You've seen the headlines: Wages down, layoffs continue, health care in crisis, Social Security and Medicare threatened. But you don't need a newspaper to tell you this. You feel your pain.

Question is, does anybody else?

Not corporations and rich folks. Profits have escalated into the ozone, and the rich are getting richer. Today the United States has the biggest "income gap" of all the industrialized countries in the world.

Not the Republican-controlled Congress. They're too busy pushing tax breaks for the wealthy while gutting worker protections, shredding the social safety net, and blaming all our problems on the least powerful among us: senior citizens, immigrants and the poor.

What to do? Fight back!

As labor legend Samuel Gompers said long ago: "Punish your enemies and reward your friends." The ILWU Political Action Fund does just that. It helps the ILWU help pro-worker candidates who promise to help you. It helps throw the rascals out!

Election '96 is just around the corner. Your donations are needed now. Send a check or money order to ILWU, 1188 Franklin Street, 4th Floor, San Francisco, CA 94109. Be sure to note on the bottom "PAF."

Don't delay. Send your contribution today to the...
MEDINPATCHER
or possible interviews for use in the video.
production of a 30-minute video about the

SAN FRANCISCO—The Pacific Maritime
Center, a multi-hospital, educational and

Coday as president of the organization,

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA:

Doug Getchell; Mark Drieth, alternate.

San Diego:

Tony DePaul; Bob Lindsey, alternate.

Bob McElrath; Wally Robbins, alternate.

Larry Wang; Bob Guillory, alternate.

LA: Joe Coli, Observer.

Gene Vrana at the International, phone

 Questions about the project should be
directed to either Brooks, ILWU

Vice President

FRANCISCO:

Ramiskey and Ole Olson.

Los ANGELES:

Jim Spinosa; D. Miller, alternate.

The employers’ side has its share of seasoned negotiators, along
with some newcomers: Bill Coday, President of the Pacific
Maritime Association (PMA) since 1981, will retire after negotia-
tions. His personal responsibility will be longshore negotiations with the
ILWU, and once that’s completed, he will prepare himself for the

NEWSPRINT
Protocol for Bargaining

By BRIAN McWILLIAMS
ILWU International President

Once again we stand on the threshold of longshore negotiations. What we accomplish in the next few months will be the foundation for the conditions of work and standard of living for ourselves and our families well into the 21st century. It’s an awesome responsibility, but, fortunately, we’re building on solid ground.

BEDROCK OF THE ILWU

For decades, the ILWU Division has been perhaps the most successful organization of workers anywhere in securing and protecting the rights and needs of its members.

These successes can be traced directly to the democratic process of rank-and-file decision-making that is the bedrock of the ILWU, and to the active support of Hawaii and warehouse and other non-longshore

San Francisco:

John Espinoza, ITF; Bob McElrath, alternate.

Washington:

Doug Getchell; Mark Drieth, alternate.

Northern California:

Bill Watkins; Lawrence Thibodeau, alternate.

Oregon -Columbia River Locals 4, 8, 40 and 92. For Longview Local 21, the choice is between the QualMed Oregon

For Los Angeles locals, dental choice is between the Delta Dental Plan and the Sakai, Simms, Simon and Sugiya-plan. For Portland/Vancouver locals, dental choice is between Blue Cross of Oregon Dentacare, Oregon Kaiser

The preliminaries are out of the way. Officers and the Coast Com-
mittee, supported by the recently concluded Longshore Caucus, have set our agenda for bargaining: increase the runs through addi-
tional longshore territory, achieve full maintenance of benefits, and expand and protect all areas of longshore jurisdiction.

These are major issues, with implications and ramifications no one can fully predict. As chair of the negotiating committee, I will
include veterans of Coast negotiations like International Vice President Rich Austin and Coast Committeeman Glen Ransiskey, as well as Coast Committeeman Richard Olson, who has experience in previous Coast safety negotiations.

The employers’ side will be represented by 15 negotiators, all

San Francisco:

Bill Coday, President of the Pacific Maritime Association (PMA) since 1981, will retire after negotiations. Along with John

Lee Braach; Scott Mason, alternate.

New president for PMA

San Francisco—The Pacific Maritime Association (PMA) has announced that Joseph W. Coday will succeed Senior Vice President John Espinoza as president of the organization, effective May 6. Mike Minato is presently vice president, human resources and administration, of New York University Medical Center, a multi-hospital, educational and research facility with 11,000 workers and $1 billion in revenue.

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ILWU video project

In keeping with the mandate of the 1994 International Convention, the ILWU International Officers have begun production of a 30-minute video about the ILWU for new and prospective members.

Filmmaker Maria Brooks is working to complete and direct the project, in cooperation with ILWU International staff, under the Officers’ supervision.

Brooks is currently in the research phase of the project and may be contacting ILWU locals and ILWU regions soon for help in locating film footage, still photographs, or possible interviews for use in the video.

Questions about the project should be directed to either Brooks, ILWU International Secretary-Treasurer Joe Irarra, or Associate Education Director Gene Vranas at the International, phone (415) 775-0503 or fax (415) 775-1302.

