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ILWU has been trying to make facility at the Los Angeles Harbor labor employer was able to obtain loopholes, playing cat-and-mouse July 11.

Law in this land—on this planet for that matter—is pretty much property law and, not surprisingly, favors those who own the most. That leaves workers and their unions either searching for loopholes, playing cat-and-mouse games, or taking the risk of defiance and playing for all the marbles.

The ILWU has been getting a lot of experience in this lately—like it or not—and that's reflected the most. That leaves workers and their unions either searching for loopholes, playing cat-and-mouse games, or taking the risk of defiance and playing for all the marbles.

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The Los Angeles port pilots’ association (see page 11). When the ILWU member Robert Irminger is at a port linked to the Liverpool ship.

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The ILWU has always had a clear perspective on international affairs. In an outrageous and apparently successful use of gunboat diplomacy, the U.S. government, through the offices of the Federal Maritime Commission, ordered Japanese flag vessels banned from calling at American ports and those still berthed here detained Oct. 17. The plan has been put on hold while the Japanese government, shipping companies, ports and unions deliberate and ratify or reject an agreement worked out in Washington, D.C. between American and Japanese negotiators.

But the U.S. government planned to use its military during the peak season of the crop of Washington state awaiting export would just be left sitting in our ports is to interfere with dockworkers’ collective bargaining agreements.

Japanese port practices are `discriminatory.' But the ultimate effect of dockworkers’ collective bargaining agreements.

Any nation’s ships calling Japan, including its own, are held to the same criteria outward in the Japan Harbor Transportation Association’s “Prior Consultation Scheme.” American shippers’ charges of discrimination and unfair trade practices stem in part from their contention that they should have the same access to dock facilities and port labor in Japan as Japanese shippers have here. This might sound “fair” on its face, but it masks their real ambition: to legislate away hard-fought wages, benefits and conditions longshoremen have won over the years in collective bargaining, to bust the dockworkers’ unions and replace those union workers with others paid lower wages and subjected to casualization and substandard working conditions.

In Japan’s own transition from break bulk to containers, production increased, Japanese dockworkers made sacrifices and lived under the threat of the gun pointed at our heads. This ILWU has always had a clear perspective on international affairs.

This ILWU has always had a clear perspective on international affairs just as our allies, our brothers and sisters in the All Japan Dockworkers Unions, have had militant and proud traditions. They support them while pressuring our government not to impose unfair terms of the proposed agreements.

American dockworkers’ wages and benefits, and the unions will oppose it. Then we will have to decide how to support them while pressuring our government not to impose sanctions and start a trade war.

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ORENA Sagastume frowned at the pay stubs she was holding, extracted a couple notes on an envelope and frowned deeper. It's a single mom with a three- and-a-half-year-old daughter and she'd just gotten fired by Pacific Rail Services—one day before she and her co-workers at the intermodal company's Richmond, Calif., yard were to vote on representation by ILWU longshore Local 10.

Her termination letter said she was fired for poor attendance. Sagastume didn't buy it. "I only called in sick three times this year," she said. "There are a lot of people with real bad attendance, but (the managers) all know I was for the union.

Though losing her job shook her a bit, she told her co-workers, "If we don't take a chance, things will never change over there. So vote yes and don't be scared."

They listened. Refusing to bow to PBS' threats and intimidation, they went for the union September 26 with 61 percent of the vote.

Doing so, they did more than stand up to an anti-union employer. They helped the ILWU take a small step into the future, organizing to keep pace with changes in work space and technology in the industry.

"It goes back to the concept Harry Bridges put out: the container revolution is work," said ILWU International Rep. Abba Ramos. "What gives people jobs is the container in transit."

Few intermodal yards are organized now. ILWU longshore Local 13's organized now. ILWU longshore Local 13's folded under an anti-union campaign by Pacific Rail Services late last year. "ILWU Local 23 serves Pacific Rail's Tacoma Container Transfer Facility before the yard—one of Pacific's 29 intermodal facilities around the country. PBS is a subsidiary of Stevedoring Service of America, one of the world's largest stevedoring concerns.

Employees at PBS in Richmond had been thinking union for a while when Ramos stopped by one day last spring. "I just waited around there one day and happened to talk to a worker," Ramos said. "I said, 'here we are. Join the ILWU family.'"

Low wages, high stress and a work environment lousy with racism, sexism and favoritism had pushed the PBS workers past their limit. The yard runs 24 hours, seven days a week. Workers get two 15-minute breaks and a half-hour lunch, though sometimes the company tries to shave those down. They handle hazardous materials without adequate protection—in spitting distance of the Chevron refinery and the General Chemical plant whose spill in 1983 sent thousands of area residents to the hospital.

Salaries start at $6 per hour and max at $14.40 with just a few exceptions. Thibeaux said. At Tacoma, under the ILWU contract, they start at $19.

And in Richmond there's no such thing as a pay scale. "Thirteen people can do the same job for eight different wage rates," said Meredith Suttice, a member of the organizing committee.

Women, African Americans and Latinos get the jobs at the gate, the ones that start at $6, almost all the higher-paying yard jobs go to white men.

Sick days? Some people get four, some six. Some people have an accident and nothing gets said, according to Suttice. He lost a load one day—due to an equipment fault, he found out later. He was relieved of his duties for a few hours and sent to take a drug test. Seniority? Not a factor, by all accounts. When promotions come up the company hand-picks the recipients, with no bidding procedure or regard for length of service.

"If you're white, you're all right," said Frank Benjamin, a worker who asked that his real name not be used. "If you're a friend of Bob Kirchgessner, PBS area manager or Frank [Marks, the terminal manager] you're all right."

Company policies are set out in the employee handbook and mostly ignored—except for the section reminding workers they're 'at-will employees," meaning they can be fired for no cause.

"We're tired of it. All we really want is some consistency and fair pay," said Bob Lucas, who worked as a night-shift coordinator at PBS. "We want what's standard in the industry."

After Ramos made contact with the workers, Local 10 took on the organizing and formed a committee of its executive board to support the drive. Activists in the plant, like Suttice and Sagastume, talked to their co-workers or passed around union cards. Within five months, around 65 out of the 68 workers had signed. Local 10 asked for a card check recognition agreement. The company declined—and began playing hardball.

As soon as the drive began, managers began documenting everything and writing people up, various workers reported. Kirchgessner sent a letter to all employees August 28 informing them they might lose their jobs if they voted in the union. He stressed the job-loss threat in one-on-one chats with workers as well, said Suttice.

The night shift trailer mechanics, most of whom are immigrants, were threatened with deportation if they voted to union, according to Sagastume. And Kirchgessner fired Bob Lucas August 28, just days after Lucas mentioned his union sympathies to the terminal manager.

Like Sagastume, Lucas was told he was fired for taking too many sick days, though no one ever told him exactly how many he had. He had worked at the yard even before PBS took it over in 1995, and done a 14-month stint as assistant terminal manager.

"You see how they act," he said. "They fire someone who's always gotten incentive awards, been in a position of responsibility. It doesn't help my house payment and my wife's going crazy—it hurts me deeply."

A last-minute memo from the company warned the workers to be wary of "the ILWU's empty promises.

"But they knew better."

Meredith Suttice and Rishia Robinson had gone to Tacoma with Thibeaux to see first-hand what an ILWU contract meant. "They [the terminal manager] were doing all sorts of things—under pressure, stressful conditions, but they're getting paid more," Suttice observed.

In the weeks before the election, members of the Local 10 committee phoned the PBS workers to answer questions and try to dispel fears. Twice the union held "open house" at locations near the yard so workers could drop by and talk about the union.

"A lot of people were afraid they'd lose their jobs," said Local 10 Executive Board member Christine Langlands. "Part of it was just not knowing about unions, not knowing that if you join you're in less jeopardy," she said.

With the election over, the company is eager to negotiate, Thibeaux said. But now the union faces another of the challenges of organizing intermodal facilities. Like many other intermodal operators, Pacific Rail subcontracts to a rail company. If their bid is too high, the company could look elsewhere. "We're very aware of that," Thibeaux said. "But we can stabilize their workforce, increase productivity and lower accident rates, so it's they're making money and the workers should get some of it."
THE Republican Congress led by House Speaker Newt Gingrich (R-GA) and Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott (R-MS) is openly hostile to unions. For months Republican leaders have vowed to avenge organized labor's activism in the 1996 elections. President Bill Clinton has done little to stop the labor movement. Yet on issue after legislative issue unions are the odd man out and whipping these Republicans and conservative Democrats into submission. Organized labor is back as a force to be feared in American politics—and our enemies couldn't be more upset.

I am starting with the example of one union that has been winning a small victory after a big loss. Let me give you a few examples of concrete wins for the ILWU and the labor movement. The "Balanced Budget Reconciliation Act" promoted by the House Republicans expanded the number of so-called "independent contractors" at the expense of full-time union jobs and denied labor protections to hundreds of thousands of warehouse workers, and severely limit- ed unions' ability to lobby through political activity. Gingrich vigorously insisted that President Clinton sign a bill that will cause more misery for union activism.

What happened? A well-funded and aggressive union lobbying effort convinced the Senate to steer clear of controversial anti-union issues in its budget reconciliation. In no uncertain terms, the Senate let Gingrich know that if the House Republican Congress would lose a showdown with them. The House-Senate Conference dropped the independent contractor provisions, the attack on our right to picket, the restrictions on union political activism before sending the legislation to the President for his signature.

SWEET VICTORIES FOR THE ILWU

Last year we won a vote on preserving the sugar program (which protects ILWU sugar jobs in Hawaii) by a close margin. Rep. Chuck Schumer (D-NY), the program's most vocal opponent, finger-pointed to me and declared me the key Republican staffer. Schumer was predicting a win based on conservative Republicans who voted with 100 parts per million as a maximum price for raw sugar to keep sugar workers in the United States from being driven away by a cheap foreign sugar.

What happened? A well-funded sugar lobby effort convinced the Senate to steer clear of this issue in the budget reconciliation. In no uncertain terms, the Senate let Gingrich know that if the House Republican Congress would lose a showdown with them. We are very close to a deal in the Senate that could be a great victory for our union. The International Longshoremen's Association and the Transportation Trades Department of the AFL-CIO have supported our efforts.

