Brian McWilliams urges the Longshore Division to vote “YES” on the contract

See President’s Report page 2

This man also wants your vote—and he wants to take away your union rights

See Washington Report page 3

This man wants to privatize your Social Security—just like he did in Pinochet’s Chile

See page 4

Also
Washington state’s new organizer ........................................ p. 6
Puget Sound District Council’s endorsements ........... p. 7
ILWU Oral History .......................................................... p. 8
Report of the Coast Balloeting Committee

The Balloting Committee met at 9:30 a.m. August 28 at ILWU International offices to prepare the final tally of the Coast Contract referendum. No challenges to any local's vote totals or balloeting procedures were presented to the committee.

The Committee examined the vote of each local. Local 10 and 13 voted in the negative and, in accordance with the ratification procedure, a 60 percent majority of all votes cast was required to approve the proposed settlement.

The vote totals are:

- Yes: 3573 (52.2%) No: 3273 (47.8%)

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BY LINDSAY MCCLAUGHLIN
ILWU Washington Representative

As difficult as it is for some labor activists to believe, approximately 30 percent of voting union members today are contemplating voting for Senator Bob Dole for President of the United States. Some of these admire Dole’s war record. Others express sympathy for his 15 percent tax cut proposal or support his conservative constitutional agenda. To these common union brothers and sisters, I recommend considering Dole’s record on protecting your right to organize, bargains, and strike to earn decent wages for you and your families.

If these union values are important to you, forget about Bob Dole. He has not provided a voice for workers. If you are skeptical of the words of an avowed liberal union man, listen to the words spoken on February 6, 1996 by Dole’s best friend in the Senate, Senator Leah Fairchild (R-NC), on Dole’s support for the National Right to Work (for less) bill.

WASHINGTON REPORT

“Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole’s support and assistance have been absolutely essential to advancing to the floor the Right to Work (for less) Act, and for that I am a strong supporter of Bob Dole because of his consistent defense of the rights of union workers to be free from compulsory unionism. The long record is based on action, not just words. For example, in 1988, 1992, 1994, and again in 1995, Bob Dole helped lead the fight to defeat the so-called striker replacement bill, one of organized labor’s top legislative priorities.

Dole himself has expressed his thoughts on working people’s ability to defend their rights in the Senate floor during the debate on the Workplace Fairness Act, which would have outlawed permanent replacement strikers. “This bill ought to be called the strike reparation bill, or perhaps the Labor Power Grab Act of 1994,” he said.

Dole supported compulsory arbitration for transportation workers as part of legislation settling the coast- wise strike in 1972. And he voted for legislation allowing state officials and companies in Hawaii to obtain an injunction temporarily preventing a maritime strike in 1974.

ABOUT FACE

Dole was born and raised in Russell, Kansas, proud, working parents who were considered poor. During the Depression the Dole family had to move to the basement of their house and rent space in their creation of Medicare—a program that a soldier during World War II, Dole valiantly fought the fascists in the mountains of Italy. He came severely wounded, but recovered most of his physical strength and agility through the financial help of the community of Russell. As a young, newly elected Congressman, Dole took an interest in the creation of the Food Stamp program which assists both the poor and farmers.

Dole once said: “What greater human right is there than the right to work.”

So what exactly happened to this hero after just four years of living and working in Washington, D.C.? This working class hero Dole quickly became what some would call a wheeler-dealer in a relatively short period of time. Washington, D.C. has a corrupting influence on those who have been years of the political game in Washington, Dole is perhaps the most vicious, unscrupulous man in America.

ANTI-YOU

Today, Dole brags about being “one of 12” who voted against the creation of Medicare which gave poor people such as his own parents access to health care. He has aggressively and relentlessly opposed efforts to make employers pay a reasonable minimum wage.

In his last year as a United States Senator, Dole was the most forceful advocate for the following budget program:

• Cutting $182 billion from the Medicaid budget for millions of older Americans and their families who count on Medicaid to pay for nursing home care. In some cases, elderly people might even lose their nursing home care altogether. In addition, up to 4.4 million poor children could lose their health insurance under the GOP-passed cuts.

• Cutting student loan programs.