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ILWU passes on early endorsement for Clinton

International Secretary-Treasurer sent the following notice to all ILWU affiliates last week:

"Monday, March 25, the AFL-CIO held a one-day, special convention to approve a more aggressive political education program and to consider an early endorsement of President Clinton's bid for reelection. I had the privilege of representing the ILWU at that meeting, and, pursuant to prior discussion and agreement among all the Titled Officers, I voted 'no' on the endorsement.

"There are several compelling reasons why the Titled Officers are not willing to endorse President Clinton at this time.

"First and foremost, presidential endorsement is the privilege of the ILWU International Executive Board, which has not yet considered the matter. The IEB is scheduled to meet April 11-12 and may consider it then.

"Further, we have serious questions about whether the President deserves an unprecedented early endorsement from organized labor. At best, he has a mixed record on many issues of importance to working people—the direct result of internal conflicts between the allied advisors of the more populist, progressive Labor Secretary Robert Reich and the conservative economic advisors led by Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin.

"It's clear which point of view predominated. Early in his Administration, the President deployed the so-called 'Wall Street Strategy,' and fashioned his economic policy around bolstering the stock market. (Investigative reporter Bob Woodward's investigative reporter, Bob Woodward's book, The Agenda, documents this strategy and describes an incident in which Clinton refers to himself as an 'Eisenhower Republican.')

"But, just as it was with the 'trickle-down' economics of the Reagan/Bush era, there is a vast divide between what's good for business and what's good for workers. The bizarre spectacle we recently witnessed of the market plunging with news of a lower-than-expected unemployment rate is testimony enough, as is the ever-widening income gap between the rich and everyone else.

"NAFTA, GATT, HEALTH CARE

"Using this same 'strategy,' President Clinton pulled out the stops to push NAFTA and GATT over the strenuous objections of the entire labor movement. He wasn't anywhere near that aggressive in promoting labor-backed legislation to ban permanent replacement of strikers. And he still hasn't backed comprehensive labor-law reform to close loopholes that let union-busting consultants violate workers' rights to organize, join and support unions.

"Equally disappointing is President Clinton's retrenchment on health care. We applauded his efforts to introduce a comprehensive national plan, but the fact is the plan fell short. It was compromised from the beginning to be more palatable to the insurance industry. Even then, the industry aligned against him—along with Republicans and large sectors of health-care providers. The President dropped the plan altogether after he became a political hot potato.

"This is not to say that President Clinton has done nothing for workers. He has taken the right stand for us on several issues, most notably: signing the Family & Medical Leave Act, vetoing the GOP's anti-labor budgets, supporting affirmative action, defending OSHA as well as prevailing-wage laws, and opposing the Team Act and other legislation stripping power from working people.

"CHECKING PRIORITIES

"We commended President Clinton for what he has accomplished, but we believe it isn't enough to warrant an unprecedented early endorsement— even if we could jump the gun on the IEB, which we can't. We are well aware that his chief rival, Republican Senator Bob Dole, is a completely unacceptable alternative, an anti-labor, reactionary, die-in-the-wool Party man. And Pat Buchanan, for all his hunches of running independently, for all his born-again workman hype, has never and will never factor in to our equation for obvious reasons.

"Nevertheless, neither the President nor the Democratic Party should take our support as a given."

JOE IBARRA
International Secretary-Treasurer

ILWU protests gov't interference with American delegation to Cuba

Last month, ILWU International President Brian McWilliams sent the following fax to President Bill Clinton and Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin:

"The ILWU protests in the strongest terms possible the recent act of interference in the destination of our government's seizure of 400 medical computers and other medical equipment sent from concerned citizens in the United States to the people of Cuba.

"GRAVE INJUSTICE

"As such,interfering with efforts for peace and the pursuit of justice—a coalition of religious, labor and civic activists—are in their 28th day without food as a demonstration against the seizure, as well as the policies that brought it about. While we are naturally concerned about their well-being, we wholeheartedly support their efforts and extend shoulder-to-shoulder with them to draw public attention to this grave injustice.

"The ILWU has long opposed the U.S. embargo of Cuba, and we believe that the Administration's support of the Helms-Burton Amendment—and concomitant capitulation to right wing fanatics—has escalated hostilities into the danger zone.

"We cannot and do not accept the illusion that the U.S. can capture the hearts and minds of the Cuban people by punishing them in the name of democracy.

"PEACE URGED

"Therefore, the ILWU joins millions of people in the U.S., Canada and throughout the world who are opposed to the U.S. policy toward Cuba, in insisting that the Administration engage in meaningful dialogue with Fasters for Life and other such organizations to obtain a perspective that is sorely lacking, and to ultimately table whatever steps are necessary to end the embargo and bring peace between the United States and Cuba.

"In the meantime, the Administration must immediately stop interfering with outreach efforts by American citizens who want to help the people of Cuba and permit the aforementioned shipment to proceed to its destination.

ILWU backs May Day solidarity demonstration

The ILWU International is a sponsor of the May Day Action in Solidarity with Latin American Workers. On May 1 in San Francisco, unionists and other social-justice forces distribute union-made work clothes, boots and gloves to day laborers as a gesture of solidarity and goodwill. This demonstration of solidarity is designed to shed light on the plight of Latino-day laborers—one of the most exploited sectors of California's working population.