Just last month the United States Department of Labor issued sweeping new safety regulations for longshore workers at our nation's ports. The legislation will save the lives of our mem- bers and greatly decrease the likelihood of workplace injuries. (see "Health and Safety" below)

OSHA's new longshore regs

hearings in Seattle and New Orleans and submitted extensive written comments to OSHA.

OSHA is dealing with the safety hazard of working (unprotected against falls) on container tops aboard vessels. It appears to be one of the most dangerous activities in the maritime industry. We have been very close to a deal in the Senate that could be a great victory for our union. The International Longshoremen's Association and the Transportation Trades Department of the AFL-CIO have supported our efforts.

By Russ Borgmann
ILWU Research Director

AFTER years of lobbying by the ILWU and the AFL-CIO Transportation and Health Administration (OSHA) issued a revised standard for working on container tops, covering workers handling cargo. From here on out, the new standard will go a long way towards protecting longshore workers, clerks and walking bosses working aboard vessels. The new provisions will take effect January 21, 1998. (A copy of the standard was sent to all affected affiliates and is available online at http://www.osha. slc.gov/FedReg_osha_data/Fed997077 21.html.)

The new standard addresses a number of serious issues, such as working on container tops, working with hazardous materials, and protecting against falls, that have arisen since the original standard was adopted nearly 26 years ago. Many of the provisions OSHA adopted mirror or duplicate rules in the Pacific Coast Marine Safety Code (PCMSC). For example, OSHA requires that ladders used aboard vessels be "positively secured", or held against shifting or slipping while in use," taking language directly out of Rule 1506 of the PCMSC.

The ILWU participated extensively in the process of setting the revised standards. Members of the Coast Labor Relations Committee, the Coast Safety Committee and the Research Department testified at

Labor beats the odds

By Lindsay McLaughlin
ILWU Legislative Director

ILWU stepped up in the Senate to kill a bill put forward by conservative Republicans who want to completely deregulate the nation's maritime industry. The bill would have destroyed most of the ILWU sugar jobs left in Hawaii.

Then the ILWU stepped in to stop the House of Representatives once again soundly defeated an amendment to the Agricultural Appropriations bill that would have destroyed most of the ILWU sugar jobs left in Hawaii. Unfortunately, the ILWU has to fight hard now to preserve ILWU sugar jobs in Hawaii.

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Striking port pilots hold steady

By Marcy Rein

The pilots say they're moving, runs the industry maxim: Delays and downtime just eat into profits. But since the port pilots of ILWU Local 68 went on strike at the Port of Los Angeles July 11, ships have been routinely knocked off their schedules by anywhere from two to 10 hours. Normally the port runs 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Since the strike, no ships have been allowed to move in or out of the harbor between 8 p.m. and 5 a.m. Yet Port and shipping company officials dismiss the delays as minor inconveniences.

"It seems almost as if the customer-oriented service they're supposed to be providing has become secondary to breaking the strike," said Will Baumann, a pilot and Local 68's business agent.

Los Angeles Mayor Richard Riordan doesn't hide his dislike for unions. The Harbor Department, run by mayoral appointees and senior city bureaucrats, has dug in and refused to negotiate. "They regard us as a little fish in the ILWU school," Baumann said. "But still, if they could see the big picture, they'd understand.

The newest protagonists in the fight to defend union rights on the docks are the Inlandboatmen's Union pilots. The pilots themselves start taking considerable risks to do so, Larkins said.

Most pilots work for private companies, but the 16 pilots at the Port of Los Angeles work for the city at wages considerably lower than the norm. An average pilot nets around $195,000 per year, according to a national survey by the Mercer consulting group. Under their old contract, which expired June 30, the LA pilots made $113,000. They asked to be brought up to $165,000 over the next three years. The Port didn't make its first, last, best and final offer—$135,000 after four years—until early July.

Negotiations stuck and the pilots struck, throwing up picket lines at the terminals. Members of ILWU Locals 13, 63 and 94 declined to cross, shutting down the Port.

The city immediately went to court asking for an injunction to end the strike. Los Angeles County Superior Court Judge Anita Shapiro didn't stop the strike, but did prohibit picketing at the terminal with temporary restraining order July 15. "The split the baby," said ILWU attorney Beth Garfield. "But there's no question the order greatly lessened the pickets' effectiveness."

That order was solidified in a preliminary injunction two weeks later. The pilots began picketing in boats, hoping to turn back the union crews who work the tugboats assisting ships through the harbor. The city got a temporary restraining order and then an injunction against the picket boats. The pilots began picketing at the Harbor Dept. The city got a TBO restricting picketing there. "The Court took away what we've all believed to be our basic rights," Larkins said.

But the pilots have hung in, picketing as permitted. Locals 13, 63 and 94 donated $120,000 to the pilots' union. "We've been very helpful to us," Larkins said.

Meanwhile the pilot service continues to run with four men—two scales and two management pilots. "We've been down to 25 percent of the normal work force," said Baumann. "We're losing money, the city and the employers mobilize the problems, but questions about the safety and efficiency of the operation persist."

The U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) Marine Safety Office has monitored the scab operation closely since the strike began. The USCG immediately ordered that each pilot get a minimum of 10 hours of continuous rest each day, and forbade ship movements between 8 p.m. and 5 a.m.

Officers also began riding with the pilots to assess their stress and fatigue levels, a practice they stopped for a while then took up again as the strike passed its third month.

"At this moment we're convinced the operation is safe," said USCG Commander Kenneth Keane, who is in charge of the monitoring. "But the Coast Guard is concerned that it can't go on forever. If this continues for a prolonged period it will be hard to maintain the same level of safety with a greatly reduced work force."

"On the docks things are all out of kilter," said one Local 13 veteran who asked that his name be not used. The nightly shut-downs keep ships waiting at berth or at anchor and create morning and evening rush hours. One October morning six ships were waiting to move at 5 a.m., with three pilots working. The ship due at 8 a.m. tied up three hours later, while one set to leave at 6 didn't go until 8:30. Crews called to tie and untie the ships and to work the cargo stood idly by—and this goes on every day, say union sources.

"These delays create inconveniences rather than big problems," said Jay Winter of the Steamship Association, which represents operators and agents. "The most serious problems come up if ships have Panama Canal dates. A few have missed their dates and been delayed by a day. Otherwise, the labor shortage is much more of an obstacle than the pilots' strike."

The City of Los Angeles, however, is incurring substantial costs to keep the scab service going. Two months into the strike, it paid the four strikebreakers a total of $62,078 for two weeks' work, according to figures obtained from the Controllers Office by Local 68. This would have paid 10 of the other locals who picked up the work and went on strike by the union. The city is also running an extra pilot boat to shuttle the scabs around faster, boarding the scabs in hotels, and paying police overtime to escort scabs to work and keep an eye on the pickets, said Local 68's Baumann.

Despite the expense, the city has rejected several attempts at resolving the strike. The pilots indicated they'd be willing to work for a private employer as long as they could maintain their ILWU affiliation. In fact, that might make it easier for them to earn industry-standard wages, Baumann said. Though a study done for the city by management consultants Booz Allen and Hamilton recommended such a step two years ago, and a subsidiary of Stevedoring Services of America expressed interest in bidding on the contract, the city rejected the proposal. Neither a company offering the pilots nor a proposal by Los Angeles City Councilman Rudy Svorinch got traction.

Sizing up the situation, Local 68 President Larkins concluded, "The Harbor Dept. is in concert with the PMA and the terminal operators, is engaged in a determined effort to break the strike."

When this possibility was suggested to Jay Winter at the Steamship Association, he abruptly announced he had a very important phone call and had to go immediately.

Sources on the docks say management's attitude toward the strike reflects a hostile new posture by the union. "I've never seen a threat like this by PMA," said the Local 13 veteran. One telling example: PMA has refused to let the pilots get casual cards, breaking a long-standing agreement that let Local 13 give out temporary cards so striking members and others could pick up some work on the waterfront.

"There used to be a sense of mutual respect when we worked together," said Coast Committeeman Ray Ortiz. "Now that's out the door. PMA is going out of the bounds of the labor contracts, doing whatever it wants. Unless we pull together, it'll destroy us when we go to the table in '99."
Union reaches pact with LAXT

By Steve Stallone

T HOUGH hamstrung by court injunctions, the ILWU still pulled out a settlement with LAXT that, while not bringing total victory, did not compromise.

Southern California ILWU longshore Locals 13, 63 and 94 initiated an agreement in principle with Pacific Carbon Services, the operator of the giant coal export facility, Oct. 9. The document still awaits final language, which signers expect sometime in November. Both sides made concessions, but the union remains in a position to pursue its concerns.

The Los Angeles Export Terminal (LAXT) was built to funnel coal from the Western U.S. to the voracious economies of Asia, especially Japan.

In November 1995, just two months after construction began, the LAXT board awarded the contract to operate the facility to PCS, a Utah-based, anti-labor company. PCS immediately declared it would hire its own non-union workers—and the ILWU saw the threat to its control of work at the Los Angeles/Long Beach Harbor.

Beginning in January 1996, L.A.-area locals held demonstrations and work stoppages, petitioned and lobbied government agencies, sued and intervened at permit hearings.

But on Sept. 22, just a few weeks before the facility was to receive its first ship, PCS got an NLRB injunction from federal court prohibiting the ILWU from taking any action to force PCS to assign LAXT work to the union. Under this order, the union couldn’t picket, stop work, or otherwise exercise its power effectively.

So the ILWU entered negotiations with its strongest cards pulled from the deck. Still the union was able to come away with the shoreside jobs. The crane operator jobs, the clerk jobs, the longshore jobs, the sweeper jobs, the swingmen jobs, the supercargo jobs and the maintenance and repair jobs will all be ILWU. The backland jobs, receiving and dumping the trains and running the bulldozers, will remain non-union.