• Repealing the Service Contract Act, a prevailing wage law covering a variety of federal- and state-contracted jobs, including tens of thousands of low-wage workers who earn only somewhat more than minimum wage.

• Requiring greater pension contributions while decreasing benefits for federal and postal employees.

• Repealing health benefits for nearly 90,000 coal miners and their families.

• Cutting the Earned Income Tax Credit program, leading to a higher tax burden for lower-income people, and penalizing those who can least afford it.

• Changing capital gains taxes and the alternative minimum tax for corporations, minimizing the tax burden for big business and families earning $200,000 a year or more.

SOLD AMERICAN!


“Bob Dole’s career symbolized much of what is wrong with American politics: the shameless selling of office and the willingness of the electorate to demonize the opposition, scapegoat- ing the poor, mudslinging, vindictive, a last for power as an end in itself, and the lack of any true ideology. The closest thing to ideology that Dole has is a contempt for the needy and a concern for the greedy.”

If a United States Senator can work such havoc on American working class, imagine what he can do to you as President.

Dole’s major opponent, President Bill Clinton is not perfect—not even close.

But I am going to vote for Clinton first and foremost because this country could not endure a Dole Administration which would make a mockery of America’s enlightened goal of life, liberty, and justice for all.

Today nearly one in four American workers is either unemployed, involuntarily working part-time or working at poverty level wages. In addition, those who are presidential signers of the welfare reform bill will send millions more begging in the streets for your charity.

Since the preamble of the U.S. Constitution asserts that the purpose of the government is to “establish Justice...promote the General Welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity” the Labor Party contends the government must guarantee a decent job either in the private sector or the public sector for current welfare recipients and the millions of unemployed and under-employed people at a minimum wage of $10 an hour.

FULL AGENDA

The Interim National Council, a group composed of representatives of the various chapters and of some local chapters, also;

• elected Tony Mazocchi (OCAW) into the National Organizing Team
• adopted bylaws revised from Labor Party Advocates to reflect the interim council’s agenda dealt with chapter-related problems, including overlapping jurisdictions, resource allocations, organizing state organizations, the definition of chapters and a disciplinary action taken against the Buffalo, NY chapter.

The interim council agreed that chapters should constitute only those individual members who affirmatively indicate their desire to be part of that chapter. The National Organization will poll individual members to determine which chapter, if any, they wish to join.

Mazocchi moved the interim council approve his revoking the charter of the Buffalo chapter because of its endorsement of a United Auto Workers Regional Director for Congressional office in contradiction of the Labor Party’s Founding Convention demand that a non-electoral strategy for the time being.
BY FRED J. SOLOWEY

Growing evidence suggests the assault on Medicare by the Republican-run Congress this year was just the beginning of an all-out war on the entire Social Security system.

Wall Street interests, conservative ideologues and right-wing politicians want to go after America's most cherished and popular social program that provides guaranteed retirement income to 43 million Americans (and a majority of income for 80 percent of them) and valuable social insurance protections for millions of others.

They want to turn over part or all of the Social Security trust funds to investment companies to run for profit taking the security out of Social Security and making it an "everyone for themselves" individual system. Your retirement would then hang on the ups and downs of the stock market.

But what happens in the national elections this November may determine whether or not they can get away with it, according to Michael Tanner, one of the ideologues pushing the change.

If Republicans "don't pay at the polls" over the steep Medicare cuts they pushed this year they will get holder in going after Social Security, Tanner, director of health and welfare studies at the right-wing, Washington, D.C.-based Cato Institute said in an interview last spring.

"If on the other hand Republicans lose control of Congress and Clinton is re-elected, no one will dare try to touch Social Security for a long time," he added.

BUY-PARTISAN INTERESTS

Unfortunately, it's not just Republicans involved. A 40-member, bipartisan Public Pension Reform Caucus has formed in the House of Representatives at the urging of Republican boss Newt Gingrich. And the most prominent Social Security privatization bill was introduced by Senators Robert Kerrey (D-NE) and Alan Simpson (R-WY). It calls for diverting a portion of Social Security taxes into Wall Street-run individual retirement investment accounts, sharply raising Social Security taxes.