Another demonstration is set for May 11. A march will start at noon from the corner of Mission and Cesar Chavez streets and end with a ' Rally to Defend Immigrants' at Mission and 16th streets at 1:30 PM. For more information, call AYUDA—Arcos Unidos para la Dignidad Latino (Action and Unity for the Homeless Latino)—at (415) 861-7419.

ILWU Quote of the Month

"We have plenty of common ground to explore, or get lost in, or fly over—depending on the issue at hand, and that can change faster than an Indy 500 pit crew replacing a tire.

"Just look at what's going on in our industry: re-flagging of American ships and [we've] also looked at elimination of the Passenger Services Act, the CAB, and the Federal Maritime Commission.

"Well, to paraphrase the Clinton camp, 'It's a waste of time, stupid—and the one in control now is about as stable as a nuke factory in an earthquake.'

"Coast Committeeman Glen Ramiskey
at the International Trade Union Congress in Long Beach, April 16"
n his office at ILWU International Headquarters in San Francisco, International Vice President Austin looks up from the piles of papers on his desk and agrees to spare The Dispatcher a few minutes to talk about his days "on the front." A 30-year longshore veteran, he has worked just about every kind of dock job in ports large and small. "I remember the docks of the '60s. I remember terms like 'hand-stowed cargo, long gangs, Frigo rigging, hatches, kite, ebb,' " Austin says. "These are all part of past, replaced by 'hammerheads, UTRs, bombcarts, hatchboards, and preventers.' Those are—all part of past now, replaced by 'hammerheads, UTRs, bombcarts, electronic data input and lasers'—the nomenclature of modern shipping terminals."

Austin waxes philosophical. "Thirty years from now, what we'll be talking about, no one knows. But the lingo of longshoring will likely be as different from today as today is from 30 years ago."

What is it about life on the waterfront that conjures up so much nostalgia? When a longshoreman reflects on the past, events somehow seem larger than life. "Some of us say the waterfront ain't what it used to be," says Austin, "but come to think of it, it never was."

Long before there was an ILWU, men along the shore labored under extremely arduous conditions. Jobs were unsafe, the hours were long, wages were inadequate, and medical and pension benefits were unheard of. Discrimination and favoritism ruled the docks; workers had little say in working conditions. They stuck with it: Jobs were in short supply, survival the name of the game.

CHANGES, THE HARD WAY
But waterfront workers were neither content nor cowed, and they certainly weren't stupid. They knew their sweat was the grease that turned the wheels of profit. They knew they were getting their fair share of the rewards of their own labor. They met. They talked. And they decided to do something about it. They formed a union—a real union and elected Harry Bridges to lead them.

Change doesn't come easily, especially when one side is faced with relinquishing a measure of control. The 1934 Maritime Strike was no exception. To this day, on the 5th of July each year, longshore workers up and down the West Coast stop work to commemorate the ILWU pioneers who died in bloody clashes perpetrated by ship owners, aided and abetted by politicians, police, hired goons and water tankers. It brought overtime rules and safety measures (AAPA) reveal that U.S. public ports have invested $4.7 billion before 1999.

"MONEY IN WHO'S BANK?"
The Port of San Francisco, for example, draws $522.9 billion in personal income, $1,677.2 billion in business sales, $780 billion of the nation's gross domestic product (GDP), and $299 million in taxes. AAPA also says expansion and development are on the rise. Since World War II, U.S. public ports have invested $4.7 billion in facilities and equipment, and the U.S. Department of Transportation estimates that an additional $4.7 billion will be invested before 1999.

DOCK O' THE BAY
There are several examples all along the coast, but the Port of San Francisco is the most fascinating. Once the crown jewel of international trade on the west coast, dock after dock is idle today. An occasional passenger ship is docked from Hawaii, but few dock jobs are involved. Employment jumps in summer months as tourists descend on the city and students hire on to low-wage, temporary, part-time, no-benefit jobs. The waterfront looks more like a ghost port, Austin explains, "so, not only are fewer people working, they are working in jobs that contribute far less to the tax base and the local economy."
The flip side of the privatization coin is even more troubling: the leasing of port properties to cut-rate, non-union tenants that vie for the same business as ILWU employers. Rich Austin has a lot to say about that.

"This is the Johnny-Come-Lately crooks whojsized their way into ports through the sweat of our labor, after decades of growing prosperity for employers, ports, workers and communities, these outfits come in from nowhere to capitalize on that success and ultimately undermine the people responsible for it."

THE PRIVATERS
Where ports historically operated as facilitators for the movement of cargo, the trend of late is to serve as landlords. Where ports invested in facilities to get their share of the lucrative ship-discharged vessels there: the lure of revenue is addictive; to hell with the union.

The Port of Tacoma and Tyson launched a massive public relations campaign, obscuring Tyson's abysmal record with the promise of good jobs. But what the public didn't know was that Tyson would impose the kind of substandard wages and working conditions they got away with in the anti-union, "right-to-work-for-less" environment of the deep South.

"Tyson's median wage is $312 a week--little more than $1,000 a month—with lousy benefits," stresses Austin. "So what the Port of Tacoma has done is open the door for Tyson to come in, undermine the workers and companies that built this port, and threaten the community's wage and benefits standards."