"We still have the ability to control the flow of cargo," said Peter Peyton, Vice President of the ILWU’s Southern California District Council and special project coordinator for Locals 13, 63 and 94.

"That was one of our key issues.

The union also made some minor concessions on the legal front. It agreed not to fund or assist the union couldn’t picket, stop work, or otherwise exercise its power effectively.

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In November 1995, just two months after construction began, the LAXT board awarded the contract to operate the facility to PCS, a Utah-based, anti-labor company. PCS immediately declared it would hire its own non-union workers—and the ILWU saw the threat to its control of work at the Los Angeles/Long Beach Harbor.

Beginning in January 1996, L.A.-area locals held demonstrations and work stoppages, petitioned and lobbied government agencies, sued and intervened at permit hearings.

But on Sept. 22, just a few weeks before the facility was to receive its first ship, PCS got an NLRB injunction from federal court prohibiting the ILWU from taking any action to force PCS to assign LAXT work to the union. Under this order, the union couldn’t picket, stop work, or otherwise exercise its power effectively.

So the ILWU entered negotiations with its strongest cards pulled from the deck. Still the union was able to come away with the shoreside jobs. The crane operator jobs, the clerk jobs, the longshore jobs, the sweeper jobs, the swingmen jobs, the supercargo jobs and the maintenance and repair jobs will all be ILWU. The backland jobs, receiving and dumping the trains and running the bulldozers, will remain non-union.

“We still have the ability to control the flow of cargo," said Peter Peyton, Vice President of the ILWU’s Southern California District Council and special project coordinator for Locals 13, 63 and 94.

“That was one of our key issues.

The union also made some minor concessions on the legal front. It agreed not to fund or assist the

By Steve Stallone

T HOUGH hamstrung by court injunctions, the ILWU still pulled out a settlement with LAXT that, while not bringing total victory, did not compromise.

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By Tom Price

CANADIAN Area longshore workers found a surprise holiday and a long weekend waiting for them when they arrived for work Friday night. The crew of the Greek-owned, Cypriot-flagged ship SK Junior unfurled an "on strike" banner, and after walking the picket line, decided to return to the ship for the rest of the shift.

"We wouldn't allow the ship to move until we got guarantees from the agent and the captain that no actions would be taken against the crew," Keith said. With assurances of solidarity from the ILWU and other unions, the crew stayed on board.

"The first officer was a big, mean son-of-a-bitch. He really intimidated the crew," Keith said. "But that crew was solid. There was only one youngster there, he could speak English better than I could and we used him to translate. He was solid and smart. He knew if they stayed on the ship they'd get paid, but if they had left, which has happened in the past, then the ship just cuts and runs and leaves the poor bastards stranded."

Keith's assurance of support for the crew moved the ship to anchorage in English Bay, away from dock, saving the ship's owners docking fees of $1000 an hour and removing any possibility of an "innocent third party injunction" against the longshore workers.

HANDOFF TO THE ITF

ITF inspector Peter Lahay arrived home from holiday the following day to find urgent messages waiting. He contacted the crew to let them know that he would be out to inspect the ship and begin negotiations with the owners and officers.

This was by no means the first time Lahay had dealings with the 22-year old ship and her owner, Stamatis Kasmas. In February 1996 Kasmas signed an agreement with the ITF recognizing the Pan-Hellenic Seamen's Federation contract. That crew jumped ship in Vancouver shortly thereafter, asking for refugee status. This has happened on five occasions since January 1996 on the SK Junior. Canadian immigration officials have charged the owner more than $55,000 to cover costs. The most alarming case occurred this April when a Chinese stowaway jumped ship and drowned in the harbor. The identity of the body has not been established and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police are still investigating.

Lahay arrived on board early Monday morning to meet with the captain. By this time the ship was under detention by the harbor authorities, one of 57 out of 454 foreign ships inspected to be detained at the port this year for safety violations. Examining the cargo, Lahay convinced Kasmas that the crew was paid below the rates agreed upon under the Greek seafarers' agreement. On the other side of the table, the ship's owner flew in Tuesday night for the meeting Wednesday and was joined by the labor broker from Indonesia, who arrived with sketchy employment records. Meanwhile the Cyprus Maritime Office got into the act, sending their maritime attaché from the Port of all the waterfront workers.

Puget Sound gets new ITF Inspector

By Marcy Rein

Lila Smith hadn't officially started her career as the new Puget Sound area ITF inspector when she got her first call. In fact, she was on her way to the grocery store when she got a mysterious page from a man who barely spoke English. Turns out he was one of nine Bulgarian seafarers stranded without money or work in the area ITF inspector when she got her page. She met them at the Seamen's Center in Seattle the next day and, working with a staffer from the Catholic Seamen's Center, got the five o'clock news to run a story on their plight.

"Needless to say, it was several hours before I got to the grocery store that first night," Smith said.

Fortright and enthusiastic, Smith became the first woman ITF inspector in the U.S. when she took office September 1—and the only woman currently working the job anywhere in the world. The ITF (International Transport Workers Federation) links more than 470 unions representing workers in 120 countries and all the transportation industries.

Before she took the ITF job, Smith worked as a terminal attendant and ticket-seller for the Washington State Ferry System. She joined the Inlandboatmen's Union in 1988 and soon won election to several union positions: steward (1992), representative to ILWU's Puget Sound Regional Executive Board (1993), delegate to the ILWU National Convention, delegate to the IUMU International Convention and to the Washington State Labor Council.

Smith also studied for her B.A. at Evergreen State College's "New School for Union Organizers," several AFL-CIO trainings and her IBU experiences, she now facilitates workshops for other union activists.

Delegates at the ILWU 30th Convention saw Smith in action when she presented the name-change resolution, which she and her co-worker Lee Hewitt drafted. It took three years and several setbacks to get there, Smith said, "but it was the right thing to do."

As an inspector, Smith works for the Flag of Convenience (FOC) campaign, a joint project of the ITF and its affiliated seafarers' and longshore workers' unions. Inspectors regularly visit ships in port to make sure they meet the Federation's minimum standards for wages and working conditions. They pressure ship owners to sign contracts upholding those conditions—and when violations occur, they are often the crew's only recourse.

Inspectors can negotiate on behalf of the workers with the muscle of the ITF member unions behind them: ITF unions may take industrial action to support the crews of FOC ships.

"The ITF is a leader of global organizing for representation of workers and maintenance of industry standards," Smith said. "I'm just totally honored that they would consider a rank-and-filer to do this important job helping seafarers. I am eager to devote my energies to it."

New York and threatening to pull their flag down.

NEGOTIATING WITH MUSCLE

Lahay heard through waterfront connections that the owner planned to bring in a Ukrainian crew and cancelled talks scheduled for Wednesday night. IUWU stewards weighed in with the sailors, raising the possibility of a refusal to work on a struck ship after finishing lifeboat repairs. Pressure against the ship's owner rose as George MacPherson of the Marine Workers and Boilermakers Industrial Union made quiet inquiries with the repair company and expressed his members' concern over the treatment of the sailors, which got back to Kasmas.

"It didn't take more than a few minutes for the owner to feel the heat. They asked me again to come out to the vessel," Lahay said. The owner had a whole gang on deck, ranging from his various agents to the Cyprus Flag Inspector and the Polish Ship Classification agent. These latter two fellows "interjected on the owner's behalf and I told them where to get off and they did," he said. Management stuck to its original offer, however. Negotiations went from bad to worse, and Lahay broke off for the day.

Friday at noon the ship's agent called Lahay and expressed Kasmas' eagerness for a settlement. The cargo owner was arriving from Korea with a brieefcase full of documents and questions about his $20 million cargo, half of which was in the ship at anchor, and the other half on the docks, waiting to be loaded. Smelling a lawsuit threat, the owner had his lawyers waiting at the airport, Kasmas was willing to give in to the crew's demands.

Lahay and the captain negotiated the final payouts and the 12 crew members got $90,000. The striking crewmen left the ship at six o'clock Saturday for a three-star downtown hotel and their first decent meal in months.

"We were a very happy lot and so was I in view of the fact that this was an extremely tough case and the owner appeared to have a strong hand with his documentation," Lahay said.

"All we really had was our determination and instincts and the support of all the waterfront workers here at the Port of Vancouver."
Fun and union work never retire
By Arne Auvinen
PCPA Secretary-Treasurer

The ILWU Pacific Coast Pensioners Association held its 30th Annual Convention Sept. 15, 16 and 17 at the West Coast Long Beach Hotel in Long Beach, Calif., which included both ILWU delegates and guests attending. Along with taking care of business, the delegates enjoyed a farewell luncheon of the Lone Victory, a World War II Liberty Ship. Southern California locals hosted a banquet and barbecue.

Guest speakers were International President Brian McInnis; International Benefits Specialist Jim Santana, whom we all know; Beverly O'Neal, mayor of Long Beach; Charlie Wallace, Southern California PMA vice-president; and Gerald Fisher, President of the Propeller Club. Peggy Chandler, President of the Southern California Auxiliaries, welcomed the delegation and guests to Long Beach.

Delegates tabled the issue of the pending Article XXIII. They would charter pension clubs and give them status within the International Union. The PCPA Convention referred this proposal to the PCPA. This issue may be taken up at the next PCPA Convention.

PCPA Officers elected are: President—Joe Lucas, San Francisco; Bay Pensioners; First Vice-President—Lou Loveridge, Southern California Pensioners; Second Vice-President—John Ebyh, Local 23a Tacoma Pensioners; and Secretary-Treasurer—Arne Auvinen, Long Beach Pensioners.

Executive Board members elected are: Paul McCabe, Seattle; Phil Lelli, Northern California; Larry Clark, Eugene; Paul Evereld, Lower Columbia River Small Ports; Jean Brown, Portland; Bill Ward, Wilmington; Bill Fowler, Los Angeles; Robert Bolato, Southern California Small Ports.

The new Harry Bridges Board of Directors are: Ray Singer, Southern California; Joe Mosby, Northern California; and John Aird and John Ebyh, Washington Area.

PCPA Auxiliaries representatives are: Bruce Krieger, Welfare Representative and Art Almeida, Auxiliary Coordinator.

