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Power balances

Between the owners of capital and those who get by through selling their ability to labor, there's a constant low-level conflict. What the business newspapers like to call "labour peace" never really exists. Whether it's a speed-up or a contractual overtime on one side, or a shopfloor grievance or extension of the workday on the other, the tug-of-war is endless. Then there are times when it is not clear who's on the winning end when the lines are drawn sharper, and the stakes are raised higher: when negotiations and arbitrations give way to strikes and picket lines. Those are times when the balance of power shifts, changing the level of the day-to-day skirmishes.

That's what happened recently in Flint, Michigan between GM and the United Auto Workers (see story page 10). In violation of what it agreed to do in its last contract the company was not investing in new technology to keep the plant modern and competitive and keep the good-paying jobs there. Instead management moved the front-end stamping equipment out of the fac-

tory.

The situation was starkly clear: either the jobs were going to leave and the company was not going to take any more public wealth to those who seem to own everything else already. This time it was the govern-

ment-run telephone system (see story page 10).

The telephone workers opposed it because they figured it was the beginning of downsizing for them. The general populace opposed it because they feared the degerma-

tion of their telephone service. The company went out on strike in June, and after bloody government repression the contract was settled. But the strike lasted for two days in early July. The governor turned down calls for a popular vote on the matter, knowing he would lose, and sold the phone system anyway. The workers may have lost this battle, but they learned about their collective strength in the process.

Back home on the Coast the employers of the PMA are still try-

ing to get tough with the ILWU before going into contract negotia-

tions next year, continuing the legal harassment of the No Free Trade lawsuit (see story page 3). At the top of PMA's public list of contract concessions is the end of the dis-

patch hall. It calls the system "anti-

quated" and wants "control" of the workforce. The only thing old about the dispatch hall is that the ILWU has been able to hang on to it since the great coastal strike that estab-

lished the union in 1944—one of those turning points in history that changed the balance of power between workers and owners dra-

matically. And it is all about con-

trol, about who controls the tributa-

tion to the work, and its modes, its conditions. That's an antique worth keeping.

By Brian McWilliams
ILWU International President

The ILWU has always been more than just an organization bar-

gaining the cost of labor. Union members have always seen them-

selves as a part of a larger working class movement for political and social change.

For more than 60 years the ILWU has formed coalitions with other labor unions, political organizations and community groups on international, national and local levels. Today there are several organi-

zations the ILWU has relations with that have social and political agen-

ciates paralleling ours. We need their advocacy of our interests and they need our support. We are matched partners, natural allies.

One of these is Jesse Jackson's Rainbow Coalition. Jackson's inclusive organization and the national bully pulpit he commands allow him to mobilize people and publicize causes important to the labor movement. His recent work in California against Prop 226 com-

plicated the union campaign and helped us gain the edge in our vic-

tory.

Now Jackson has another campaign the labor movement—and especially the ILWU—needs to get involved with. He is working towards changing the criteria for responsible investment of pension funds so the impact on our communities can be taken into account rather than just the rate of return. Currently those criteria often result in pension funds being invested in ventures taking union jobs overseas or in companies involved in objectionable labor, environmental or human rights prac-

tices.

Jackson also wants to institute incentives to invest in depressed areas in our own communities, similar to the incentives for overseas invest-

ments in developing and depressed econ-

omies.

Jackson's pro-

gram parallels the ILWU's longstanding policy of investing in the community like we have with the St. Francis Square perpe-

ual affordable housing project in San-

Francisco, the Avalon housing project in Los Angeles and six low-

income rental housing developments for workers and seniors in Hawaii. The ILWU opposes the Social Security cut voted by President John Sweeney on board with this program and the ILWU needs to be an active player in this campaign.

The international is already reviewing its finances to find long-term fund raising to support community development banks. And I will be pre-

senting a policy statement for the International Executive Board to consider at its next meeting in August to encourage all our locals to do the same. As Jackson says, we can do well and do good at the same time.

Another natural ally of the ILWU is the Labor Party. We helped found it at its first Convention two years ago. The EB is on record as supporting the Labor Party, but at our last International Convention budget-conscious delegates balked at paying the annual $10,000 for-

mal membership fee and others fretted that such support might undercut strategic alliances they have built with Democratic Party lawmakers. While we have many friends, like Congressmen Richard Gephardt, in the Democratic Party, we must also realize the limits of that party. The Democrats include many so-called "moderates," advocates of free trade agreements like NAFTA, people whose alle-

iances are much more closely tied to business interests than the concerns of working people. So in the legislative process even our best Democratic friends have to make compromises to get anything passed.

