a very determined membership is mobilizing.

Tough times continue for sugar workers. Lapenia noted. Another sugar plantation is closing (McBryde on Kauai). And the Republican-dominated Congress seems unlikely to continue the U.S. Sugar Program. Confection and soft-drink companies (big-time GOP contributors) have been lobbying vigorously. Participants at a recent LPA rally in Hayward, Ca., represented 135 unions. In June 1996, the LPA will hold a conference in Cleveland, Ohio, to formally create a Labor Party.

The IEB also adopted seven State Policies—the most in recent memory.

- In a detailed statement, the Board addressed the history of and the ILWU's relationship to the Harry Bridges Institute.

- Local 24's tough hotel negotiations must have the ILWU's whole-hearted support, the Board said.

- The Board urged locals to beef-up protests against shipping companies, such as American President Lines and Sealand, that displace American seamen with foreign crews.

- And, in four statements, the Board called upon the AFL-CIO to institute various reforms and to help eliminate the "reciprocity exception" to U.S. immigration law.

In addition to the four Titled Officers, members of the ILWU International Executive Board are: Vicente Arista, Robert Barba, Johnna Bockwinkel, Eusebio "Bo" Lapenia, Nate Lum and Brian Tanaka (Hawaii); John Bukoskey (Alaska); Nick Buckles and Pat Vukich (Puget Sound); Norm Parks (Columbia River); Frank Billeci, Robert Moreno and Lawrence Thibeaux (Northern California); Joe Cortez, Luisa Gratz and John Tousseau (Southern California); Dave Prebich (Inlandboatmen's Union); and Gordie Westrand (Canadian Area).

Suzanne Doran is a staffer at ILWU International Headquarters, a Bay Area activist, and a freelance writer.
The International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union has approximately 42,000 members in over 60 local unions in the states of California, Washington, Oregon, Alaska and Hawaii. An additional 3,500 members belong to the Inlandboatmen's Union of the Pacific, which constitutes the Union's Marine Division. Another 14,000 members belong to the autonomous ILWU Canadian Area.

The organization of the ILWU began in 1934 when it was the Pacific Coast District of the International Longshoremen's Association (ILA), with headquarters in New York. The ILA was affiliated with the American Federation of Labor (AFL), which was identified with conservative politics and an approach to organizing narrowly focused on skilled craft workers.

The membership of the Pacific Coast District voted to disaffiliate from the ILA in the summer of 1937, and formed itself into the ILWU as an independent union. The new union soon affiliated with the militant Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO)—based primarily in the newer mass production industries like auto, steel and rubber—which sought to unionize all the workers in an industry, skilled and unskilled, into one union for maximum unity and strength. This approach was known as industrial unionism.
The International Union

The ILWU’s internal structure was put in place by delegates to the Union’s first International Convention in 1938, and later modified by the 1945 Constitution which became effective in July 1946.

The highest governing body of the Union is the International Convention, which, since 1945, meets every three years. The Convention is made up of delegates elected by rank and file in each local or affiliate.

The Convention has the authority to adopt resolutions and statements of policy on political, economic, and other issues, and to amend the International Constitution which, according to the preamble, serves to “guide our conduct and protect the rights and responsibilities of ILWU members, local unions, International Officers, affiliates, and decision making bodies such as the International Convention and Executive Board.

International Officers and members of the International Executive Board are nominated at the Convention and elected later in direct rank-and-file vote by secret ballot. At the present time there are four such officers (an International President, two Vice Presidents, and a Secretary-Treasurer) who run the day-to-day affairs of the Union and supervise the staff. The Titled Officers also make up the National Organizing Committee, which coordinates and administers funds and personnel used in organizing activities throughout the Union.

The International Executive Board, which meets at least three times a year, is the highest governing body of the Union between conventions. The Board has the authority to take all actions necessary to implement the provisions of the Constitution and the decisions of the Convention delegates, including any necessary adjustments in the budget.

The ILWU Continental Area

The “continental area” of the ILWU is made up of the Titled Officers, field staff, professional staff, and clerical workers. The International coordinates the many constituencies of the ILWU—divisions, regions, locals, and international/corporate groupings. In practice, the International centralizes and digests the knowledge and experience of the membership—primarily as expressed in delegated bodies such as caucuses, conventions, district councils and the International Executive Board—and brings that collective wisdom to bear on contract negotiations, political action, and the implementation of policy.