Resolutions passed at the Convention included:

1. Nomination of Harry Bridges for ILWU Pensioners. BE IT RESOLVED: The present tier of pension compensation be eliminated (ILWU-PMA pension plan) and the new PCPA pension plan retires the same retirement benefits. 

2. Welfare Benefit Status. Due to the confusion since the removal of labels from the ILWU-PMA Welfare Supplementary Plan Description Booklet, pertaining to lifelong retirement and medical benefits. BE IT RESOLVED: That a COLA program be established for all ILWU-PMA pension card holders.

3. Welfare Benefit Status. BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That the ILWU-PMA plan be brought up to modern day standards. BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That a COLA program be established for all ILWU-PMA pension card holders.

4. Welfare Benefit Status. BE IT RESOLVED: That the OMCA program be established for all ILWU-PMA pension card holders.

5. Resolution reaffirming past opposition to NAFTA and opposing fast track schemes to extend it to Central and South America. BE IT RESOLVED: That this 30th Annual Convention of the Pacific Coast Pensioners Association (PCPA) reaffirms its opposition to NAFTA and that letters and phone calls be directed as soon as possible to Pacific coast congressional delegations urging them to vote against the current “fast track” deal to extend NAFTA. BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That our Local Pension Clubs and active members be urged to participate in similar communications.

6. Resolution in support of a National Labor Committee and a National Day of Conscience to End Sweatshop petition campaign. BE IT RESOLVED: This 30th Convention of the PCPA (1) endorses the National Labor Committee’s petition drive and the National Day of Conscience to End Sweatshops. (2) That delegates in attendance be urged to sign the End Sweatshops Petitions while at the Convention and that delegates be requested to participate in similar communications. (3) With a copy of the petition attached to this resolution, the ILWU-PMA will be a signatory to the National Day of Conscience to End Sweatshops Petition.

7. Resolution in support of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), including a provision for the Independent Contractors Party’s 28th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. BE IT RESOLVED: That the PCPA Convention go on record as supporting this resolution.

8. Resolution in support of a National Day of Conscience to End Sweatshops Petition campaign. BE IT RESOLVED: That the PCPA Convention go on record as supporting this resolution.

9. Resolution outlining key action issues, ILWU/Pensioners Agenda. BE IT RESOLVED: That the resolution be attached to this resolution, containing a list of key action issues which will be addressed in the U.S. Congress.

10. Resolution outlining key action issues, ILWU/Pensioners Agenda. BE IT RESOLVED: That the resolution be included as an addendum to the PCPA Convention report, which will be submitted along with our request for the inclusion of Harry Bridges’ name to the Labor Party Five Score List Committee.

11. Resolution on House Bill 80. BE IT RESOLVED: This is a bill to modify the “Made in America” label to include products if only 75 percent of manufacturing costs are incurred in the United States. BE IT RESOLVED: The 1997 PCPA Convention is opposed to this rule change by Congress and instructs our principle officers to compose letters stating our opposition to House Bill 80. BE IT RESOLVED: That this resolution be taken up to help effect the amendment to the rule change by Congress. And, each and every one of us do the same by phone or letter.

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Federated Auxiliaries Convention Report
By Margo Erickson
Oregon Vice President

The ILWU Federated Auxiliaries meet regularly to renew the common bond we share as sisters of the ILWU family; to support one another and in any family, the relationship between members must be nurtured. We held our 28th Biennial Convention May 30-June 2, 1997 in Newport, Ore. Several of the resolutions and stories from the Convention will be included in this Auxiliary member newsletter.

The Convention addressed a range of ILWU and general labor issues, including survivor pensions, health care, early childhood education in the U.S. and social security privatization. Delegates also read and discussed many resolutions from the union’s International Convention in April, since the resolutions affecting ILWU members affect their families as well.

The Convention also elected new Auxiliary officers. They are: President: Jean Ordano of Chermansus, British Columbia, Ramona; Vice President Clara Sambro of Portland, Oregon; Secretary Pat Marks of Longview, Washington; Treasurer Pat Dunlap of Everett, Washington; Washington Vice President Dawn Fowler of Longview; Oregon Vice President Margo Erickson of North Wilmington, Oregon; and Southern California Vice President Peggy Chandler of Wilmington.

The top priority for the Auxiliaries at this time is finding an effective way to increase participation in local auxiliary groups. Each local brought a report to the Convention and shared ideas about ways we as auxiliary members can make a difference in our individual communities. When dedicated women go out and do things, they uphold the positive image of the ILWU, and unions in general. But realizing how much is being done now, we get frustrated knowing how much more could be accomplished with a larger membership.

Like many organizations, unions included, we’re fighting an uphill battle against complacent attitudes. We have often felt that even our own union members do not always recognize what a valuable resource they have in the auxiliaries.

At our Convention delegates decided to mail informational letters to families of ILWU members in their local communities. The letters explain what the auxiliary groups are doing and, hopefully, spark interest in helping to shape the future of the Federated Auxiliaries.

Many families in the ILWU do not fully realize that the benefits they receive are not set in stone and must be fought for each contract year. The struggle to retain what we have is important and must be shared equally by all who benefit daily from the sacrifices made by our union brothers and sisters more than 50 years ago. The apathy that has taken a foothold in the union movement, and in the ILWU family as well, dis honors those who came before us. If we expect to keep the life and benefits we now enjoy, we must gain ground for ILWU members and their families in the future, we must find the way to re-ignite a spirit of sacrifice and service.
Local 142 Convention: Democracy and organizing

By Meil Chang
Editor, Voice of the ILWU

FACED with declining membership and an unprecedented management attack, ILWU Local 142 was in a tough position as it faced the challenge. Delegates committed the Local to increased organizing to retain members and build the ILWU Local 142 to meet the needs of today's working families and Democrats held the convention. The convention was asked to raise per capita dues to fund the new programs and keep the union strong.

The convention, held in Honolulu from September 22-26, 1997, was one of the smallest in 40 years, with 460 delegates and 47 officers. It was also one of the hardest-working. Three sessions ran until 11:00 p.m., so delegates could finish reviewing, considering and acting on 116 constitutional amendments, 30 resolutions and 20 reports from six committees.

DEMOCRACY SUSTAINED

After spirited discussions on several of the constitutional amendments, overrepresenting membership of the delegates to vote to preserve the democratic structure and traditions of the ILWU. The trouped resolutions to change business agents from elected officers to appointed employees and uphold the collective leadership of the three Titled Officers, rejecting proposals to centralize decision-making authority to the president.

They also registered their preference for democracy by increasing the size of negotiating caucuses and committees and increasing the size of ballot committees, and providing for more Convention delegates from smaller units.

Delegates strongly supported the need for officers to be more accountable to members and members to the union. They adopted a series of constitutional amendments that allow supervision or discharge of union officers and staff who neglect their responsibilities to the membership.

Delegates also voted to create a new central panel to handle charges against union officers or members and disputes arising from union elections.

The convention sealed its commitment to organizing by approving a budget allocating as much as $1 million a year to build the union by organizing the unorganized.

Local 142’s Constitution requires all amendments and resolutions of the Convention be submitted to the membership for ratification. A majority vote of those present or those voting by mail at the three membership meetings constitutes ratification.

The special membership meetings to ratify the actions of the 21st Convention will be held between Nov. 24 and Dec. 12.

UNION FINANCES APPROVED

Convention delegates unanimously adopted a three-year budget based on a substantial dues increase. Local 142 members now pay 1.5 percent of their gross income in dues, one of the lowest rates in Hawaii.

Delegates also adopted an amendment raising dues to a maximum of 2 percent of gross income and giving the local the authority to lower dues if the union’s financial situation changes.

The biggest reason for the dues increase was the decline in membership. The convention had 30,000 members in 1989, but had to increase dues just to maintain existing services and programs. The money is being used to revitalize organizing, negotiations and education in order to rebuild the ILWU membership. Organizers have to become a priority of the union.

The adopted budget does not include a wage increase for the Full-Time fund trustees and managers and for Full-Time Officers were frozen in 1992, adjusted on January 1, 1995, and adjusted again in 1997.

The Full-Time Officers felt everyone needs to sacrifice in difficult economic times to keep the union strong.

LOCAL TITLED OFFICERS Nominated

On the last day of the Convention, delegates nominated candidates for the three titled officers’ positions. The nominees for Local 142 President were incumbent Eusebio “Bo” Lapania and Danford Kanu. Kanu comes from Unit 4404- Pacific Highway. Local Vice-President Robert G. Gillard and Secretary-Treasurer Guy Frieboth, ILWU International Executive Board member and warehouse Local 6 Business Agent Fred Pecker and I we seated near the 1100 -time union leaders. The section was special- ly heavy on the blue suits and strong canteen, but elsewhere in the hall diversity was lacking as well. From the podium AFL-CIO President John Sweeney encouraged unions to make the Convention look more like their membership by expanding to involve more women, people of color and young people.

An impressive list of political speakers—from President Clinton on down—addressed the Convention. Clinton was booed when he defended NAFTA and his plans to extend free trade to the rest of the hemisphere without adequate labor and human rights protections. But at least he was up front about his disagreement with labor on these issues.

House Minority Leader Richard Gephardt rapped into the White House last week to talk about NAFTA and Chile. He delivered a strong presentation complete with slides of the President’s speeches on economic matters, the NAFTA issue, and the labor rights and labor programs on the U.S.-Mexico border. These problems have been exacerbated by NAFTA and by multinational corporations’ penchant to beat down workers and destroy the environment abroad.

Several significant Convention resolutions took place at the Federation’s new agenda into concrete goals.

Resolution #1, “Building a Broad Labor Movement,” took aim at the decline of the labor movement that has allowed so much economic harm to working families over the past two decades. To reclaim the economy and give working families a real voice in our government, we must build a larger and stronger American labor movement. In this resolution, the AFL-CIO promised to lead an expanded “Changing to Organize” program and help unions craft strategic plans to support a greater focus on organizing. By the year 2000, the Federation wants to see hundreds of new staff organizers and tens of thousands of volunteer member-organizers trained, and millions of union dollars shifted to raise $1 billion for organizing.