The Cato Institute—which is gathering together a $2 million war chest from financial interests and conservative foundations—already has published more than 30 books, reports and articles aimed at undermining public support for Social Security since 1979. Of special note: an article "Achieving a 'Leninist' Strategy," (Cato Journal 3, Fall 1983) which calls for "guerrilla warfare against both the current Social Security system and the coalition that supports it."

Smelling the huge profits that could be made through managing the investment of hundreds of billions of dollars of Social Security money, banks, life insurance and Wall Street investment companies and their trade associations and lobbying groups are funding the Cato and other anti-Social Security campaigns.

The ideologues and the profit-seekers are trying to create panic about a "crisis" in Social Security and have convinced many younger Americans that the program won't be there for them when they retire because the ratio of contributors to retirees keeps going down.

But other economists see it differently.

"There is no funding crisis despite the changing demographics," maintains economist Dean Baker, a Social Security expert at the UAW-backed Economic Policy Institute. "Making no changes at all, the system will be solvent for 35 years. And very small tax increases or benefit changes will keep it sound indefinitely."

MODEL HYPE

Social Security's enemies also argue it's already proven that turning over Social Security to "the free market" is the way to go. Just look, they say, at the 15-year experience in the South American nation of Chile.

They even use the U.S.-trained Chilean economist who dismantled his country's Social Security under the brutally repressive military dictatorship of General Augusto Pinochet, to sell the scheme here.

Former Chilean Minister of Labor Jose Piñera, has testified before Congress and toured the U.S. extensively touting Chile's model.

"We go just about every month to speak," he said in an interview in his office in the Chilean capital of Santiago. "The success of the Chilean private social security system is beyond dispute."

Piñera even claims that he launched the new system in 1981 on May 1 (International Workers Day) to mark the end of class conflict in Chile. Because of having his or her individual retirement investment account "the Chilean worker is an owner, a capitalist," he argued, noting that 90 percent of Chilean workers voluntarily switched to the new system when it was started.

"There was a big publicity campaign that convinced most people—including me—that the old system would disappear quickly," explained Roberto Alarón, president of CUT (Confederacion Unitaria de Trabajadores), Chile's AFL-CIO. Alarón pointed out that the new system also left hard-pressed workers with increased take-home pay.

Of course the system itself was imposed on the country and many authorities appointed by Pinochet forced people to switch," he continued. "Neither I nor most other workers would have switched if we had known what we know now. No worker I've ever met thinks he's a capitalist. Too many people have suffered because of the changes."

Why Are These Men Smiling?

Unlike most Chilean workers, these cops have reason to smile—they still have quality public health care and guaranteed pension benefits from Social Security.
The old Social Security system—
with employers required to fund
around two-thirds of the costs—also
provided a national health-care sys-
tem and low-interest housing loans.
The system insisted on "solidarity fac-
tor" with lower-wage workers getting
better pensions. And the law required
payment of a hefty seervice-payment
package upon retirement.

But the military government that
came to power with the help of
President Richard Nixon and the CIA
in 1973 concluded that all new
employers no longer had to con-
tribute anything towards employee
retirement or health care.

Health care was privatized, the
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"Neither I nor most other workers would have switched [to private insurance] if
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PENSIONS, POVERTY &
PROFITS

Union leaders point to people
like Morral and Rojas to illustrate that
Social Security in Chile has been
replaced with a system of social inse-
curity. As many as 60-70 percent of
workers never have a pension
account or don’t contribute regu-
larly to one because of irregular or
poor informal sector employment.
This means millions may not qualify
for any pension or cut for a neglect-
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In addition, the private pension
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Liverpool Dockers Dig In

Yesterday was the ten month anniversary of the day the Liverpool Dockworkers were sacked. We have continued with this struggle ever since. I often think about that period riding an emotional roller-coaster reaching incredible highs and enduring depressions in our low periods. We are at the stage now where at least ten of our families’ homes are about to be repossessed by the mortgage company. There’s an enormous void in our family network now as there is in the ILWU. There’s no more deals! We are always worried when it’s winter may we take this opportunity to thank you sincerely for your continued support from which we draw a great deal of our strength. Good luck with your contract negotiations.