Since 1945, the principles underlying the role of the International have been service to the locals and strengthening unity between the many parts of the Union. The current concept of the role of the International derives from the post-World War II era when the ILWU came into its organizational maturity as an international union with a solid foundation in many industries beyond its base in longshore working. Between 1945 and 1949 the International Convention authorized reorganization of the International into a departmental structure to better serve the membership. Division of work into departments such as Administration, Publicity, Research and Education, and Organizing, allowed for effective use of the International’s resources and personnel and a more timely response to requests for assistance from the locals and the rank and file. In each department, staff and clerical workers are assigned to work under the direction of International Officers, duplication of effort is minimized, and it is easier to identify and fulfill organizational priorities.

The changes were accompanied by other innovations in 1945 to more effectively represent the needs and interests of the ILWU on a national and international level, such as the creation of the Washington Office in the nation’s capital. To more effectively represent the International Union in local areas, and to coordinate the implementation of ILWU policy and programs, particularly in the realm of organizing and political action, the Union also put in place a field staff of organizers and international representatives under the supervision of Regional Directors, all of whom work under the direction of the Titled Officers.

Areas of work since 1945, with only slight modification, have been: Publicity/ The Dispatcher 
Recreation/Health and Safety 
Political Action 
Administration 
Organizing/Field Services

Operating under constitutional limits on executive authority, the departments do not and cannot impose policy or programs on the locals. Local autonomy in this context means that the locals are responsible for requesting and making use of International services, and for implementing ILWU programs.

In relation to organizing, for example, the collective wisdom through the 1950s was that rank and file were the most effective organizers, and that the most successful organizing campaigns were those involving the mobilization of an entire local. In this framework, the development of staff services to supplement and complement the work of the Titled Officers was not to take the place of collective efforts by locals and the rank and file, but to make local activity more effective through efficient allocation of the International’s resources in response to local requests for assistance—and through coordination with other locals and regions autonomously within the Longshore Division. They are responsible for negotiating local agreements and working rules, and for making sure locals are good citizens of the ILWU, as guided by the contract. They administer the grievance procedure on a local level through the Local Labor Relations Committee. Together with the employers, the locals jointly administer the procedure whereby members are disqualified from the union hiring hall to their work assignments.

The Division is governed by the Longshore Caucus, which is a representative body of longshore workers, clerks and foremen elected by the membership. Each local has a number of votes determined by its size. The Longshore Caucus sets its own rules and procedures, and discusses questions of Longshore Division policy.

The executive body of the Longshore Division is called the coast Labor Relations Committee. It has four members: the ILWU International President and Vice President, who are elected by the entire membership of the union, and two additional members called “Coast Commissioners,” who are elected for three-year terms by members of the Longshore Division, one representing the coast area, the other representing Oregon and Washington.

The primary purpose of the Longshore Caucus is to meet before contract negotiations and develop a list of demands and improvements. The Caucus then elects from among its number a negotiating committee of rank-and-file longshore workers who remain in San Francisco during the course of negotiations. The negotiating committee also includes the International Officers and the Coast Commissioners.

If the negotiating committee reaches agreement with the employers’ committee, the contract must be presented to the Caucus which will debate it and vote on it. If the Caucus votes it up, it is sent out to the members for a ratification vote. If the Caucus votes it down, the call for a strike vote by the membership, in order for a contract to be approved, it must win a simple majority vote among the rank and file. However, if the membership of a
major local, a geographical unit of smaller locals, or the clerks locals, vote against the agreement then the Pacc Coast Contr.

Local unions are also members of the ILWU, who pay their share to the Longshore Division, with demands set by a special committee, conduct the financial affairs of the Longshore Division.

The Coast Pro Rata Committee pays the salary of the two Coast Committees members, the support staff, and all costs of the Longshore Division, including the Caucus, legal fees, negotiating contracts and conducting strikes. These activities are funded by members of the Longshore Division, who pay their share to their local. The payment is collected with the local's dues and sent to the Coast Committee at the International Headquarters in San Francisco. These locals negotiate their own contracts and have their own structures. In Northern California, members in warehouse, production, food processing, mining, health care and many other industries.

A similar regional structure has developed in Alaska, where several local unions and locals of local unions in 1983 consolidated into Local 300 for more effective representation and administration. The Marine Division of the ILWU began in 1981, when the previously independent inlandsteamboat's Union of the Pacific (IBU) affiliated with the ILWU, and is fully autonomous. The IBU represents members who work on towboats, barges and ferries along the Pacific Coast, including deep sea ports and inland waterways. The Marine Division also includes IBU Region 37, a group of seafood processing workers with jurisdiction in Alaska and the Puget Sound who originally came into the ILWU in the 1950s from the independent canneries and fishery workers unions.