The Labor Party, on the other hand, is singularly committed to a worker political program. Its current campaign is to pass a Constitutional Amendment guaranteeing everyone working American the right to a decent job at a living wage and will help define the debate in par-

liament.

This is important to every aspect of what the ILWU does. It is important when workers try to take advantage of the gradual change between getting organized into a union and losing their jobs. It is important when people earn decent wages and have money to spend in the community, creating more jobs and keeping our tax-

pays that support schools and social programs. These are mean-

ingful investments in our future. They narrow the gap between the haves and have-nots, exactly what we work towards in our political action committees and the benchmark against which we measure the politi-

cians we support.

Another organization working on parallel tracks with the ILWU is the International Transport Workers Federation (ITF). With affiliates in some 500 unions in more than 125 countries representing about five million unionists, it's ability to coordinate worldwide solidarity actions is invaluable, both to the ILWU and to the international workers move-

ment. That is why in the recent Australian waterfront dispute, the employers sought a legal injunction to restrain the ILWU from advocat-

ing and coordinating global actions in support of the longshore work-

ers there.

The ITF has, and continues to, aid the ILWU in crucial times. In January 1998 during a jurisdiction dispute Local 13 was having with High-Sea-Proker at the Port of L.A., the ship com-

lining into its dock, the Trans Bridge, owned by Wah Tung Shipping, had an ITF contract. Our local ITF inspector contacted the ITF and the ITF in turn contact-

ed the ship's crew and told them not to handle any cargo. The ship was also sent to the ship's owner in China. The owner, not wanting any trouble with the ITF, commanded the ship's captain to anchor outside the break-

water until the dispute was settled. It took the employ-

er a day only after that to settle with the ILWU.

Always receptive to any request of the ILWU, the ITF put pressure on the international consor-

tium operating LAXT to deal with our union. And the ITF has already alerted the PMA it will take whatever action the ILWU deems appro-

priate if it does not drop the Neptune Jade lawsuit.

Now the ILWU is trying to insulate its organization in the Western Hemisphereso we can coordinate our fight against the various free trade agreements and insidious international trade laws that attack our workers. So we can speak with one voice from Tierra Del Fuego to the Yukon. The ILWU has fought NAFTA in the U.S. and Canada and has reached out to Mexican workers effected by it. This initiative by the ITF will make our opposition more effective and we must participate in it.

Last but not least, back to the House of Labor. For all the same reasons we affiliated with the AFL-CIO on the national level, we need to participate in the state labor bodies. The AFL-CIO's State Federations are a direct link to the state legislative processes. They lobby all state legislators tirelessly and keep a vigilant watch on state and local issues affecting our members. They also provide network-

ing and solidarity resources for our affiliates.

Making these partnerships work requires the active participation of the rank and file in the local level. Here's what I'm asking you to do:

• Encourage your local to affiliate with your State Fed.

• Propose your Local invest in community development banks.

• Join your local Labor Party chapter and get your Local involved in the Constitutional Amendment campaign.

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ving the cost of labor. Union members have always seen them-

themselves as a part of a larger working class movement for political and social change.

For more than 60 years the ILWU has formed coalitions with other labor unions, political organizations and community groups on international, national and local levels. Today there are several organi-

zations the ILWU has relations with that have social and political agen-

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Several organizations have social and political agendas paralleling ours. We are matched partners, natural allies.

ILWU Political partnerships

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ILWU Titled Officers
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Vice President
JOE IBARRA
Secretary-Treasurer
"No justice, no work!"

ILWU shuts Oakland port in Neptune Jade protest

By Steve Stallone

The employers of the Pacific Maritime Association got a taste of the ILWU determination to end the notorious Neptune Jade protest when the union shut down the Port of Oakland for half the first shift July 22. Instead of working, ILWU members, many of whom were 50% strong, rallied outside the courtroom while PMA's lawyers pursued their case.(``

At least six ships were idled in the Port of Oakland for the first half of the day shift as longshore workers, clerks, walking bosses and other community supporters chanted "No justice, no work." Down the Port of Oakland for half the day shift as longshore workers, clerks, walking bosses and other community supporters chanted "No justice, no work." President Brian McWilliams told the demonstrations last September.

"This is an attack on the very soul of the ILWU," International President Brian McWilliams told the demonstrators. "We need to resist it in every way we can."

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Meanwhile the employers sought arbitration on the union walkout. At the hearing the employers asserted that the port-wide work stoppage "was caused and abetted by ILWU" Local 10 member Leo Robinson addresses his co-workers at a rally in front of the Oakland courthouse.