Austin also points to similar situations at Sunmar Shipping in Seattle; the USS-Posco Steel dock in Pittsburgh, California; Eureka's private piers in northernmost California; and, most recently, the LAXT coal facility under construction at Port of Los Angeles. And, that, he says is just the tip of the iceberg.

"Every time we turn around we run into another fly-by-night, nonunion, anti-union, low-wage outfit trying to bring us down, trying to drive our contract employers out of business, trying to drive the standard of living into the ground."

ILWU-COMMUNITY ALLIANCE
Many communities have openly opposed the privatization, fighting to ensure that public ports stay public. ILWU members are doing their part, serving as overseas delegates, studying new developments in port operations, working with port commissions to attract business, and, Austin adds, contributing their expertise.

TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS
"Because of the ILWU's unique and strategic position in the Pacific Rim, and the broad scope of our contracts in Hawaii, Alaska, Canada and the west coast, we understand in detail every facet of every component of international trade—from the point of manufacture to the point of distribution; from offshore ports to vessels to terminals; to intermodalism, to container freight stations, to electronically transmitted information.

"In short, we've made it our business to understand the business. We know what a tremendously positive impact it has, and we know what has to be done to keep it."

"We also know that when problems arise—and they always do—we can resolve them by meeting on common ground and in mutual respect. Failing that, we won't hesitate to deploy other means at our disposal to protect our members, their families and the communities where they live and work."

Next month watch for Part Two, "Thicker Than Water" in Dispatchers near you!

...And Now

MONEY, MONEY, MONEY, MONEY!
Workers didn't have it way back when.

Bosses had most of it and still do.

The industry gives, the industry takes away, making for big-time winners and losers.

COASTWISE...

It's a term few know outside the ILWU Longshore Division where, for decades, it's meant "coast-wide." There's the coastwise contract and the members coastwise and so on. With this series, there's another definition: the wealth of knowledge and insight gained by ILWU members working in the maritime industry. Better than anyone else, they truly understand the value of their labor—to employers, to their families, and to the communities where they live.
Job-Killing, Community-Destroying
Maritime Dereg Bill Heads for House Vote

Just before press time, we learned that Congressional Republicans scheduled a floor vote for the week of April 29—dubbed “Deregulation Week”—in the House of Representatives on the “Right-to-work” (RTW) bill. Senator Lauch Faircloth (R-NC), one of the most aggressive political education program advocates of the House, told the Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee March 15 that the legislation “is about weakening unions, destroying democracy in the workplace and forcing workers to labor for up to 20 percent less than they are now earning.”

He presented conclusive evidence that wages in RTW states average 18 percent less than in other states and that, when the difference between union and nonunion income is included, the national RTW law could force down wages by 20 percent. Judge also proofed that RTW states have a lower living standard than others.

Current federal law, Judge pointed out, does not “force” anyone to join a union against their will, as the proponents of this malicious law falsely allege. The National Labor Relations Act allows employers and unions to negotiate clauses in their contracts to evenly distribute the cost of union representation among all bargaining unit members. Workers who don’t want to be union members may pay “agency fee” to cover the cost of con-
egressional political activity and administration. They judged that it isn’t fair or democratic for some workers to get the benefits and contract protections that only a union provides without paying their fair share of the costs.

In another attack on workers’ rights and organized labor, right- wing Republicans in Congress are moving to pass a bill with the clever title, “Right-to-work” (RTW) law. Senator Lauch Faircloth (R-NC), one of the most hostile to union>Nama employees back into the 1930s—when more than 6,000 Americans still died or were maimed while working.

WASHINGTON, D.C.—On March 20, bowing to labor’s determined campaign, Rep. Cass Ballenger (R-NC) announced that he would shel ve plans to pass legislation attacking OSHA.

His bill, H.R. 1384, sought to abolish the Mine Safety and Health Administration, folding it into OSHA; prevent OSHA from enforcing the law until a worker was killed or hospitalized; take away workers’ rights to file complaints with OSHA about job hazards unless the employer was informed first; and shift emphasis from enforcement measures to volun-

tary programs. Even before the bill’s introduction in June 1996, labor raised a single voice in opposition. Activists expressed the proposal through ads in the media, town meetings, marches, rallies and other events all last year.

Efforts continue against S. 1423, a bill similar to the Ballenger proposal that one also includes a provision allowing company unions. The Labor and Human Resources Committee has sent the bill to the Senate floor, but no action on it has been scheduled yet.

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Local 10 longshoreman Dora "Sam" Gurule was killed while working as a pin-man at Matson Terminal. He was the victim of a hit-and-run. Walking Boss Henry Alvarez found Gurule’s body and immediately called for paramedics. Oakdale Police have not been able to say if they are investigating the incident. Although it happened on a Local 10 job, since Gurule was a member since 1965, he was well liked and respected. He was remembered as a good worker and a conscientious steward with prized leadership abilities. He knew the ins and outs of the contract and enforced it vigilantly, even though he never sought an official union position. He was quick-witted, safety-conscious and "as sharp as a tack," according to lifelong friend and fellow ILWU Local 10 member Dora "Joe" Gurule.