The Federation seeks to establish the right to organize as the civil rights issue of the next decade. As part of effecting this shift in attitude, it plans to educate the public about the obstacles workers face when they try to unionize, and lay the groundwork for a labor-law reform effort.

A resolution entitled “A New Voice for Workers in a Changing Global Economy” tackled the theme of representing workers in a changing economy. Increasingly, unions have challenged management’s authority at all levels, from the shop floor and the bargaining table to the boardroom and Wall Street. Unions are looking to their counterparts abroad to help with such initiatives.

This resolution committed the AFL-CIO to working with other national trade union federations and organizations to develop labor’s capacity to organize multinational corporations the world over and strengthen our ability to bargain collectively. The Federation will also work with non-governmental organizations on human rights issues such as stopping child labor, enforcing workers’ rights, and pushing codes that support workers’ interests in the era of globalization. This policy statement marks a giant step forward in the fight to end the Meany and Kirkland days, when collaboration with the CIA in fighting the Cold War was the major priority for the American labor movement.

Under the “New Voice” resolution, the AFL-CIO also pledged to better organize financial assets, to train pension fund trustees and managers to support workers interest more effectively, and to help national unions develop stronger political programs and keep the union strong.

General Membership Ratifying

The Convention successfully passed a progressive agenda—now we must do our part to propel the resolutions into action.

Local 142 Convention: Organizing for a changing future

By Lindsay McLaughlin
ILWU Legislative Director

PISTCUIK, Pennsylvania has been the site of the bloody 1902 coal- miners’ strike, an early stronghold of the Congress of Under the “New Voice” resolution, the AFL-CIO also pledged to better organize financial assets, to train pension fund trustees and managers to support workers interest more effectively, and to help national unions develop stronger political programs.

The Convention successfully passed a progressive agenda—now we must do our part to propel the resolutions into action.
CANADA—The Saint John, New "Supporters of Liverpool" showed up to see which ships are coming and to canteen meeting in Liverpool where dockers voted to support the action.

AUSTRALIA—All major ports were "The fight in Liverpool inspires us to conspiracy" and have threatened sackings at the gates. Port authorities have the government carries out its threat to complete the return to the bad old days of realised that the Thatcher government abolished the agreement which secured dock work- and secure jobs. Members met at their local union halls to discuss how the threats of privatisation and casualization are looming over dock workers around the world, hitting closest to home in Los Angeles. There the city has leased the operation of a coal export facility known as the Los Angeles Export Terminal (LAXT) to a private company who was attempting to run it with non-union labor (see story page 6).

New Zealand—The Auckland stop-work meeting Sept. 8 was 90 percent effective. Only volunteer dockers worked and then only to move essential cargo. In Parliament, the left-wing Labour Party opposed a letter to the Britain's new Labour government demanding it use its power as co-owner of the port to re-state the dockers.

Holland—Dockers in Amsterdam met and viewed "The Flickering Flame," a Ken Loach film about Liverpool and privatization. Workers in Rotterdam and Amsterdam have engaged in a number of "self-orga- nized strikes" to fight further attempts to casualize their jobs. The five dockers in Amsterdam protest are independent, not union-unionized.

AUSTRALIA—All major ports were hit by stoppages of five hours or more on the day and night shifts. MUA Deputy Branch Secretary Jim Donovan spoke in Liverpool Sept. 27, that the "unusual support" is due to dockers' sacking, pledging continuing sup- port. The right-wing government in Australia, Brazil and Holland, unionists are facing heavy pressure on their own docks. Liverpool has become a symbol for their local struggles, as longshore workers look over the hori- zon from which ships are coming and whether they represent union-busting.

BRITISH workers have watched their steady longshore jobs be eliminated since 1989, when the Thatcher government abolished the agreements that protected dockers' rights under a union contract. Wages for those still working have plunged. Unemployment among dockers is high.

Around 500 Liverpool dockers, the last of Britain's unionized dockwork-ers, got the suck September 27, 1995 for refusing to cross a picket line. Their employer, Mersey Docks and Harbor Co., thought the dockers were ready to return to work. Dockers sent six people, including ILWU longshore Local 10 Executive Board member Jack Heyman, to discuss the issues with representatives of ILWU Local 269 President David Donovan spoke in Liverpool Sept. 27, later convening a meeting with truckers to discuss the Liverpool situation, which may have impacted productivity.

UNITED KINGDOM—Secondary boycotts are spreading to all the streets. BBC Radio Merseyside ran a nasty editorial that called for a pathetic reception. Sacked Liverpool dockers worked and then only to move essential cargo. In Parliament, the left-wing Labour Party opposed a letter to the Britain's new Labour government demanding it use its power as co-owner of the port to reinstate the dockers.

NEW ZEALAND—The Auckland stop-work meeting Sept. 8 was 90 percent effective. Only volunteer dockers worked and then only to move essential cargo. In Parliament, the left-wing Labour Party opposed a letter to the Britain's new Labour government demanding it use its power as co-owner of the port to re-state the dockers.

PORTUGAL—The ports of Leixos and Aveiro shut down for the morn- ing shift on Sept. 10 while dockers in Lisbon were on strike. The strike was a symbol for their local struggles, as longshore workers look over the horizon from which ships are coming and whether they represent union-busting.

SOUTH AFRICA—Liverpool dockers, said his local "did not carry on our own struggle in support of Liverpool dockers. The right-wing government in Australia is trying to bust the MUA of 60 port stewards in Cape Town who represent union-busting.


dockers battled privatization and casualization for union contracts and secure jobs. Members met at their local union halls to discuss how the threats of privatisation and casualization are looming over dock workers around the world, hitting closest to home in Los Angeles. There the city has leased the operation of a coal export facility known as the Los Angeles Export Terminal (LAXT) to a private company who was attempting to run it with non-union labor (see story page 6).

At the Los Angeles-Long Beach Harbor 32 vessels were in port when longshoremen walked out. The Port of Oakland had two ships at berth at that time. The work stoppage held up three ships and delayed two trains in Portland. Earlier that day Seattle long- shore workers aboard ships bound for Hong Kong proposed to discuss the Liverpool situation, which may have impacted productivity.

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Australia is the strictest in the world, giving man- agement powerful weapons against workers' solidarity. In spite of this, Belfast dockers and sailors hold up ships bound for Wales, Ireland and Liverpool.

Trucks turned back at the Belfast port gates. The Thatcher government abolished the dockers' homes.

In London Sept. 29, 20 members of the anti-authoritarian group Reclaim the Streets picketed the residence of Mersey Docks Chairman Gordon Waddell. Donovan spoke in Liverpool Sept. 27, later convening a meeting with truckers to discuss the Liverpool situation, which may have impacted productivity.

A London support group picketed the Port of Sheerness Sept. 27. Since 8 Sheerness is 100 percent owned by MD&HC, Auto transit stewards came out in protest. The Stewards Union later convening a meeting with truckers to discuss the further support.

That support showed solidly Sept. 29 when Liverpool dockers and sup- porters occupied cranes at Sheerness. Truckers refused to cross lines loaded, leaving autos sitting on the docks as they drove off empty.

In Liverpool Sept. 27, a crowd of 7,000 turned out for a rally marking the second anniversary of the firing of the dockers. Arney Williams, from the British Independent Party of Tacoma, addressed the rally, as did Bjorn Borg from the Swedish dockers' workers union, Jim Donohue from the Maritime Union of Australia and Mike Williams of New Zealand.

France—Workers in Le Havre engaged in a number of "self-orga- nized strikes" to fight further attempts to casualize their jobs. The five dockers in Amsterdam protest are independent, not union-unionized.

IN Canada—The Saint John, New Brunwick port shut down for 24 hours. The Port of Halifax, Nova Scotia shut down for four hours after "Supporters of Liverpool" showed up at the gates. Port authorities have accused longshore workers of "con- spiracy" and have threatened sackings of their own if jobs actions continue. The Saint John dockers' strike has been worse for the shipper, as 600 dele- gatees were attending Port Days at the Woodbine Casino Convention Centre in Halifax. Six Liverpool dockers picketed the entrance to the Halterm and no truckers, no dock and 170 dock workers did not cross.

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The Neptune Jade vacations in Oakland

By Tom Price

OAKLAND, CALIF.—The second anniv-
erary of the sacking of the Liverpool
dockers was ushered in early Sunday,
Oct. 19, with cargo loaded at Thamesport,
England. The port authority there, Medway
Ports, which also provide the pilotage,
is 100 percent owned by Mersey Docks
and Harbour Company (MD&HC), which
sacked the Liverpool dockers. According
to Lloyd's List, the vessel may also have
parted, fruitless, shipped from the Port of
Sheerness, a subsidiary of MD&HC.

The International Committee for
Victory to the Liverpool Dockers
threw up a picket line in front of Berth
23 at 7 a.m. Sunday. The pickets were as
many as 65 people walked the line that
morning, among them sympathetic
unionists and members of the Laney
College Labor Studies Club, the IWW,
and an anti-NAFTA group.

Longshore workers respected the
line and stayed out. The Pacific
Maritime Association (PMA), the
employer organization, immediately
sought arbitration. Representatives
from ILWU longshore Local 10 and clerks
Local 34 argued against crossing
the picket line itself represented a threat to
the Port Authority there, Medway Ports,
Thamesport, England. The port
sought arbitration. Representatives
100 percent owned by Mersey Docks
and Harbour Company (MD&HC),
ruled that although it was not a bona
fide strike, the picketing was a vote of
represent, a health and safety hazard,
workers weren't required to cross. He
reaffirmed the same ruling for both
Sunday evening and Monday morn-
ing when the line would be crossed.
Monday afternoon PMA went to
Alameda County Superior Court seeking
an injunction to order against the
picketing, a move denied by Judge Sandra
Margulies because it would restrict
freedom of ILWU Local 10 and clerks
Local 34 to be heard on Nov. 10.

The ship sat at berth through mid-
night; Tuesday night it left to make the
morning of Oct. 28. "It has been a tremen-
dous morale-booster for our dockers
who have been on strike for two years
now," he said.