The ILWU has two full-time officers (President and Secretary-Treasurer) as well as Regional Directors in Northern California, Southern California, Puget Sound, Columbia River, Alaska, and Hawaii, who conduct their local affairs based on the IBU's own constitutions and bylaws. The autonomous Canadian Area includes 3,500 longshore workers and over 14,000 workers in the retail/wholesale, grain, and inland transport industries. Members elect their own Area officers and have their own constitution. They maintain affiliation with the Canadian Labor Congress. All dues money raised in Canada remains in Canada.

Longshore in Hawaii, Alaska and Canada

Longshore workers in Hawaii ports are not officially part of the Longshore Division. They are members of Hawaii's Local 142 and negotiate their own contract in much the same manner as the Longshore Division, with demands set by a special caucus and a negotiating committee. In general, the Hawaii longshore contracts follow the pattern of the Pacific Coast Longshore Contract Document, with allowances for specific operations and local conditions.

Longshore in Hawaii ports are also members of the ILWU, and are part of the ILWU Canadian Area, which is entirely autonomous. The Canadian longshore contract roughly follows the West Coast contract, although it is subject to Canadian laws that contain elaborate provisions for government intervention in the bargaining process, and other aspects of a legal structure very different from the United States.

Local 142 is organized into five industrial divisions: longshore, sugar, pineapple, tourism and general trades. Members of each division elect delegates to caucus-type bodies, which select demands, elect negotiating committees, and have their own procedures for the ratification of contracts and the conduct of strikes.

Other Areas and Divisions of the Union

After the successful maritime strikes of the 1930s, the longshore union sought to spread its organization intact on the West Coast to protest itself against nonunion workers, and in accordance with the aggressive organizing efforts of that time. The first area organized included the waterfront warehouses. Organization gradually spread away from the docks in the ports of San Francisco/Gate-

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Pensioners' Groups and Women's Auxiliaries

Throughout the history of the ILWU the Union has recognized the important contributions made by members' families and retired workers. When the longshore workforce was entirely male, women family members rallied to support the early struggles through actions of Ladies Auxiliaries, which since 1947 have been chartered by the International Union as local branches of the Federated Auxiliaries. Membership was open to daughters, sisters, mothers and wives of ILWU members. The ILWU Auxiliaries built a lasting reputation for militant support of the union, and for numerous activities aimed at carrying out ILWU policies in the community and the legislative arena—including programs and policies developed at the Auxiliaries' own conventions and delegated bodies.

Unlike the Auxiliaries, which are chartered under the ILWU Constitution, the various pensioners' groups exist independent of the ILWU, but are knit together under the Pacific Coast Pensioners Association, which has been in existence since 1948. Today, each of the four major counties (Oahu, Maui and Kauai) has a Division Director to oversee the membership, with an executive board and procedures for the ratification of contracts and the conduct of strikes.

Rules governing the participation of pensioners in the life of the ILWU are generally set by the constitutions and bylaws of the local unions from which the members are retired, although persons are not allowed to vote in ILWU International elections or on the Pacific Coast Longshore Contract. Representatives of the Federated Auxiliaries and the PCPA are seated at the ILWU Convention as fraternal delegates, having voice but no vote on matters before the Convention.

District Councils & Political Activities

For purposes of political action, there are District Councils in each area of the ILWU's geographical jurisdiction consisting of elected representatives from each affiliated local. The District Councils endorse political candidates for state and local offices, and for the U.S. House of Representatives and Senate. In presidential election years, the presidential endorsement is usually made by the International Executive Board. The Councils also communicate with state and congressional legislators on matters of interest to the union, engage in "lobbying" activities on behalf of the ILWU's legislative program, and run voter registration and "get-out-the-vote" campaigns during election years.

To finance national political activities, the ILWU has a Political Action Fund. Under U.S. law, unions and companies are prohibited from making contributions to candidates for federal office, but may establish political action funds (PAFs) using voluntary contributions to make such donations. Each year, ILWU members are asked to authorize a $1.20 contribution from their regular August dues to the ILWU Political Action Fund, and may be asked for another $1.20 in March. These contributions are purely voluntary, and members may choose to donate more or less than $1.20—or nothing at all. There is no favoritism or reprisals for either making or failing to make such contributions.