Victory to the ILWU

Tony Nelson and Bobby Morton

Merseyside Port Shop Stewards

Committee

Liverpool, England

Many thanks for your parcel that I received this week. I was overwhelmed is an understatement. I cannot stress the importance of these pins (chocked full of the most in the picket line. They really do lift our spirits just thinking about them. They’re a wonderful tribute to him. In her tribute to my dad I fully agree with Johanna Bridges Flynn that Harry and my dad found each other and that they are organizing the inhabitants of the earth is a better place for all and I know they will do something about the temperature.

I’m thrilled to see that a scholarship drive is being organized in my parents’ name. In her tribute to my dad I fully agreed with the Martin and Anne Jugum Scholarship. My dad loved talking to and educating youth about labor issues on the local, national and international fronts. My mom was his great support behind the scenes. I’m excited about this effort to honor my dad and mom in this way.

In closing I want to share some of my dad’s final words. During his last week of life when he was so weak that he could barely speak, this man with the once commanding voice said to me, "A very soft, halting voice, "Longshoremen...are some of the greatest people...on the face of the earth." In loving memory of my dad, I always knew it.

JoAnne Jugum (a longshoreman’s daughter)

Seattle, WA

Why Weir’s wrong

Since my retirement I have tried to keep out of any internal union matters. But my gorge rose when I read Stan Weir’s (from Borroge Springs, California) review of Gene Vrana’s review of Sea-Say. What upset me was Weir’s statement that “the ‘free’ ideology deregistered with 80 others in 1959 as a result of a secret set of discipli- nary rules. The true facts is, and it is set in the court records (in a recent edition of Weir et al against the ILWU known as the Williams case) that about 500 B M men were reg- istered in 1959 when Weir and a handful of others were deregistered for violating the rules. These 500 reg- istered men received their charts and moved now the bulk of the local. They were told to close shop trouble adding to any so-called “secret” rules—nor was anybody deregistered as a “John Doe” as Weir suggests. The delin- quents including Stan Weir were named by name.

What Stan Weir does not tell you is which rule—clearly known to everyone—was invoked to deregister him: Thou shalt not Chisel Hours on thy brother longshoremen.

The Union Committee that reviewed the records, the Joint Labor Relations Committee and the United States District Court Court all agreed that the records showed that Weir had chiseled on his fellow workers at the dispatch hall. The U.S. Supreme Court did not even bother to review the case, it was so obvious that Weir was wrong.

These are all matters of judicial record that should be known to Weir.

As I say, since my retirement I have tried to keep out of internal Union quarrels. However, I could not let this go by without setting the record straight.

Norman Leonard

ILWU General Counsel, Emeritus

No more deals!

I have chewed on our local and international officials many times when I thought they had raised the wrong issues. I could see things much clearer then when they were seeing. When I read the President’s Report in the July-August Dispatcher I have found new hope in the thinking of our union officials.

We are on our way. No more back door deals. No more high protein diet. Some of our brothers we can break bread together once again.

Some feelings will be hurt. Some names will be called. But when it’s all over we will have a strong union again.

Osborne Hills

Longshore Local 10

Richmond, CA

It was at East Bay Hospital, where working conditions were so bad something had to be done, that Gonzales became an employee activist, contact- ing the union and working to get it certified and get the first contract negotiated. In the process he was bit- ten by the organizing bug, watching people become empowered as they fought a massive anti-union drive by the hospital owners.

“I see myself as a rank-and-filer taking the next step to being a union staffer,” Gonzales said. “My father was a Teamster truck driver activist, so there’s always been that union presence in my life.”

He is looking forward to moving in early October to the Puget Sound area with his wife, a native of Seattle, and their three year old son Gabriel and four month old daughter Isabel.

“My first step will be to meet with the district councils and local representatives and connect with the mem- hers,” Gonzales said. “They’re the greatest resource for an organizer.”

Because the ILWU hasn’t had an organizer in the area for some 20 years Gonzales said he will first look at the industries the union now represents—shipping, the docks and warehouses—to begin his work.

“I will check and see if there are similar situations of workers who have fallen through the cracks. We should build on what we have now,” he said.