The judge noted General Manager Jefferi Neu in his deposition he could not recall any threats by the union, or that they ever asked for ghost jobs. On the contrary, he admitted that union officials actually said they did not want the jobs to be ghost jobs. On several occasions management sent Local 13 workers home because they were using staffing from other locals to run praises and buildi, which violated the Local 13 contract.

"Hugo Neu-Proler and his attorney Mark Thierman tried to characterize the ILWU as a corrupt waterfront union and the ILWU was again vindicated by the court as a democratic, honest union," ILWU attorney Beth Ross said. Thierman has repeatedly brought frivolous RICO suits against labor unions, and even was sanctioned in 1984 for it. We hope the court sanctions Thierman for filing this case and awards legal expenses to the union."

Although this legal victory sustains the ILWU longshore locals' jurisdiction, there will be no party to the ILWU-PMA contract negotiations coming up next year. The company's behavior suggests it will challenge that jurisdiction as soon as it is out from under its contractual obligations and Locals 13, 63 and 94 may well have a new battle ahead.

The remaining defendant in the case, the Pacific Maritime Association's Local 10 Executive Board member Jack Heyman they listened to speeches from various ILWU officers and other labor dignitaries such as Alameda County Central Labor Council Secretary-Treasurer Owen Marron and San Francisco Labor Council Secretary-Treasurer Walter Johnson.

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Local 10 member Leo Robinson addresses his co-workers at a rally in front of the Oakland courthouse.

Local 10 member Leo Robinson addresses his co-workers at a rally in front of the Oakland courthouse.
The ILWU lobbying visit was successful. She was struck by the intensity of the arguments," said Chris Kisier, legislative aide to Senator Dianne Feinstein (D-CA). Two hours after the May 12 meeting with ILWU grassroots members, Senator Bob Dole (R-KS) released a statement in opposition to the anti-union Proposition 226. To convince his state's most popular politician to join the war was critical in the successful campaign to send the initiative packers.

During the week of May 11-15, 1998, 17 delegates from California, Washington, Oregon and Hawaii descended on Capitol Hill to lobby members of Congress on the critical issues facing the labor movement. The majority of the delegates were funded by the Longshore Division which has a program aimed at using the political process to further the goals of the ILWU.

The delegates urged members of Congress to oppose legislation aimed at curtailing union legal and organizing strategies. The ILWU members also worked on other particular concern to the Longshore Division, such as the labor protection elements contained in the proposed Shipping Reform Act and banning unsafe work practices on the docks. Delegate testimony was given by members of the California Congressional delegation to actively oppose Proposition 226.

The following are excerpts from reports written by the ILWU delegates:

**SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA**

The Southern California delegation was represented by Ralph Espino (Local 13), Michael Hermann (Local 63) and Roxanne Lawrence (Local 63). Lawrence reported on the four central issues on our agenda: 

1. Ocean Shipping Reform Act—"This legislation took four years to put together and it is a labor-corporate collective bargaining, keeps the Federal Maritime Commission an independent entity and provides for negotiations for NOVCOC's. We urged support in the House for a similar bill to put on national legislation. Lawmakers in Washington, Senator Barbara Boxer was very helpful in the collective action.

2. Attacks on Organizing (H.R.3246)—"This was passed in the House by a narrow margin of 202-200 when 15 Democratic members were in Africa with the President. This anti-union bill is another example of corporate America trying to destroy successful organizing and strategic union structures. In South Africa, continued support from the Democratic parties and some Congress members have been necessary to keep the ANC in power. Senator Barbara Boxer was very helpful in the collective action.

**NORTHERN CALIFORNIA**

The ILWU representatives from Northern California included Ralph Rooker (Local 10), Emil Powell (Local 10), Eddie Gutierrez (Local 34), and Daniel Davis (Local 54).

Rooker was amused by Rep. George Miller's style. He recalled how he used to tell Rooker, "You're a bully!# ![2]. Just tell my staff what you want and you'll get it." Powell was struck by Rep. Tom Lantos' comment that he has a 100 percent record with the ILWU, and when he dies "he'll have 110 percent.

Brueckner was impressed by the top-notch speakers willing to address the ILWU delegates. They included Rich Trumka, Secretary-Treasurer AFL-CIO; Karen Ramstam, Deputy Assistant to President Clinton; David Bonior, House Democratic Whip; Representative Bernie Sanders; and House Majority Leader Dick Gephardt. "Representative Gephardt gave a brief speech at our reception stating this country needs an organization like the ILWU to keep fighting to stop the exploitation of workers and to stop human rights violations in this country, and how we lent our support to the Australian dock workers, and to keep the ship out of the good fight," Brueckner recalled.