ILWU Principles

The three principles that emerge from the ILWU's concept of "The International" are:

1) There must be equal measures of leadership from the Officers and initiative by the locals.
2) The International is that the thread that weaves together the many regions and constituencies of the ILWU into a unified and progressive force in the work of the locals and the ILWU.
3) There should be maximum local autonomy consistent with the need for coordinated policies, democratic procedures, and overall solidarity.
The Ten Guiding Principles of the ILWU

The ILWU began with a set of cardinal principles upon which it continues to operate. These were memorialized by the union's Tenth Biennial Convention held in San Francisco in 1953, its twentieth anniversary year. They are reproduced here for the benefit of all generations of ILWU members, who have and continue to be instrumental to the union's success.

I. A union is built on its members. The strength, understanding and unity of the membership can determine the union's course and its advancements. The members who work, who make up the union and pay dues can best determine their own destiny. If the facts are honestly presented to the members in the ranks, they will best judge what should be done and how it should be done. In brief, it is the membership of the union which is the best judge of its own welfare; not the officers, not the employers, not politicians and the fair weather friends of labor.

Above all, this approach is based on the conviction that given the truth and an opportunity to determine their own course of action, the rank and file in 99 cases out of 100 will take the right path in their own interests and in the interests of all the people.

II. Labor unity is at all times the key for a successful economic advancement. Anything that detracts from labor unity hurts all labor. Any group of workers which decides to put itself above other workers through craft unionism or through cozy deals at the expense of others will in the long run gain but little and inevitably will lose both its substance and its friends.

No matter how difficult the going, a union must fight in every possible way to advance the principles of labor unity.

III. Workers are indivisible. There can be no discrimination because of race, color, creed, national origin, religion or political belief. Any division among the workers can help no one but the employers. Discrimination of worker against worker is suicide. Discrimination is a weapon of the employer, not the employers of this country are part of a well-organized, carefully coordinated, effective fighting machine. They can be met only on equal terms, which requires industry-wide bargaining and the most extensive economic strength of organized labor.

IV. "To help any worker in distress" must be a daily guide in the life of every trade union and its individual members. Labor solidarity means just that. Unions have to accept the fact that the solidarity of labor stands above all else, including even the so-called sanctity of contract. We cannot adopt for ourselves the policies of union leaders who insist that because they have a contract, their members are compelled to perform work even behind a picket line.

Every picket line must be respected as though it were our own.

V. Any union, if it is to fulfill its appointed task, must put aside all internal differences and issues to combine for the common cause of advancing the welfare of the membership. No union can successfully fulfill its purpose in life if it allows itself to be distracted by any issue which causes division in its ranks and undermines the unity which all labor must have in the face of the employer.

VI. The days are long gone when a union can consider dealing with single employers. The powerful financial interests of the country are bound together in every conceivable type of united organization to promote their own welfare and to resist the demands of labor. Labor can no more win with the ancient weapons of taking on a single employer in industry any more than it can hope to win through the worn-out dream of withholding its skill until an employer sues for peace. The employers of this country are part of a well-organized, carefully coordinated, effective fighting machine. They can be met only on equal terms, which requires industry-wide bargaining and the most extensive economic strength of organized labor.

VII. Just as water flows to its lowest level, so do wages if the bulk of the workers are left unorganized. The day of craft unionism—the aristocracy of labor—was over when mass production methods were introduced. To organize the unorganized must be a cardinal principle of any union worth its salt; and to accomplish this is not merely in the interest of the unorganized, it is for the benefit of the organized as well.

VIII. The basic aspirations and desires of the workers throughout the world are the same. Workers are workers the world over. International solidarity, particularly to maritime workers, is essential to their protection and a guarantee of reserve economic power in times of strife.

IX. A new type of unionism is called for which does not confine its ambitions and demands only to wages. Conditions of work, security of employment and adequate provisions for the workers and their families in times of need are of equal, if not greater importance, than the hourly wage.

X. Jurisdictional warfare and jurisdictional raiding must be outlawed by labor itself. Nothing can do as much damage to the ranks of labor and to the principle of labor unity and solidarity as jurisdictional bickering and raiding among unions. Both the public support and strike victories are jeopardized by jurisdictional warfare.

This code for rank and file unionism is implemented by the membership's participation in organization, negotiations, strike machinery, contract enforcement and every other aspect of union life. There is absolute democracy in its affairs. It is run by the rank and file. Thus, its discipline springs out of participation, conviction and the right of the membership to decide its own course of action. The above principles and steps to implement them, and an informed and alert membership make the union what it is.

Preamble

Since the beginning of history mankind has strived individually and collectively for political, economic and cultural betterment, and has the greatest ability to make such advancement through democratic organization to achieve common aims.