LINGERING QUESTIONS

No one has come forward yet. Eddie Gutierrez, a Local 34 member and former Local 10 business agent, said, "That's not just unusual, it's unprecedented!" There has never been a Local 10's history of an injury, fatality or accident taking place without witnesses coming forward, he said. Gutierrez said Oakland police think a nonunion truck driver who claims no knowledge of the accident is the culprit. His terminal paper says he worked at the facility for the day to protest unfair working conditions. About 1 p.m., they were joined by workers from other terminals with rail lines, who were outraged after safety and health hazards in their own workplaces. Local 13 President Joe Cortez, Medina's step-brother, said that this terrible tragedy may open the door for avenues for tougher safety rules.

"We're mourning for our brother, but we're also going to fight like hell for the living," said Cortez. "We can't allow this to happen again."

During the recent longshore caucus, delegates passed a safety resolution on "intermodalism," i.e., ship-to-rail, rail-to-ship or rail-to-rail work. Submitted by Cortez at Local 13, it requires the union negotiating committee to address issues of safety, conditions and jurisdiction in upcoming bargaining with the Pacific Maritime Association. It also points out that Medina's death would have been avoided had certain safety adjustments been made.

ILWU International President Brian McWilliams, in conjunction with Local 13 officials, has started a move to rename an overpass near ITS in honor of Medina, as a lasting memorial to him and a constant reminder to workers of the dangers they face on the job.

FAMILY MAN, FRIEND

Medina will also be remembered in a very personal sense. He came from a large longshore family in the Wilmington area and got his start in the industry by working in his father's ship ping for several years.

"He was highly respected among his co-workers and friends as a great family man," said Local 13 member Mike Mitre. "Mario was very close to his brothers, they were always engaged in heated debate over sports issues. And he'd frequently take time off from work to spend with his kids." He was just a really decent, hard-working man," Mitre added. "He didn't have an enemy in the world, "

Medina leaves behind his spouse, Sally, daughter Monica, sons Freddie, 19, and Mario Jr., 13; and many other relatives.

Memorial contributions may be sent to ILWU Longshore Local 13, 231 West "C" St., Wilmington, CA 90744.

Tragic train accident spurs new intermodal safety push

By BRIAN WILES-HEAPE

LONG BEACH—A train engine on the wrong track took the life of ILWU Local 13 longshoreman Mario Medina recently in a tragic accident at Long Beach Harbor.

Working at the ITS container terminal, Medina was atop a container rail car when three incoming Santa Fe engines smashed into the train he was on, throwing him down and crushing him. He was pronounced dead almost immediately, according to police and firemen on the scene.

"It just ran into a whole half-mile-long line of cars," a police spokesman said. "When the train was hit from behind, it just kind of moved out from beneath him and he fell into it."

The engines were traveling about 15 miles-per-hour, near the Queen Mary at Harbor Plaza, at the time of the 10 a.m. accident. Apparently the engineer believed he was being routed to the other section of the yard, but the switch sent him to the half where Medina was working.

TERMINAL SHUTDOWN

Local 13 members shut down the ITS facility for the day to protest unsafe working conditions. About 1 p.m., they were joined by workers from other terminals with rail lines, who were outraged after safety and health hazards in their own workplaces.

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ILWU International President Brian McWilliams, in conjunction with Local 13 officials, has started a move to rename an overpass near ITS in honor of Medina, as a lasting memorial to him and a constant reminder to workers of the dangers they face on the job.

Mario Medina came from a large longshore family and worked at ITS for 15 years. He had a passion for the game, Gutierrez reflected. "He had a passion for the game, Carrots."

Mario Medina was a very personal sense. He came from a large longshore family in the Wilmington area and got his start in the industry by working in his father's shipping for several years.

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Another organizing victory for Local 63 office clericals

By BRIAN WILES-HEAPE

The ILWU Local 63 Office Clerical Local has added another union house to its portfolio of successes. Steve Uecker, general business agent, and his staff have added several more clerical positions to the ILWU Local 63 union membership.

"We're thrilled to be with the ILWU," said new member Kevin Scola, who works for Solar International, an agency that represents the Chinese steamship line. Scola said the ILWU is a "union they can trust." He added that the ILWU's success is due in large part to ILWU Longshore Business Agent Darlene Allman, recording secretary; and Randy Uecker, sergeant-at-arms.

OCU President Jeff Powell is preparing the ground for the upcoming election. "These workers called us because of the ILWU's solid record of quality representation," said OCU President Jerry Rich. "The OCU's success is due in large part to ILWU Longshore Business Agent Darlene Allman, recording secretary; and Randy Uecker, sergeant-at-arms. Trustee includes Ron Edson, Mark Triplett and Roger Van Brocklin. Without them, I doubt that we'd be welcoming 38 new members to Solar in the ILWU family."

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Another organizing victory for Local 63 office clericals
Progressive' Berkeley company dumps ILWU members

By JILL DUKE
business writer Local TOPS Division

OAKLAND — An enthusiastic group of 300 workers and their supporters showed up in force outside the Post Office to protest the closing of Blue & Gold Fleet Company. Pickets marched through sections of the nearby residential and business communities, encouraged by flyers posted in store windows along the way. Speakers at the rally included AFL-CIO President John J. Sweeney, ILWU President Emeritus Jim Herman, and marchers from the legal and political supporters. Representatives from every Bay Area Labor Council spoke out in opposition to the plans to close.