LOCALS ELECTION RESULTS

MARINE CLERKS ASSOCIATION LOCAL 63
LOS ANGELES AND LONG BEACH HARBORS

Secretary/BA: Joe Gasperov

Dispatchers: Richard Jacobelli, John Carranza and Julio Saldana

Labor Relations Committee: John Kavarnaugh

Board of Directors-Memorial Association: David Miller and Steve Beibich.

LOCAL 20

SAN DIEGO

President: Timmy Chavez

Vice President: Tony Castillo

Secretary/Treasurer: Carlos Fernandez


Welfare Officer: Eddie Esquivel

Caucus Delegate: Sammy Vargas

Business Agent: James Castillo, Augie Reyes, Bennie Vargas

Trustee: Eddie Esquivel, Carlos Fernandez, Edward Rodriguez, Sergeant at Arms: Raymond Barenco, Louis Cruz

BY STEVE STALLONE

Assistant Editor

With the funds raised by the $2 per month organizing assessment ILWU members voted for last year, the union has hired Louis Gonzales as its new Puget Sound organizer.

Gonzales brings with him the experience of a grassroots union organizer. Before joining the ILWU he worked for two years as the business agent for APSCME Council 57 in San Jose, California where he represented more than 1,000 employees in the private, public and non-profit sectors, handling contract negotiations, grievances, arbitrations and internal organizational campaigns. He also published a monthly newsletter for members and developed workshops on employee rights, steward training and contract negotiations.

Previously to that Gonzales suc- cessfully led the organizing of more than 600 employees into the University Professional and Technical Employees Local 9119 at the University of California campuses in Davis and Sacramento. Before that Gonzales helped organizers from Laborers’ Union Local 324 get the union to represent the employees at East Bay Hospital in Richmond, California where he worked with 150 new workers, including LVNs, mental health counselors, pharmacy technicians, medical social workers, food service workers, joined the union.

It was at East Bay Hospital, where working conditions were so bad something had to be done, that Gonzales became an employee activist, contact- ing the union and working to get it certified and get the first contract negotiated. In the process he was bit- ten by the organizing bug, watching people become empowered as they fought a massive anti-union drive by the hospital owners.

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Herrera for Assembly

BY BRIAN McWILLIAMS
IUW President

This November we have an extraordinary opportunity to elect one of our own to the California state Assembly. The Assembly plays a big part in our everyday lives affecting everything from the conditions people labor under to the quality of the schools our children attend. Jess Herrera, a member of Local 46, Port Hueneme, a 30-year member of the IUW and an elected Harbor Commissioner, is the official Democratic candidate for the 37th Assembly District. He has been waging an aggressive campaign against an anti-labor incumbent. The pollsters now say he can win, but he desperately needs money for the home stretch. To date he has run his campaign without any IUW support. But in a race where one mailing costs $10,000, he cannot continue without our support. I strongly urge each member and local to contribute as soon and as generously as possible. The need for friends in the political arena has never been greater.

Contributions should be sent to: Committee to Elect Jess Herrera/PO Box 1706/Camarillo, CA 93011 (State ID# 905179).

Smolin Scholarships awarded

The Trustees of the Smolin Scholarship Fund, Norman Leonard, Reino Erkki and Gene Vrana, announced the following scholarships of $750 each awarded to the sons and daughters of Local 10 members for the college year of 1996-1997.

**STUDENT**

Marlene G. Abreu
Janine M. Beacham
John Wason Gomes
Debra D. Koch
Aranzazu M. Machin
Elizabeth Martinovich
Nancy I. Olivera
Ramon Romero
Chad Malik Williams

With these awards the Smolin Scholarship Fund has now distributed almost $150,000 to 80 children of Local 10 members since 1988, the year the fund was established by the will of Victor and Antonia Smolin. A long-time member of Local 10, Smolin deeply believed the children of working longshoremen need and deserve a college education—an education that has often been too expensive for their families to provide without assistance.

In keeping with the Smolins’ wishes and generous spirit, the Trustees of the fund have awarded scholarships to every applicant who met the basic qualifications set forth in the will—but declining interest rates and scores of anti-labor incumbents have slowly but steadily reduced the fund’s balance. For that reason and because of the increasingly large number of qualified applicants this year, the Trustees have reluctantly reduced the 1996-1997 awards to $750 each. The Trustees have therefore decided to repeat their encouragement of donations to the Smolin Fund in the form of direct contributions. Or by mentioning the Smolin Scholarship Fund in an individual’s will. Hopefully a generous response will enable the Trustees to restore the $1,000 award next year.