Therefore, we who have the common objectives of democracy, the rights and standards of ourselves and our fellow workers everywhere in the world, to promote the general welfare of our nation and our communities to benefit racial and religious prejudice and discrimination, to strengthen democracy everywhere and achieve permanent peace in the world, do form ourselves into one indivisible union and adopt the following constitution to guide our conduct and protect our democracy within the union.

The ILWU Constitution: Article III, Objectives

The objectives of the organization are:

First, to unite in one organization, regardless of religion, race, creed, color, sex, political affiliation or nationality, all workers within the jurisdiction of this International;

Second, to maintain and improve the wages, hours and working conditions for all of its members without discrimination;

Third, to educate the membership of this organization in the history of the American labor movement and in present day labor problems and tactics;

Fourth, to secure legislation in the interest of labor and to oppose anti-labor legislation.
Harry Bridges Institute for Organizing and Education (HBI)

The Harry Bridges Institute was incorporated as a non-profit organization in September, 1993 by then-ILWU International Secretary-Treasurer David Arian. As stated in an introductory brochure, the HBI was established because:

"The ILWU and other unions in the maritime industry and beyond have supported the HBI because they see the pressing need for educational programs and materials within the ILWU and for the preservation of its past, its policies, and its leaders."—Harry Bridges, 1962, "Chairman's Address"

The following Statements of Policy were adopted in San Francisco, August 17-18, 1995:

We also hope that HBI fund-raising activities do not use the name of the ILWU in such a way as to create the impression that the HBI is carrying out ILWU programs, or is somehow representing the ILWU in the areas of organizing and education.

We do not wish to stand in the way of individuals who feel they have an obligation to support the HBI. But we will not cede the International’s responsibilities for education within the ILWU—and for the preservation of its past, its policies, programs and institutional purposes—to a separate organization, however well-intentioned it may be.

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U.S. Merchant Marine

The International Executive Board reaffirms our position in support of the U.S. Merchant Marine and opposition to the reflagging of American vessels. We strongly urge all local officers and members to contact American President and Secretary Treasurer to protest their hostility and antagonism toward American seafarers. Further, we support a Longshore Division program of resistance in solidarity with our brothers and sisters offshore.

Local 142 Hotel Negotiations

WHEREAS: The International Executive Board reaffirms our position in support of the U.S. Merchant Marine and opposition to the reflagging of American vessels. We strongly urge all local officers and members to contact American President and Secretary Treasurer to protest their hostility and antagonism toward American seafarers. Further, we support a Longshore Division program of resistance in solidarity with our brothers and sisters offshore.

WHEREAS: Local 142 hotel workers are working without a collective bargaining agreement and are seeking to negotiate one; and
WHEREAS: The hotel operators are refusing to honor the union security clause in a calculated attempt to weaken and destroy the ILWU; and
WHEREAS: The hotel operators are employing a hard-nosed approach on virtually all issues that have been raised across the bargaining table, employing delaying and stalling tactics; THEREFORE BE IT
RESOLVED: That the National Executive Board reaffirms the position taken at the 1994 International Convention in support of ILWU tourism workers; AND BE IT FINALLY
RESOLVED: That the entire membership of the ILWU will be informed of the current state of negotiations and asked to express their support of Local 142 hotel workers.

The ILWU calls upon the AFL-CIO Executive Council to immediately adopt a policy of allowing all international union presidents of its member unions, or designees of such international unions, to attend all future meetings of the AFL-CIO Executive Council, and THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER
RESOLVED: That International Presidents of affiliates (or their designees as noted above), assistants to the AFL-CIO President and Secretary-Treasurer, and department heads of the AFL-CIO be permitted to attend future Executive Council meetings.

Geographical Diversity on the AFL-CIO Executive Council

WHEREAS: The AFL-CIO Vice Presidents, who along with the President and Secretary-Treasurer comprise the Executive Council, are all from unions east of the Mississippi River and the vast majority from within the Beltway around Washington, DC, and
WHEREAS: All the International unions west of the Mississippi, including the ILWU, are not represented on the AFL-CIO Executive Council, and
WHEREAS: The AFL-CIO Convention is hereby authorized to submit an amendment to the Constitution to provide for a Vice President whose International Union headquarters are west of the Mississippi River.

The ILWU resolutions to the AFL-CIO Convention

WHEREAS: Resolutions, Statements of Policy, Memorials and similar testimonials that are to be considered at an AFL-CIO Convention must be submitted at least 30 days in advance of the Convention; and
WHEREAS: The International Executive Board of the ILWU will not be meeting again prior to the AFL-CIO Convention; and THEREFORE BE IT
RESOLVED: That the ILWU Executive Board delegates to the AFL-CIO Convention are hereby authorized to submit resolutions to the AFL-CIO Convention on any matter for which there is Convention or International Executive Board policy.