Gutierrez made a point of visiting the Vietnam War Memorial during his free day. "The ILWU led the way against the war when it wasn't popular to come out against it," he said. Gutierrez said he believes we are fighting the same kind of extremist reactionary elements today on Capitol Hill that were prevalent in the 1960s beating the drums for war. This time, however, those aiming their guns at organized labor.

These are the same ones trying to take away all the gains the labor movement has accomplished over the years," he said.

**WASHINGTON STATE**

The Puget Sound District Council was represented by Rich Dyer (Local 4), John Munson (Local 7), Celso Tolman (Local 52), and Bonnie Eckert McHenry (Local 19). Possibly the most memorable experience from the entire Conference occurred during the meeting with Representative Linda Smith (R-WA). Dyer asked her flat out how someone who grew up in a working class background and raised her family under a union benevolent program could vote against the interests of working people.

According to reports, she almost lost from her chair and grew very testy. She talked and talked and talked and did no listening. She double-talked the ILWU delegation out the door.

On a more positive note, Ms. Munson reported that the most impressive comments she could remember from the Conference came from Rep. Rich Trumka (APWU) and Secretary-Treasurer. "He thanked us for maintaining the principles of trade unionism," he said. Munson thought the ILWU delegation did a "pretty decent job" of letting our members of Congress know about the union's concerns. "We were sure they knew we were there, and we hope they'll walk right over us." According to reports, she almost lost her chair and grew very testy. She talked and talked and talked and did no listening. She double-talked the ILWU delegation out the door.

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ILWU marches inland in Oregon

Cross border organizing at home

By Tom Price

Nearly 100,000 farm workers till crops in Oregon, and their living and working conditions would be familar to any who have seen The Grapes of Wrath. The 1940 film portrayed the dispossession of Oklahoma farmers and their creation into wandering wage laborers, blown west across the states to the Coast.

That is what 25 ILWU members from Locals 4, 8 and 40 discovered in their travels into the Willamette Valley late June as part of the Accompaniment Campaign for Farmworker Justice.

Pineiros y Compasinos Unidos del Norte (Tree Planters and Farm Workers United) has been organizing the farm workers of eastern Oregon to improve their wages and conditions. But as a home to go homesteaders, organizers face, they also have to deal with the vulnerability of farm workers and immigrant workers who often don’t speak English well and the determination of farm owners to prevent organizing.

The accompaniment program helps PCUN organizers get better access to workers and helps keep employers and local police acting within the law.

ILWU participation builds good relations with PCUN and the farm workers they will not have seen. The organizing workers in related food processing and distribution plants. So ILWU members visit the farms with organizers from PCUN and, by simply crossing county lines, witnessed first hand the conditions. Returning to the hall, they reported what they learned to the membership.

“We saw guys out working with garbage bags for rain gear,” said Cager Clabaugh of Local 4. “People are living out of their cars or housing that looks like old chicken coops.”

Some people didn’t even have that. “It’s not unusual for a farm worker to put in ten hours of work and not have a home to go home to,” PCUN President Ramon Ramirez told the Local 8 stop last week.

“These workers often do not make minimum wage if they fall below that basic of survival. That applies to the children in the fields.

“We were only there for an hour and the kids had five cop cars come out to escort us away. But we weren’t doing anything illegal, so they had us move out quickly,” said Local 4 member Tom Boyer. After the police left, workers came by to get information from the organizers. Since the squad-shack the workers live in are often on the owner’s property, the bosses feel they have the right to control access. This means the police are a constant, obnoxious presence.

“They would look pretty foolish if they arrested a longshoreman for passing out leaflets informing farm workers they have rights,” Clabaugh said.

Farmworkers are exempt from many basic labor laws, including the National Labor Relations Act. They lack tenant rights at company-owned camps, even though they pay rent. Immigration and language problems, plus the temporary nature of their work, makes them vulnerable to management pressure. The accompaniment of farm workers and community activists lets farmworkers know they are not alone.

Monty Sinclair, also of Local 4, reported to his union brothers and sisters an incident in which he and PCUN organizers were run off an out-of-session school yard by the principal, who told them they could use the facilities for sports but not union meetings.

Sinclair also discussed the political situation with PCUN organizers, who told him that many of the representatives in the Oregon Congressional delegation supported the new Bracero program to bring “guest workers” into Oregon.