If you can help. Please contact Norman Leonard at 1188 Franklin Street, Suite 201, San Francisco, CA 94109 or telephone 415-771-6400.

Local 4 scholarships announced

ILWU Local 4 has announced the 1996-1997 scholarship winners for the sons and daughters of its members. Longshoremen’s Credit Union Clark College Scholarship has awarded $1300 to Leah Levanen. The Stevedore Services of America-ILWU Local 4 Scholarships of $500 have been awarded to Tyler Claibough and Jason Lee Breaker.
This month we feature a recent discussion with Ah Quon McElrath, an esteemed union pioneer in Hawaii who served for many years as the social worker for Local 142.

I was born in 1915 at Twili on Oahu's capital island, Ohau. Twili was the location of the world's largest pineapple company, a tannery, and a fertilizer company. My mom and dad came from China. Dad came as a contract laborer. I was one of seven children. My father died when I was five. We did everything we could to survive. We lived near the beach where we picked kowai berries and dried bones to sell to the fertilizer company. My brothers sold newspapers. There was no gas stove, so we would find firewood to get our outside stove going. We lived by kerosene lamps. We didn't have electricity.

All of us started working in the pineapple canneries when we were 12 or 13 years old. There were no child labor laws then. I packed and trimmed pineapple and picked eyes out of the so-called jam. I worked in the cafeteria, which was supported by jobs, because you made $7.5 cents an hour as against 18 cents an hour packing pineapple. In season we worked 12 hours a day. That was how we supported the family and got back to school during the fall.

Education was extremely important to me. I felt it was a window to the world, and that being able to read, write, and speak English—my first language was Chinese—offered special opportunities. I became the editor of the school paper in intermediate school and decided to concentrate my efforts on learning the English language well.

I went to the University of Hawaii during the period of the Spanish Civil War in the late 1930s. The entry of the anti-fascist side affected many of us. We felt we had a part to play in the struggle of the independent Marine Engineers and Drydock Workers Association. I helped him organize the tuna packers. Because I had done volunteer work during the 1946 tidal wave and the 46 sugar and 49 longshore strikes, the local's leaders asked me to volunteer my services to the union to do the investigations of need, because the entire union was collecting money to give to families that suffered a death or the loss of a home or personal belongings. I also worked with families to get them to understand what it meant to help each other in times of disaster.

This was the prelude to what needed to be done during the long 46 sugar strike, which was a major test for the ILWU in Hawaii. I did a lot more work then by getting recipes from the Dept. of Health for the soup kitchen. I was in the kitchen, and talking to the families about how important it was for the kids to continue school and about what arrangements we could make with creditors and the parish schools.

Another crisis started in 1947 when Ichiro Imuka published a red-baiting pamphlet that was inherently a move to separate our various ILWU groupings so they would become independent unions. This move failed, but we felt a great need to close ranks. When the Imuka pamphlet came out, we still had a number of locals devoted to sugar and to industrial groupings such as pineapple and miscellaneous trades. We decided that for the strength of the union and its members it was better to have one consolidated local. Then we could send out the same message to all units. We would have solidarity in political action. People would have an opportunity to come together and discuss what it was that concerned them in their various industrial groupings. That's how we eventually became Local 142 in a consolidation process that began in 1947 and concluded in 1951. We ended up with one big local of longshore, sugar and pineapple, plus, later, the supermarkets, hotels, and hospitals.

In 1954 I was hired as ILWU Local 142 Social Worker. The union had moved in a new way to enhance our political power. The idea was to make sure people in the future would still know what it was to live in a plantation community.

Looking back, it is clear that what the ILWU accomplished in Hawaii was truly remarkable. In a short time we raised wages two and three times what the workers had received before, and we gave them a measure of control over their working lives. The Republicans and the sugar and pineapple growers had held unchecked power for decades. Then along came this little union, and it was able to assert their interests in a more equitable way. That's why the ILWU is still here today.