CHANGE IN PLANS

Kaiser’s plan to contract work to private, for-profit hospitals marks a fundamental change in how the health maintenance organization (HMO) will provide health care in the future.

Up to now, the Kaiser Foundation Health Plan has always emphasized affordable, quality care, convenient access, and providing all services under one roof.

"Working people and their unions built Kaiser in the 1950s," one developer said, "and we are counting on Kaiser to honor its plans to turn its backs on us. But we’re going to hold them accountable for the consequences." The unions are outraged at the prospect of losing jobs and the damage to the communities whose economies that will result. The Oakland community at large will be impacted, and Piedmont Avenue could force them out of business.

"The granting of evidentiary hearings is a significant victory for the 60 IBU deckhands, ticket vendors and collectors, and groundkeepers who will likely lose their jobs if the sale is allowed to go through. An additional 20 snack bar workers who recently voted for IBU representation will also be unemployed. The long-term sustainability of the business is in question as a consequence of the sale."

The ruling was issued in response to an application by Red & White to transfer its assets to Blue & Gold. BLP has also requested authority to acquire the assets of Red & White and Blue & Gold.

"This ruling indicates that the PUC takes the monopoly issue seriously," said IBU Northern California Regional Director Jay Seccombe. "Approval of this sale would give Blue & Gold a near-monopoly position over passengers and ferry operations on San Francisco Bay, in stark contrast to the PUC’s ongoing consideration of competition in other public utility markets."

Winning students will receive their scholarships during awards assem
dles and complimentary reservations for a trip to the Fisherman’s Wharf area, from Pier 39 to 44. Four additional students will receive a full scholarship with lodging rights in the Fisherman’s Wharf area, from Pier 39 to 44.

"Even more critical," he reiterated, "is the fact that Blue & Gold would gain a monopolistic advantage in bidding for the concession to provide service on the prime route between Fisherman’s Wharf and Alcatraz Island, since they will be the only company capable of meeting the National Park Service’s requirements for ferry service to and from Fisherman’s Wharf."
**GEORGE LEE**

“These people are robbing you, stealing your labor”

We were a team. One night we would visit workers in Bakersfield, the next night McFarland, the next Tulare. The Valley was a racist place then. We were meeting in this one little town. Afterwards, this Caucasian says to me, “You planning on stayin’ overnight here?” I said, “Sure as hell is.” After he left, a black guy who worked at Calcot Compress in Bakersfield told me, “BROTHER, I advise you not to stay here tonight!” Sometimes, at night Chet and I would pull over to the side of the road and sleep in the car.

Organizing, we'd go to the plant at noon, find the key skilled people who had influence, and talk to them at night to get their point of view. We’d put out a leaflet and go back and ask 'em how the leaflet was received among the workers. If something was wrong, we'd correct it in the next leaflet.

We met at Kenneth Gatewood's house in Bakersfield. He was a key person at Bakersfield's San Joaquin Compress and he was the strongest guy in the Valley. San Joaquin was the first place organized into Local 26 because of Gatewood and his brother. At General Foods we'd talk to the workers, “These people are robbing you, stealing your labor. You get rich, and the only protection you have is to act in unity; and if you don't know, ask us to have a union to support you.”

The workers trusted me; I'd worked in the industry and was considered one of their own. They were black and Mexi-can, and Chet was white, but he did all right because he spoke the workers' language. He knew what it meant to suffer and be punished. Chet had spent a lot of time in New Orleans; he was able to relate how unjust it was there. And he had a unique way of organizing. Chet went to people's houses. He'd sit down at their table, eat their food and make himself part of them. Most organizers want to talk to a guy in a restaurant or on the picket line. Chet would visit a guy at his house and stay for hours. Most people don't find the time.

**CHET MESKE**

“I had strong guys on my side.”

Some organizers would call a meeting in the hall right away and push cards under people's noses. I'd get one or two names, and I didn't want more than one or two on the first ini-tial meeting. Then I'd get another two, and I'd get additional information. So when I'd call a big meeting I'd know the ins and outs within that plant. I'd know they was comin' into something like that. About 15 or 20 scabs came. Some left; they said they didn't have their contract. They brought them scabs in here in boxcars. They fixed the workers up, all I had to do was tell the company I'm gonna stop the line. Then they tried to fire me. ‘Don't look like you,’ he said, ‘I would--' So I walked out, and the scabs drove in. I didn't know it, but the owners were prepared. There were photographs on the roof snap-pictures and all the wire. So we walked out of the office with our hands up. The workers saw that, and right away the steam was cut off. About 200 men followed us out the gate. We set up a picket line. Then they started importing white scale from the South. This created more resentment among the men because the compress workers were Spanish and the firemen were white.

I tried to persuade the scale not to go into the plant. When they were in front of Calcot in cars I opened one car's door and started talking. The driver began to move ahead slowly; the sheriff was warning in. I twisted this guy by the ears, then reached for a gun in the back seat. The cop pulled me out, and the scale drove in. I didn't know it, but the owners were prepared. There were photographs on the roof, snap-pictures and all. The picket line was there. We was hauled away and had to go to court and pay a fine.

**SILVER LINING**

“Calcot tried to cheat us out of back pay.”