AFL-CIO Executive Council

WHEREAS: In order to promote greater unity within the American labor movement and particularly the AFL-CIO; and
WHEREAS: Meetings of the AFL-CIO Executive Council are attended by many of the policies that are determined that influence the direction and future of the American labor movement; and
WHEREAS: Issues that are discussed and policies that are adopted at these meetings dramatically affect the AFL-CIO membership and those who are not represented on the Executive Council; THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: That the International Longshoremen’s and Warehousemen’s Union Executive Board calls upon the AFL-CIO Executive Council to immediately adopt a policy of allowing all international union presidents of its member unions, or designees of such international unions, to attend all future meetings of the AFL-CIO Executive Council, and THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER
RESOLVED: That International Presidents of affiliates (or their designees as noted above), assistants to the AFL-CIO President and Secretary-Treasurer, and department heads of the AFL-CIO be permitted to attend future Executive Council meetings.

Reciprocity

WHEREAS: The AFL-CIO should work toward implementing reciprocal arrangements with other unions; and
WHEREAS: ILO Convention 137 sets forth clear jurisdiction between international seamen and deckworkers; and
WHEREAS: The AFL-CIO has repeatedly stated that "exceptionality," foreign crews to perform longshore work in the U.S. and its territorial waters, THEREFORE BE IT
RESOLVED: That the AFL-CIO will actively work toward the elimination of the "exceptionality" exception in U.S. law.
Sixty years ago hundreds of Canadian longshoremen struck their employers in a better way of life on the waterfront. They lost that battle, as they had a similar struggle in 1933 and suffered a decade of company unionism before joining the ILWU in 1944. The move to join the ILWU basically arose out of a fight for a share of the work on the West Coast. By March 1944 the Vancouver longshoremen were initially anxious to get into the ILWU because there were a bunch of longshoremen there and I figured I'd get a drink! After the meeting they got to congregating and they said when I come home from overseas there was a job for nobody in my family returned to the waterfront until after he died of cancer later that same year. My uncle George never returned to the waterfront. My father, who started longshoring after the war in 1947, had been a young man in 1935.

A lot of the things I heard from my family are not necessarily things that history would contain in its articles. I heard of the kinds of problems a regular striking family had: things like how do you feed the family? My father tells the story of how he'd go down to the sugar shop in 30. In those days, liver was not something the butcher sold, he gave it away. Usually he gave it to a person with a dog for food. It seems that that's the way my father and his brothers and sisters acquired a taste for liver.

Those are the kinds of stories I heard. This goes into my philosophy about the ILWU and what the whole movement is about. What is important is the individual, the 'soldier' out there who turns around and puts himself and his family in a position where he has to deal with the police and the employers. The thing I'm so proud of with my family is that my grandfather and his two sons, it was in theory in Canada when it was unheard of to have a job, never mind to be striking against that job, made the kind of commitment they made, saying this is wrong and we are not going to stand for it. That's something to be proud of.

CRAG H. PRITCHETT

The move to join the ILWU basically arose out of a fight for a share of the work on the West Coast.

JUNE 18, 1935: Police amass at Ballentyne Pier, left, before attacking union longshoremen (right) marching to protest hiring of scabs.
How ILWU Survived Hawaii’s ‘Red Scare’

The Specter of Communism in Hawaii (Honolulu, University of Hawai‘i Press, 1994, 257 pages) by T. Michael Holmes

Reviewed by AH QUON McELRATH

Reviewing a book on part of the history of Hawaii’s political economy— to which the ILWU made a significant contribution— presents some difficulties when one has known many of the individuals mentioned and has lived through the events with which the book is concerned.

These individuals, some of them dead and others well advanced in years, lived and worked in those fascinating times from the mid-1930s up to 1944, the time of the so-called Democratic revolution, when the book ends, and beyond that year. They were accused of Communist Party membership supposedly to subvert democracy, to take over Hawaii, and to advance a foreign ideology, even though their basic desire was the building of one big industrial, interracial union.

FIGHTING FOR JUSTICE

All the individuals I knew believed that the benefits of the Wagner Act (National Labor Relations Act) should extend not only to workers on the mainland United States but also to workers in Hawaii. All these individuals shared the belief that a socialist economy would provide the equity and justice not possible under capitalism.