But the Neptune Jade's odyssey was
not yet over. It cruised up the West
Coast of the U.S., arriving in
Vancouver, British Columbia at 9 a.m.
Oct. 4. The ship's agent advised ILWU
Local 500 if longshore workers there
would work the ship, and was
informed that cabin cargo would not be
unloaded if a picket line were in place.
The morning shift arrived on the
dock to find a picket line that
pier stood firm. Five Japanese
container trucks were parked in the
middle of Maritime Avenue in front of
the gate, along with four
other containers meant for the
ship. Longshore workers arriving for
the night shift drove on by.

The ship's crew, out on shore
leave for the day, arrived by taxi and
were welcomed across the line. They
stopped for leaflets and a friendly chat with picketers, who encouraged
them to get aboard so the ship could
leave, which it did at midnight.

The company then sent out person-
al letters to all former MD&HC
dockers, offering the bay an individual basis and informed
the media that "up to 50 men" had
responded. They are being charged with violent
and intimidating picketing and con-
damages. Donations are urgently
needed to pay the defense costs and the
company's figures, but point out that even if they are accurate, that they are not the
company's, but the dockers'

No sooner had the results come
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The ship's agent advised ILWU
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The ship blocked the main entrance,
before marching on the Coastal
Terminall, an operation under way reportedly bound for Japan. Docks and picketers cheered
prema-
taneously as the ship sailed south to
anchor while another vessel dis-
charged cargo at Berth 23. The
Neptune Jade is scheduled to arrive
at 7 a.m. Sunday, Nov. 20, but no crew was available to
unload it. Protestors were not fooled for

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DAY OF CONSCIENCE RALLIES AGAINST NAFTA FAST TRACK AND SWEATSHOPS

Recent exposés of sweatshop conditions in plants manufacturing GAP, Nike, Disney and Kathy Lee Gifford apparel have shocked the nation and shamed the companies into at least pretending they respect human rights. But the push to campaign to rein in sweatshop exploiters has not been matched by the same actions around the country Oct. 4.

“Most people in this country are sickened by the idea of goods produced by children or by young teenage girls working 12, 13 hour shifts for starvation wages under armed guards and stripped of their right to organize,” said Charles Kerertime, executive director of the National Labor Committee (NLC), an organization fighting child and sweatshop labor.

To provide an outlet for those feelings the NLC declared Oct. 4 a “Day of Conscience” and worked with the AFL-CIO and UNITE to organize action across the country. Constituencies pay a living wage and be held accountable for their human rights practices. The NLC was in touch with hundreds of other unions, community organizations, student and religious groups, make-up artists, and even organized their own 4 events. San Francisco’s O’Farrell-Carmel action began with a town meeting debating NAFTA and fast track, hosted by U.S. Rep. Nancy Pelosi (D-CA). Detailed presentations documented NAFTA-related job losses and revealed the connections between NAFTA and the wage gap between what workers make and what the store charges. Haitian workers make a measly $1.60 a day.

New York City’s O’Farrell-Carmel action drew 5,000 to the heart of the garment district, according to NLC’s Ellen Braune. The New York Labor Chorus sang, accompanied by a children’s band from the Bronx who played instruments they made out of refuse. Marchers paraded down the streets to the Disney Store at 42nd and Times Square with a Chinese dragon and a huge boat held aloft by 25 people, painted with the sign “We’re all in the same boat.” British rocker Billy Bragg opened a rally there, followed by an open mike session with students criticizing Nike for directing advertising at poor children in the U.S. to get them to buy things made by poor children working in sweatshops overseas.

More than 100 attended a rally in Los Angeles. Sponsored by labor, community and student groups, the demonstration drew front-page coverage in the Los Angeles Times and a spot on “MTV News.” John Morrello of the punk-rock group Rage Against the Machine sang.

Rallies and petition drives took place in at least 25 other cities across the country. The NLC has initiated a petition to President Clinton, Congress and the White House, asking the President to Force to End Sweatshop Abuses deploring sweatshop conditions in the U.S. and abroad. The Committee aims to collect a million signatures.

The Day of Conscience marked the beginning of the “Holiday Season of Conscience,” a series of actions highlighting corporations with sweatshop practices. The NLC will compile a list of the worst offenders for consumers to boycott.

For more information: National Labor Committee, 275-7th Avenue, 15th floor, New York, NY 1001, (212) 242-3002.

—Tom Price

ABU-JAMAL MAY SOON FACE ANOTHER JUDICIAL MASHING

Within the pennsylvania Supreme Court could rule on Mumia Abu-Jamal’s last state appeal for a new trial in 1995 and earlier this year. The case is now before the elected justices of the Pennsylvania Supreme Court.

“They won’t be voting on Mumia’s case,” said Weinglass. “They’ll be making a career decision.”

If the state court rejects his appeal, the federal Court of Appeals will be Abu-Jamal’s last recourse. But the “Effective Death Penalty Act,” passed as part of 1996 anti-terrorism bills, makes for a review much harder to get—rendering political pressure all the more critical.

“We have a hell of a struggle on our hands,” Geronomio j Jaga told a 3,000-strong rally for Abu-Jamal in San Francisco August 16. “We all have to come together if we want to save this brother’s life,” added the Black Panther leader, himself released from prison June 10 after a judge overturned his 1972 murder conviction.

To learn how you can help, contact Equal Justice USA/The Prison Radio Project by phone at (415) 648-1584 or by e-mail at radiocir@siuris. org. Organizers of the Aug. 16 rally plan a mass mobilization in San Francisco October 15, the anniversary of Mumia’s incarceration.

More info: (415) 821-0459.

—Marcy Rein

ALL-AMERICAS GATHERING: WORKERS TO MEET ON NAFTA AND PRIVATIZATION

LAX to Los Angeles Union

The Mexican government smash the longshore union in Vera Cruz. Chilen workers lose their pensions when Social Security goes private. Free trade and privatization are bat-
COLUMBIA RIVER AREA GETS NEW ORGANIZER

As part of its expanded organizing program, the ILWU hired Michael Cannarella as the union's new International organizer assigned to the Columbia River Area.

Cannarella, a Portland-area resident for 20 years and AFSCME (American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees) organizer for 10 years, came to organizing through the rank and file.

While Cannarella worked as a clinical research assistant at the University of Portland, he was taking classes and getting his degree in Urban Anthropology. When he arrived at the hospital he got involved in a successful AFSCME organizing campaign.

"I was the sort of person I'm always looking for in an organizing drive. I worked in a lot of different areas and knew a lot of different people and I was prepared from the start," he said. The drive brought in Oregon's largest AFSCME local, which represents nearly 3,000 workers at the massive educational, research and health care facility.

The union later hired Cannarella on a trial basis. "I was one of those 90-40 guys—you know, 'we'll hire you for 90 days and see what you can do.' And then it turned into a 10-year job," he said.

As the only AFSCME organizer in Oregon, Cannarella worked with local members and volunteers on organizing committees and covered the gamut of organizing work, from recruiting, to propaganda work, to media spokesperson to contract negotiations and organizing in both public and private sector, moving more toward the private sector in the last few years as public jobs were contracted out to private non-profit agencies or for-profit companies.

In the fall, between the jobs at the hospital and AFSCME, Cannarella did a stint as a talk show host and public affairs expert for the local Public affiliate, KBOO. And before moving to Portland, he was a UAW member working at the Ford Rouge Plant in Detroit and a Teamster working in a warehouse.

With his experience and knowledge of the Oregon area, Cannarella will provide new energy for the ILWU's organizing program. One of his first assignments will be to establish a new warehouse local in the region.

"Anybody who enjoys organizing," he said, "It's tough now that everybody is going to organizing. It's easy to talk and harder to do it. One of my attractions to the ILWU is its commitment in terms of putting dollars there, with 30 percent of the budget going to organizing."

Cannarella has set up a new office at Local 6 in Portland and can be reached at 2435 NW Front Avenue, Portland, OR 97209 and 503-233-6057.

—Steve Stallone

APALA CONVENTION WALKS THE TALK

Under the theme "Every worker is important," the New York Chapter of the Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance set out to train each of its nearly 400 delegates in bargaining union organizing skills.

For five evenings by visiting dignitaries such as AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Richard Trumka and President-elect Richard Duran, the October 7-10 convention turned into an intensive training session, trying to cram the AFL-CIO's three-day organizing training into a day and a half. Workshops included sessions on outlining organizing campaigns and simulations of captive audience meetings and home visits. Presentations focused on organizing issues such as overcoming employer campaigns, reaching out to immigrant workers, building community support, industry-wide organizing and multi-union organizing.

Conventional organizers also hit the streets, joining a demonstration against H&N Fish, a fish processing facility at San Francisco's Fisherman's Wharf. Almost all of the facility's workers are recent immigrants who endure unsafe working conditions, work as many hours as legally required without breaks, are forced to work unpaid overtime and face sexual discrimination and harassment—and finally tried to organize with the United Food and Commercial Workers.

"We would never have accepted the contract except for the six-month re-opener clause, when we will renegotiate wages and benefits. The language is good. We beat back their attempt to end eight-hour overtime. They wanted language giving them the right to hire scabs. We weren't going to allow that in an ILWU contract," Woods said.

Other gains were made in the agreement. "The language includes recognition of seniority rights and establishes grievance procedures," Pecker said. "The bonus situation has been clarified, and workers can make $1.50 an hour in additional pay."

Renegotiations will be held in early March with wages, benefits and holiday pay on the table.

—Tom Price

LOCAL 63 OCU BEATS LAYOFFS AT TASA

Local 63 OCU members won a closely watched test of its union security language July 18, and beat back a mass layoff in its newest shop. The bargaining unit is 3,000 strong.

Workers at Trans American Steamship Agency (TASA) no sooner won their first contract than the company announced it was laying off 18 of the 22 people in the bargaining unit. TASA works for TMM, Transpor- tation Maritime Mercantile, handling all the paperwork involved in moving TMM cargo. From the beginning, TASA management fought the union and claw. It transferred eight jobs to Houston as soon as the drive began, poured on threats and intimidation before the election and evaded contract talks until four days before Local 63's strike deadline.