After the ‘52 strike, Calcot tried to cheat us out of the back pay the NLRB told them to give our members. The boss offered to pay me mine, but said, “Don’t say nothin’ to the rest of ’em.” I said, “No, you’re goin’ to pay all of us.” So he paid. Then he tried to fire me. ‘Don’t look like you,’ he said, ‘I wouldn’t have to pay all these men back pay, you’re fired.’ And he just walked away. But I knew he couldn’t do it; he knew that if he did the whole union would have got behind him. So I kept workin’. He didn’t come back, never did bring it up again. The union was still strong after the strike. Anything come up, all I had to do was tell the company I’m gonna stop the works. And the men were willing to stop. They always told me, “Owen, whatever you say, we’re with you.” I know from that part of it.

**WILLIAM CHESTER**

“They were ILWU body and soul!”

As the ILWU Regional Director for Northern California in 1952 when Kenneth Gatewood and George Green asked me to look into the possibility of organizing the cotton compress industry around Fresno, they ordained me to Ernest Clark and Tommy Sykes down there and we started holding meet-ings in their living rooms.

During the 1952 strike, Gatewood and a group from Bakersfield came up to ask for support from Fresno and the compress workers working at nearby Pinedale. That was the very beginning of the guys in the Fresno-Pinedale area looking toward affiliation with the ILWU, because they saw how much fight and militancy there was in our Bakersfield unit. Fresno was then in the AFL, Chemical Workers Union, but had served very poorly. Pinedale had already left that organization.

At first Harry Bridges thought Fresno was an area we couldn’t hold on to, and he refused to issue a charter. Ernest Clark was a leader in demanding one, and after a few years Fresno was just known as the ILWU Organizing Commit-tee, International Sect-Treas. Lou Goldblatt, International Vice Pres. Bob Robertson, and I kept urging Harry to issue a charter. He came around. After we got it, I prevailed upon him to drive down with me and tour the plants. On the way back, he said, “That’s a fine bunch of guys. Perhaps I was wrong.” Fresno-Pinedale was chartered as Local 51 in 1957.

After Fresno was taken in as a fully fledged ILWU convention, Gateway was already coming. Harry noticed the leadership quality of these guys—they were ILWU body and soul. There had been so much of a change, especially in Fresno. The change didn’t necessarily multiply in dollars and cents; it multiplied in style. The guys felt for the first time that they had a union that was going to be behind ‘em so the bosses couldn’t kick ‘em around.

I’m very happy about the work we did. LeeBoy King became Regional Director for Northern California after me in 1969 and did an excellent job of carrying on. Under his direction the union picked up a lot of additional plants in the valley.
**Union counsel Frank H. Pozzi**

Work from the docks to the courts

By BRIAN WILES-HEAPE

Frank H. Pozzi, 75, a prominent Portland trial attorney and one-time ILWU member who devoted his life to helping working-class people gain justice, died January 2 of respiratory failure.

During an almost 50-year career, Pozzi gained a national reputation as a "lawyer to the poor" for thousands of workers who suffered from on-the-job injuries. A legend in the courtroom, he also represented the ILWU's Columbia River, Oregon Coast, and Alaska area locals, the Inlandboatmen's Union of the Pacific, and many other labor organizations.

NEVER FORGOT THE DOCKS

"I'm appreciative of the many, many things Frank did in order to help preserve the ILWU," said ILWU President Emeritus Jim Herman at Pozzi's January 5 funeral at St. Thomas More Catholic Church in southwest Portland. Herman recalled that Pozzi was an old friend from his days as the first Presiding Judge Harry Bridges, and called him "one of the great lawyers of our time" who never forgot his days working on the docks and ships.

Bob Wilson, a partner in Pozzi's firm, noted Pozzi's kindness and generosity to others. He said Pozzi "achieved greater success for his clients than any other personal injury lawyer in Oregon, adding that he had a passion for social, economic and racial justice.

In his eulogy at the funeral he described him as a "family man" and a "union man" who was "dedicated to serving the underdog."

Pozzi was born in Portland on August 25, 1920, the youngest of five children and the only boy. He attended Ockley Green Grade School and Jefferson High School, where he served football and basketball teams developed in the sport came in handy later, when he paid his way through law school by working as a longshoreman on Portland's waterfront.

Graduating from the University of Portland in 1941, Pozzi joined a firm as a working member of ILWU Local 8 in August 1943. A longshoreman by day—at a time when the work was backbreaking and the hours long—he attended Willamette Manette Law School in Salem by night, and received his Juris Doctor degree in February 1948.

After being admitted to the bar, Pozzi worked for a short time in the Portland City Attorney's Office and then joined a firm that became known as Peterson, Pozzi and Lent. In July 1959, he and Don Wilson left to form their own firm, Pozzi Wilson & Associates, where he worked until September 1995, winning countless cases for injured workers.

FLOYD PILLSBURY: He knew the issues and had a passion for social, economic and racial justice.

During the late '40s, Ulrich and his easy-going manner in the union, your fellow workers are referred to as brothers and sisters, and Don was more brother than employer, causing people to reflect that if all employers were like him there wouldn't be strikes, lockouts and disputes.

Pozzi's first wife, Patricia Delano, who worked as a St. Luke's nurse, died in 1968. She married the former Kathe Brown in 1977, who survives him, along with his children and three great-grandchildren.