Hawaii takes the reader through the various battles of the ILWU: the organization of sugar workers, the backbone of the territory’s economy completely dominated by the Big Five (Alexander & Baldwin, American Factors, C. Brewer, Castle & Cooke, Theo H. Davies); the 1946 sugar strike; the union’s development of political action and its tie-in with the building of the Communist Party; the 1947 dismissal of public school teachers, John and Aiko Reinecke, supporters of the ILWU; the 1949 longshore strike; the 1949 House Un-American Activities Committee hearings and Harry Bridges’ defiance of the Korean War; the 1963 arrest and indictment of seven individuals, including Jack Hall, ILWU Regional Director, for violation of the Smith Act (Alien Registration Act of 1940), section 2, which prohibited the advocacy or teaching of overthrowing the government by force and violence, and organizing and helping to organize the Communist Party of the USA.

NOTORIOUS INTERVIEWS

Our government’s actions against individuals and the ILWU were a reflection not only of the Red Scare on the mainland and the Cold War on a world scale but also of fear of what a successful ILWU would cost economically and politically. They were also a reflection of the fact that the ILWU, having been frozen out of sugar, was the only organized union on O‘ahu.

ILWU LEGACY

The events covered in the book caused much personal anguish and the loss of employment for some, but did not result in the demise of the ILWU, which continued to dominate the labor movement.

Incidentally, John A. Burns, the late governor of Hawaii, who played a large role in activating ILWU anti-Communist in the early 50s, declared in the 1959 ILWU convention in Seattle, Washington, that the union was responsible for bringing economic, political, and social democracy to Hawaii.

Holmes’ thin volume for interesting reading and provides many details of events that could have delayed the development of a strong labor movement in Hawaii.

Ah Quon McElrath is a longtime activist and retired ILWU social worker from Local 142, Hawaii, and the widow of the late Robert McElrath, who served as Hawaii Regional Director for many years.
ILWU lobbied extensively during their three-day conference. Left, Representatives Patsy Mink (HI) and Dale Kiley (MI) with Clarence Thomas, Local 10. Right, Coast Committeeman Glen Ramiskey, MIRAID Pres. Jim Patti, House Minority Whip David Bonior, Brian Davidson (wall) and Lindsay McLaughlin of the ILWU Wash. DC office, and Local 40's Don Holzman and Martha Hendrix.

ILWU Goes to Washington

By LINDSAY McLAUGHLIN
ILWU Legislative Representative

It could have been any tavern in any working-class neighborhood: beer on tap flowed endlessly; cigarette smoke fogged images of baseball on the big screen; voices boomed above the din, competing to be heard; and the primary topic of conversation was “those godawful SOBs”—bosses, politicians, take your pick.

But this was no ordinary tavern, no ordinary night on the town. This was the Tiber Creek Pub across from the United States Capitol, where, after days of lobbying, ILWU members met to compare notes, share experiences and vent. Their conclusion was unanimous: the Republican Congress is hell-bent on destroying every vestige of justice in America.

UNITED TO FIGHT THE RIGHT
They spoke with their convictions and their hearts.

Lawrence Thibaux (Local 10, San Francisco) brought delegates to their feet—and grabbed the attention of Vice President Al Gore’s young staffers across the room—with an impassioned appeal to union workers and retirees in the fight against well-organized, right-wing extremists.

Local 142 President Be Lapenia commended the delegates’ efforts to protect the jobs of workers in Hawaii’s sugarcane industry.

Coast Committee Member Glen Ramiskey, standing on behalf of International President Brian McWilliams, drew compliments for his inspiring speech on political action at the ILWU Congressional Reception held hours before.

And ILWU Washington Office legislative assistant Brian Davidson earned everyone’s admiration for getting and keeping them all organized.

CHAMPIONS TOASTED, ENEMIES GRUNTED
Arriving in Washington, DC, July 24, these twenty-one ILWU members had a near-impossible task: to meet with over 50 House Representatives and Senators in just three days. They would target budget priorities, including the Labor/HHS/Education Appropriations being considered by the House, federal labor protections, labor law reform, and the U.S. Sugar Program. Intensive education and message-refining sessions took place before they hit the halls of Congress.

Not exactly a pleasure trip.

The responsibility was awesome for some delegates who had never lobbied before; but everyone pulled together and worked in teams. “We developed into an ambitious, dedicated unit,” remarked Ron Hanson (Local 8, Portland). “We could feel the camaraderie and support for one another to be the most persuasive and effective we could be.”