The union grievances the June layoff immediately, contending that TASA was evading union representation and violating contract provisions that required bargaining over transfers of work, said Local 63 OCU President Jerry Rich. "Every employer in LA/Long Beach had their eye on this case, because they all have the same language in their contracts with us," Rich said. "If they saw TASA get away with this, we'd be dead," he added.

APALA activists smell something rotten in San Francisco.

At the arbitration hearing TASA brass claimed they needed to transfer the jobs to Houston, because they'd lost so much work to a new joint venture between TMM and AFL. This loss was beyond TASA control, President and CEO Charles Kerr testified. But the union used the employer's own exhibits from NLRB hearings to show that in fact, Kerr was TMM's general manager for the U.S. as well as TASA's top gun, and TMM exerted a controlling influence over TASA.

TASA workers Laura Sapinza, Richard Rosenthal, and Martha Charpaklauf, Local 63 OCU Vice President Jeff Powell, ILWU organizer Mike Diller and counsel Bob Remar all attended the 12-and-a-half hour hearing—longest in the local's history—and offered vital testimony and input, Rich said.

Area Arbitrator John Pandora ruled for the ILWU on every point. The laid-off workers are to be rehired and all bargaining unit employees compensated for lost wages and benefits. All bargaining unit work for TMM vessels (whether operating under joint venture or not) is to be done by Local 63 members.

"This was a very important win," said Rich. "Aside from this writing the laid-off employees were all re-hired—and TASA was scrambling to move its office furniture back from Houston.

—Marcy Rein
THE DISPATCHER
October 1997

TEAMSTERS AND UFW JOIN FORCES FOR APPLE WORKERS

Putting aside their bitter history, the United Farm Workers and the Teamsters union are cooperating on the first effort to organize more than 50,000 apple workers working in Washington State.

Washington produces 60 percent of all U.S.-grown apples and apple exports from the state more than tripled in 1996. In the midst of this growth, Agriculture is turning the Columbia Basin from desert to orchard, using water from the Colorado River Basin as a huge, costly crop. Federal and state subsidies feed the boom with an infusion of about $25 million, according to Teamster researchers.

But wages and benefits for the people who pick and pack the fruit remain stagnant. Orchard workers averaged $9,326 per year, warehouse workers $11,000. Though fancy new apple varieties require more careful handling, piece rates have stagnated, effectively cutting wages, according to UFW community organizer Anne Atkeson. Skilled workers are nonexistent.

In warehouse and orchard alike, workers are put under pressure to pick and pack as fast as possible. musculo-skeletal injuries and back motion and back injuries. And in both settings, they face a profound lack of respect.

"They get lots of verbal abuse from supervisors—ethnic slurs, yelling, name-calling," said Frank Vega, Teamster spokesperson. But "all our ducks are in a row, because this will be a huge organizing effort," she said.

And already workers’ dissatisfaction is bubbling up in wildcat strikes. Three strikes at large orchards in the Mattawa area early this year netted workers wages of $7.05 to $1.00 per hour. The UFW helped the workers organize and plans to continue organizing to win long-term contracts, Atkeson said.

The Teamsters, working through their influence of the California Trucking Association, which publish the Detroit News and the San Francisco Chronicle, began to move in after the Teamster's strike was declared by the 6th U.S. District Court of Appeals in Cincinnati.

JUDGE STALLS DETROIT NEWSPAPER SETTLEMENT

Confirming the adage "justice delayed is justice denied," U.S. District Judge John O'Meara ruled June 14 that management had violated labor law in 10 separate instances, and that it provoked a wildcat strike by imposing a series of merit pay scheme without consulting the unions. Judge Wilks declared the strike was in effect a lockout. While not overturning Wilks decision, Judge O'Meara's August 14 finding has delayed its effects on management until the NLRB in Washington, D.C. hears the case. O'Meara's decision is under appeal in the 6th U.S. District Court of Appeals in Cincinnati.

JUDGE RULES ON CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Teamster workers demand union recognition at demonstration against Washington Fruit Co. August 12.

Management will have to pay back wages at some point, but the strike's two-weeks has taken a devastating toll on the lives and families of the striking workers, who have been out since July 13, 1995. The strike, striking newspaper workers drew 500 people in support of Monterrey workers in a rally there, and rallies occurred in ten other cities. Consumers formed readers' committees, which are gathering subscription cancellation vouchers.

Security teams, including Vance security guards, in an area of un-union outfit, constantly patrolled the inside and outside of the building. Those still working found new work rules in force. Those who management negotiated the new rules. The scales of personal belongings in desks, newspaper employ-ees electronically, forbid distribution of literature and the conversion of all workers. While state and federal law prevents them from following the new rules. As revised by Judge Ford, the new standard would protect more workers in more workplaces against crippling RSIs, and will prevent employers from claiming that cost prevents them from following the new rules. The BSI is the fastest-growing cate-

The ruling upheld the Labor Federation has been confirmed by the 6th District Court of Appeals in Cincinnati.

Apple workers demand union recognition at demonstration against Washington Fruit Co. August 12.

Monterey is August 21, attended by 400 people and watched over by rent-a-goons brought in for the occasion. In Detroit, striking newspaper workers drew 500 people in support of Monterrey workers in a rally there, and rallies occurred in ten other cities. Consumers formed readers' committees, which are gathering subscription cancellation vouchers.

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Second, the judge rejected the Board's argument that there was no causation, a concept of injury. While state law defines an injury broadly, the ergonomics standard applied only to workspaces against crippling RSIs. It also limited injuries covered by the regulation to those that are objectively identifiable and have workplace activity as the predominant cause.

Third, the court closed a loophole in the standard allowing employers to evade their duty to limit workplace injuries. In the employer's opinion, the cost would be too high. The judge rejected attacks on the ergonomics standard by the American Trucking Association and the California Trucking Association.

If any of their attacks had been successful, the standard could have been delayed, leaving California without a standard, perhaps for years. The judge rejected attacks on the ergonomics standard by the American Trucking Association and the California Trucking Association.

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We are the ILWU, a 30-minute video, produced by the ILWU Research and Communications Committee in 1997 under the direction by Maria Brooks. $7.00. Available from the ILWU International Library. (See order form on page 20.)

Reviewed by Archie Green

In seven decades of film production Hollywood has hardly touched work experience or trade unionism. We recall a handful of powerful movies from diverse perspectives—"Matewan," "Norma Rae," "On the Waterfront," "Silkwood," "Grapes of Wrath," "Calf's Head & Union Tale," "Local 6 color guard marches in Oakland's Labor Day Parade, 1947."

We are the ILWU presents contemporary rank-and-file and a few veterans in cameo shots. No one struts as a star. Each person reflects on the meaning of trade unionism in general, and the ILWU specifically, as it touches their particular experience. Some voices remind listeners of old-fashioned speechifying. But most are calm, almost understated, yet deeply moving in reaching for labor's back talking.

The film’s visual sequences match its sound track. Brooks scooped archives for black-and-white footage—strikes, parades, handline, loading, tired faces, determined faces. One senses she searched every newsreel that ever touched maritime labor. Such raw material pairs with the current color shots of modern container cranes, robotized assembly lines and National Geographic-inspired harbor scenes.

"We are the ILWU" departs from the screen that holds an avalanche of significant events and prominent personalities. Instead, the ILWU’s first offering creates a mosaic of feeling. Just as the artist sets countless ceramic bits in mortar, Brooks sets hundreds of sight/sound chips in her film. Her work can be compared to a Carl Sandberg poem—ordinary speech, graphic image, kind hum, clear position. Film critics normally do not reveal plot mysteries or tricky erudite. As a guest reviewer for The Hollywood Reporter, I have no such rules. Instead, I urge ILWU members to see "We are the ILWU. Old-timers will identify with memorable details, for example, the awesome parade on San Francisco’s Market street during the Bloody Thursday killings in 1934. New members will appreciate today’s rapid-action scenes such as salmon moving from boat to conveyor belt. Work. Spirit. Life.

No single scene dominates. The film’s strength flows from thoughtful sequencing of my choices for The Inheritance (1941) internment of Japanese-American citizens and Tony Salcedo’s intimate memory of his father’s heating by San Pedro goons.

In addition to members viewing "We are the ILWU" at home, local unions might consider showing this film and "talking back to it" at regular meetings, classes and conferences. Certainly, the ILWU could create educational materials on science-fiction war, canneries, hands, farm laborers, cotton-compress crews, packagers and processors of ten thousand warehouse goods, lab technicians, computer wizards—all together in varied settings face the new millennium. To debate the film’s merits can serve as a tool in building strategies for global solidarity.

"We are the ILWU" is the union’s first film, a trailblazer. The ILWU need not follow Hollywood’s lead of a trailblazer. The ILWU can strike once a decade. This union has within its ranks creativity enough to fill a steel container. With spirit, the ILWU could craft educational documentaries in the tradition of "The Inheritance" as well as inspire a fresh "Norma Rae" or "Matewan."

Calf’s Head & Union Tale: Labor yarns at work and play

"Calf’s Head & Union Tale" (introduction, Archie Green; Urbanba and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1996, 223 pp., index, bibliography, index, paper, $15.95.)

Reviewed by Ottile Markolt

Beneath the proper discipline of labor lore, one finds bits of old records, official documents, newspaper reports and oral history, lies the subterranean world. People themselves create. As they create, cherish and perpetuate their own subterranean history. Archie Green, acknowledged "don of labor lore" presents here a collection of 66 stories echoed from us or the world and spanning over a century. Some tell of work skills and dangers, others of job pride, others of hate at job, touches of abuse, threats, dumb scams or union strength. Listen to Green describe labor lore (page 1): "...a man who's worked all his life. A man who's been energizing labor as it notes pain, pleasure, or promise within each act of work. Do we consider his words a legend, perhaps in an antiseptic talk? Talk jumps from fields and mills, from behind stockyards, from going myth told by many rank-and-file from the boardrooms, from behind dolly trucks and stock box. Three of the stories feature "just a man." The "time-study man, that mother-robbing creeper who watches you..."