Memorial contributions may be made to the Frank H. Pozzi Endowment Scholarship at the University of Portland, 5000 N. Willamette Blvd., Portland, Oregon 97203.
DELEGATES RETURN TO ROOTS, PLEDGE ORGANIZING AND LEADERSHIP REVIVAL

Local 6 50th Convention

By BRIAN WILES-HEAPE

OAKLAND—On February 24, 1996, delegates from around Northern California came to the East Bay hall of ILWU warehouse Local 6 to take care of business and celebrate at the local's 50th Convention.

In his opening address, Local 6 President Larry De Gaetano expressed the union's gratitude and appreciation to its pensioners, whose struggles and hardships paved the way for the rights and benefits today's workers enjoy.

GLOBAL GREED

But now, corporate America and its politicians—Republicans and Democrats alike—are preparing a new assault on workers' rights, he warned. They have placed historic gains of the labor movement, like eight-hour day, union security, health care, sick leave, pensions and social programs, on the chopping block, all for bigger profits.

And they've done nothing to stem corporate downsizing and layoffs for low-wage countries overseas. This "new world order of global corporate greed" will mean our ruin, De Gaetano said.

Health care workers are particularly besieged, as greedy HMOs, like Kaiser, and other hospitals replace professionals with unskilled labor (see story page 9). "They are not only defending their jobs, but also the quality of patient care for the entire community," De Gaetano said. "We must stand up for their rights. The families that these members work hard to provide for belong to us all. We're all of the same union family."

De Gaetano pointed out that politicians are doing everything they can to further the interests of the health care industry. For example, a proposed law would limit malpractice suits for health care providers.

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PEOPLE POWER

He urged members to exercise their right to vote, recalling the days when women and African Americans were excluded from the franchise. "We fought that around then, but now is the time to use our power more than ever before."

De Gaetano received a long ovation when he asserted that Local 6 will follow the example of workers overseas who protest "brought all of Europe to a halt" as well as "our brothers and sisters of the '30s and '40s," to take actions that will force an end to corporate attacks on labor. "If Europe has the unity to speak out, so should the labor movement of America! Let's be the first to make the statement, "No More Corporate Greed!"

1995 saw the closure of eight Local 6 work places. In the East Bay division, Amecl Corp., Frontline Campaigns, Nicro Corp., Huntington Labs and Galaxy Lighting shut their doors, while Mayfair Plants #4 and #7 in the South Bay and Port Costa Materials in the North Bay also went belly-up. Local 6 has lost about 400 members in the past year as a result.

The local's membership has slid from a high point of 19,000 members in 1949, to 3,100 at the time of this report.

An organizing strategy is in the works. Local 6 will not turn its back on any workers that need organization, officers underscored, regardless of the size of the business they work for. The survival of Local 6 depends on organizing the unorganized, they said, calling on members to get actively involved by reporting potential organizing leads and assisting with organizing "legwork." Only through a renewal of the spirit of rank-and-file volunteerism, they reported, would new organizing drives succeed.

Other components of the organizing strategy include re-establishing the Local's constitutionally mandated Organizing Committee to consolidate the local's operations at the East Bay hall. The second would authorize the sale of all other real properties of the Local, including the San Francisco, Crockett, San Jose, Stockton and Fresno halls.

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Pensioners led the charge against these proposals, and emotions flared. Many retirees resented that anyone would propose to sell these remaining tangible products of their youthful struggles. They noted that their halls were remnants of older locals, like Local 11, San Jose, and Local 78, Fresno.

HOT TOPICS

Six resolutions were presented for membership approval, and—in fine ILWU democratic style—several were the subjects of hot-temped, stormy debate.

The most controversial were two that aimed to deal with the Local's financial challenges. The first sought to consolidate the local's operations at the East Bay hall. The second would authorize the sale of all other real properties of the Local, including the San Francisco, Crockett, San Jose, Stockton and Fresno halls.

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THUMBS DOWN, THUMBS UP

The two resolutions were soundly defeated by an overwhelming voice vote.

Resolutions adopted call for a dues increase to fund the new organizing program; and a 24-hour moratorium by the labor movement on all pension fund trading on the stock exchange to demonstrate labor's might to the world. They also called for an end to "the criminal corporate rape of the nation's health care system."

Among the many special guests attending the Convention were State Assembly Member Barerra Lee, Teamsters Joint Council 7 Secretary-Treasurer Chuck Mack and Alamada County Central Labor Council Secretary-Treasurer Owen Marron. Father Jay Matthews of St. Benedict's Church in Oakland gave the invocation.

From the ILWU came International President Bruce McWilliams. International Secretary-Treasurer Joe Buran, International Rep Abba Ramos, Local 17 officials Jack Wyatt and Everett Burdan and Local 26 President Luisa Gratz.

GOOD NEWS

But not all news was bad. Local 6 secured six new houses in the East Bay and South Bay regions during the past year, with contracts in place or in progress: Smurfit Recycling, East Bay Generator Company, Pacific Institute, Lloyd Wise Company, Selix Formalwear, and John Lewis Company.

Local 6 also reported the successful re-negotiation of the Industrial Employers and Distributors Association (IEDA) master contract and most independent contracts, and their extension for three to four years. This gives the local some much-needed breathing space and time to devote its energies to its biggest priority—organizing.