The delegation was a virtual counter-punch to the Capitol’s virtual reality. Let conservatives claim that it is “their time in history,” that it is their agenda with “the mandate.” ILWU members aren’t buying the hard sell; hopefully, they’re not that much different from everyone else. They see no benefit from slashing government and gutting worker protections, no “trickle-down” from more tax breaks for the rich, more misery for the poor and working-class.

TAX AND REND
Elimination of the 40-hour workweek is a top GOP priority. If it passes, workers can kiss their overtime pay goodbye. Massive Medicare cuts would cost workers a “hidden tax” of $1000 in higher premiums and co-payments. And, as Roger Tacdol (Local 142, Hawaii) pointed out, “axing the earned income credit would mean a tax hike for workers earning under $27,000 a year.” All reasons enough for concerted ILWU political action.

Although delegates were clearly struck by the Republicans’ anti-worker vendetta, Don Holzman (Local 40, Portland) and Sandy Strike (Local 12, Coos Bay) surprised everyone with their comments about Rep. Jim Bunn (R-Ore). The freshman Congressman, Holzman said, would be willing to “listen to our arguments.” Strike reported that, after meeting with ILWU delegates, Bunn promised to give “serious consideration” to ILWU-backed legislation he had been inclined to oppose. Bunn admitted that, until he met with the ILWU, he had gotten just one, very limited viewpoint.

“Congressional representatives must see that we are not complacent,” Strike emphasized. “They must understand that we care enough to come to them with our concerns and ideas.”

THEM DEMS
Democrats, for the most part, were receptive to the ILWU message. Coast Committee Benefits Specialist Jim Santana said he was “impressed” by the number of Senators and Representatives that met with his group, particularly Rep. Ron Dellums (D-Calif.) who urged support for his bill, H.R. 1090, the “Living-Wage, Jobs-For-All Act.”

Rep. Jane Harman (D-Calif.) was a glaring exception. Running to the right and crossing over to the right for the sake of his “mandate.” ILWU members aren’t buying the hard sell; hopefully, they’re not that much different from everyone else.

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And, as Roger Tacdol (Local 142, Southern California) struck by the Republicans’ anti-worker vendetta, Don Holzman (Local 40, Portland) and Sandy Strike (Local 12, Coos Bay) surprised everyone with their comments about Rep. Jim Bunn (R-OR). The freshman Congressman, Holzman said, would be willing to “listen to our arguments.” Strike reported that, after meeting with ILWU delegates, Bunn promised to give “serious consideration” to ILWU-backed legislation he had been inclined to oppose. Bunn admitted that, until he met with the ILWU, he had gotten just one, very limited viewpoint.

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NAFTA-THOUGHT
Some Dems may have already learned that lesson. According to Clarence Thomas (Local 30), many now regret backing NAFTA (and, consequently, betraying their longtime supporters in the labor movement.) It remains to be seen, however, whether such remorse will culminate in an act of contrition; pending legislation to repeal NAFTA needs co-sponsors and a huge political push.

Democrats courting labor will also have to put backbone and muscle into defeating GOP bills repealing the Davis-Bacon Act, the Service Contract Act, several labor laws, and certain provisions in collective bargaining agreements with government workers.

SIZING UP THE SYSTEM
As it’s always to us to keep up the pressure. That and means knowing “the system” as well as the issues. Two cases in point: Sherman Will (Local 47, Olympia), having concluded his carefully-crafted presentation, had just stopped out the door when he overheard the Congressman ask an aide, “So, where do we stand on this one?” The aide told him how to vote.

• Bobby Giraldi (Local 142) was thoroughly frustrated by the many legislators who thought the US sugar program involved a government subsidy. He had to clarify repeatedly that it operates at no cost to taxpayers.

When the conference, the ILWU delegation to DC was decidedly forceful; many have committed to following through on the home front.

Will Young (Local 13) said he is intent on registering new voters and organizing around political issues.

Debbie Creswell (Local 63, Wilmington) underscored the importance of being "involved with a grassroots movement."

And everyone agreed that political activism within the ILWU is imperative—our first, best and perhaps only chance to fend off the assault from the right.

Many thanks to the delegates attending the conference!

FUGGET SOUND
Maynard Brent, Michael Forbes, Sherman Will & Guy Williams.

COLUMBIA RIVER
Ron Hanson, Martha Hendricks, Don Holzman & Randy Strike.

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA
Danny Caruso, Jim Santana, Levan Sherman, Thibaux & Clarence Thomas.

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
Debbie Creswell, Jess Herron, Keven Schroeder & William Young.