"Calf’s Head" tells the story of a striker’s wife who couldn’t afford to pay a dollar for a union calf’s head to feed her family. The oblong union butcher scooped out some of the brains and sold it to her as a slab calf’s head for seventy-five cents. Green found four versions of the brainsless slab, dating back to Peter J. McGuire, editor of The Carpenter, 1883 and appearing in the IWW press in 1924. In the 1983 story, the wife of a nonunion man refused to buy a union sheep’s head. The butcher split the head and removed the brains.

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SMOKE SCREENS AND POLITICAL SCHEMES

As a longtime member of the ILWU, and a retired officer of that great organization I have to speak out about the recent events concerning the election for International Officers. Just for the record, I attended the Election Procedures Committee hearing back in July, the International Executive Board (IEB) meeting (that was) in August, and the "old" and "new" IEB meetings in September, so I speak from first-hand knowledge.

It was quickly clear to me that the challenges filed by Brothers Wing and Cortez were nothing more than smokescreen to cover up the real agenda behind them, and that no smokescreen would ever cover up the real agenda. The transparency of their challenge was nothing more than a political maneuver to get the IEB to give Wing another shot at the Presidency. While I can understand not wanting to lose an election, what amazes and disgusts me is that the IEB went along with this. With the Constitution and election rules that govern the manner in which individuals are elected to office, these rules allow for setting aside an election or rerunning part of an election, but such an action must be based on some proven irregularity affecting the outcome of one or more races. No challenge need be filed. The IEB's so-called (correctly) with the Procedures Committee in deciding that Class B individuals are not entitled to vote unless they are members of the union. So why rerun part of the election?
The IEB decided that because the word "fraud" had been uttered the election in Local 13 for just the office of President must be rerun. Let's set the record straight. There was no fraud in the conduct of the election. The first and only time the word "fraud" came up was during the Election Procedures Committee hearing back in July, well after the election was concluded.

Glen Ramiskey, a former Coast Committeeman, submitted a response to the procedures committee concerning the challenges filed by Wing and Cortez. In that response, he stated that "the Constitution and election rules that govern the manner in which individuals are elected to office. Those rules allow for setting aside an election or rerunning part of an election, but such an action must be based on some proven irregularity affecting the outcome of one or more races. No challenge need be filed. The IEB's so-called (correctly) with the Procedures Committee in deciding that Class B individuals are not entitled to vote unless they are members of the union. So why rerun part of the election? The IEB decided that because the word "fraud" had been uttered the election in Local 13 for just the office of President must be rerun. Let's set the record straight. There was no fraud in the conduct of the election. 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excluded from the final tally.

It is curious that the IEB chose only to re-elect the office of International President to the 1978 election and by a mere 1,777 votes! This is a striking contrast to the previous elections where only 10 or 12 votes divided the winner and the candidate who lost.

The results of this election may have been influenced by factors such as leadership, voting patterns, or other factors that are not immediately apparent. It is important to consider these factors when evaluating the outcomes of such elections.

Trade unionism: what does it mean?

Unionists should seek to understand the principles and values that underpin trade unionism. These principles include the idea of solidarity, the right to organize, and the protection of workers' rights.

With the help of your staff, I would love to discuss the concept of trade unionism and how it relates to the outcomes of elections in the maritime industry. Let's explore how these concepts can be applied to the situation at hand.

Sincerely,

John Dent
Portland, OR

REMEMBER YOUR OATH OF ALLEGIANCE

Trade unionism: where is it going? Going down the tubes, driven by the sinister forces of ignorance. Trade unionism: what does it mean?

Obey the rules of your union. You are working members of a union. They are your brothers and sisters. You should be able to trust them.

I am profoundly disappointed with the outcome of the recent election in Local 13. Despite the fact that the union has a long history of democracy and transparency, the results of this election do not reflect the values that we hold dear.

PSDC: GET OVER ELECTIONS AND GET TO WORK

No credible evidence of any improprieties was found to justify the International Executive Board's decision to disqualify the results of the recent election in Local 13.

The Puget Sound District Council recognizes that elections are conducted fairly and that the integrity of the dispatch system is maintained. We applaud the efforts of the union leadership to ensure that the results of the election are accepted by all members.

On behalf of the Puget Sound District Council, I would like to express our support for the leadership and the members of Local 13. Let us work together to ensure that the union remains strong and continues to thrive.

Sincerely,

Philip W. Schultz
Sandy, OR

A CALL FOR SOLIDARITY

I have just finished reading the special September edition of The Dispatcher and found myself shocked and appalled by what I have read. I have known both Brian McWilliams and Larry Wing for a number of years and without presuming to comment on the qualifications of either, I would like to ask what makes anyone believe that a person unable to vote in the affairs of the Local with which he or she is financially affiliated, has the right to vote for International Officers.

"B" registration is granted jointly by PMA and the local union involved. Union membership is granted only by the local involved. Perhaps things have changed in recent years, but in my day union membership took precedence over registration.

To Larry Wing I would say, "Larry, you lost the election. You are not doing anything. I wish you would vote that way."

The Puget Sound District Council believes that it is imperative that the IEA uphold the integrity of the International Constitution.

It is time for the rank and file to rally behind elected officials and present a united front to enemies of our dues. The Puget Sound District Council recognizes that elections are conducted fairly and that the integrity of the dispatch system is maintained.

On behalf of the Puget Sound District Council, I would like to express our support for the leadership and the members of Local 13. Let us work together to ensure that the results of the election are accepted by all members.

Sincerely,

Nick Zanze
Retired, Local 54
Cedar D'Aleone, ID
The San Francisco Port Commission is deeply concerned about the fate of the Copra Crane, a historically significant structure located in the Islais Creek area. The tower crane has been active since the pre-containerization era and continues to be an integral part of the maritime trades at the Port of Oakland. The commission is seeking community support to save this historic crane, which is currently scheduled to be dismantled as part of the ongoing development at the Port of Oakland. The crane is a testament to the area's rich maritime history and has been a symbol of resilience for generations. The commission calls on residents and stakeholders to join in the effort to preserve this important landmark. For more information, visit the Port Commission's website or contact their office directly.
Remembering Canadian Area’s Roy Smith

By Tom Price

ROY Smith was a 37-year member of Local 501 and a major force in building the Canadian Area into a strong, autonomous division in the ILWU.

Born in 1922 in a paper-mill town in the Cleveland area of Ohio, Smith grew through the hard times of the great depression. His father died when he was 6 and his mother raised the family of four.

In the spring of 1941 Smith joined the Royal Canadian Air Force and spent five years as a navigator/bombardier. His duties sent him from shore patrol of Vancouver to England and the Southeast Asian Theater.

Smith married in Vancouver in 1944, and returned after the war to his wife and the ships he had defended. Roy Smith began his career on the docks in Vancouver in 1945. For six years he labored as a casual, hauling 200-pound sacks of sugar on his back in the days when loads were stowed below the water line.

He joined the union in 1954 and was elected by the members of Local 501 to their executive board in 1956. He was president of the local during the 1958 strike, fighting to win a joint labor-management pension plan, paid by the employers, and the eight-hour day.

"That strike was a real landmark in the history of the waterfront in British Columbia. It was the first strike the [Canadian] longshoremen won. In 1958, 1961 and 1963, the union was broken...Before that we were still basically a company union that we had been literally for 50 years. Smith told ILWU labor historian Harvey Schwartz.

"But we had to consolidate the various locals into one, which was to become Local 500. Management had a clause in the contract limiting local membership to 800 people, which was defeated in the 1963 strike. With this amendment, it would come the consolidated contract covering the entire Canadian west coast and the ILWU under one contract.

Canadian school children at the time had a rhyme they sang every spring: "The 24th of May is the Queen's birthday, if we don't get a holiday, we'll all run away." The song went, referring to Queen Victoria's birthday. School officials tried to end the holiday when Victoria died in 1901, and it became an "official" holiday among the boldest of children. Later it would become a legal holiday in 1962 when longshore workers were excluded unless they worked 15 consecutive days with one employer. To nobody's surprise, longshore workers took the day off in 1966, and Smith was in the thick of it.

"That was a crisis when the employers withheld the proper pay for statutory holiday work that our members had been collecting for years. So on Victoria Day in 1966 we refused to work the waterfront. The employers got an injunction against the nine local presidents and me as President of the Canadian Area. We were told to order the men to work on a statutory holiday. We refused, saying we would not do so until the employers paid the proper amount," Smith said.

The ten were jailed and released three weeks later when the Minister of Labor, after a visit from area officers including Local 500 Vice President Bill Kemp, presented the issue to Parliament. The B.C. Federation of Labor paid the fines.

The following autumn Parliament amended the Statutory Holiday Act to include longshore workers as long as they had worked 15 days with any employer.

"The legal harassment had backfired, perhaps by the overwhelming 95 percent majority who voted for strike authorization in 1966. The jail terms temporarily stalled contract negotiations. "There wasn't exactly a strike at that time, but a real good slowdown on the docks" said Local 500 retiree Bill Kemp.

With everybody out of jail the talks resumed and a Canadian Area contract was hammered out and signed August 13, with Smith and Harry Bridges signing for the union. Major advances in pension, dental and benefits for regular casual workers were achieved, along with a pay increase 25 percent above average for the area.

Smith continued to fight management's use of the court injunction, offering ILWU support when four ILWU men were jailed during a strike at Lenkurt Electric later in 1966. The Fisherman's Union faced similar court harassment and Smith was there helping raise $7,000 as an offset in the local's strike fund.

In 1968 he announced to the Tenth Annual Canadian Area ILWU Conference that $22,000 had been raised to support the jailed fishermen.

Roy Smith died December 6, 1996 at the age of 74. His wife May, son Charles, daughter Carol and five grandchildren survive him.
Color prints of the official 30th Convention photo are available through THE DISPATCHER. This beautiful 20x26 print, suitable for framing, is a memorable keepsake for all Locals and anyone who was there. Just mail a $30 check payable to The Dispatcher to:
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