“Since you can’t move the land to Indonesia or Mexico the owners want it,” Ramirez said. Other industries use guest workers as sources of lower-paid labor. One of the largest of these is the computer industry. Grover Norquist, who helped bankroll Calif. Prop 226, successfully raised the number of computer industry guest workers employed in the U.S. last fall. More than 80,000 in the country—50,000 in India alone. The medical business imports one forth of its doctors from abroad.

Supporters of the Bracero program claim a labor shortage in the fields. But union organizers point to a lowering wages, down 17 percent since 1989, as a sign of a labor surplus. The federal government agreed with this assessment in a General Accounting Office report issued last December. The GAO also noted that 600,000 non-citizen farmworkers are working illegally in the United States.

Child labor in the fields may be seen as a result of labor shortages, but workers claim they can not afford child care and don’t want to leave their kids in the wretched camps. More than 290,000 children worked illegally in the U.S. in 1996, according to an Associated Press analysis of government labor statistics, up from 29,000 ten years earlier.

PCUN’s Ramirez suggested in his talk at the Local 4 hall that recent success in farmworker organizing is the real incentive for the comeback of the Bracero program. The union won a good contract for its Nature’s

Child laborers are all too common in the fields of the Willamette Valley.

Fountain Farm workers on Cesar Chavez’s birthday, March 31, and is making progress in another contract, Ramirez said.

Growers for the food processor NOTPAC responded to organizing drives with dismissals, evictions and even physical violence. They organized themselves into an anti-union Council for Agricultural Employers, which also lobbies for Bracero legislation. In response PCUN declared a consumer boycott of Gardenburger and Fleur-R-Pac vegetables, subsidiaries of NOTPAC.

In addition to supporting the boycott, ILWU Organizer Mike Cannarella prepared flyers and other information on the Bracero program, pointing out how guest workers can be exploited. If management finds them troublesome, guestworker proposals attack all workers and their unions, not just farmworkers,” Cannarella’s leaflet reads. “That’s why all workers should unite to defeat guestworker legislation.”

In the House of Representatives the Bracero bill is known as HR 3410, and SB 1563 in the Senate.

David Bacon

Company union battles UFW

WATSONVILLE, CA—Three years ago, Watsonville strawberry growers began implementing one of the most sophisticated union-fighting strategies in postwar labor history—a elaborate all-out effort to stop the United Farm Workers.

This year, in late July, the growers’ counterrevolution reached its critical moment. Cashing in their markers with Governor Pete Wilson, whose political career they’ve already financed, the barons of California agribusiness forced the Agricultural Labor Relations Board, whose member Wilson appoints, to hold a union election on July 23 at the largest strawberry company in Pajaro Valley.

But it was not the election for which the union and its supporters have organized for many months. The UFW did not even appear on the ballot. Instead, workers were presented with a radically different alternative. They could vote for no union at all, or for the company union grower's been patiently constructing for two years.

In the ballotting which followed a string of violent attacks on UFW supporters, 410 workers voted for no union, and 30 votes were challenged. The Coastal Berry Farmworkers Committee got 523 votes.

The election, immediately attacked by the union and many state legislators as fraudulent, poses a threat far beyond the UFW’s drive in the strawberry industry. Company unions, having received the green light from state officials despite the violent tactics used by its backers, may now appear elsewhere in California agriculture. If growers succeed in Watsonville, the strategy is likely to become widespread.

Since the beginning of the 1996 strawberry harvest, the UFW has mounted the largest bottom-up union organizing drive in the country today, trying to break the hold companies wield over the 15,000 berry pickers of the Pajaro and Salinas Valleys.

Despite the election results, the UFW is not giving up. “We are not walking away,” Rodriguez says. “We are committed to the long haul to ensure improvements for workers.”

The week after the vote the labor subcommittee of the California State Senate held hearings on the ALRB’s action allowing it. “The ALRB is dysfunctional, it’s clearly in collusion with the growers,” announced committee chair Hilda Solis, after hearing testimony from workers and ALRB representatives. Neither Coastal Berry nor the Coastal Berry Farmworkers Committee appeared.

If growers see that they can use violence against workers who support the union, and then have an election with the blessing of the board to legitimize a company union, they won’t stop here,” Rodriguez warned.
The workers at JORE, a barge loading facility, do stevedoring, container stuffing and tugboat work. They joined the IBU back in 1986 in large part because the company's owner needed the union label to capture work on barges going to Hawaii, but felt he couldn't afford longshore wages and stay competitive. At the time the arrangement caused some friction between the IBU and longshore Local 19, which felt its members were being undercut. But that rift is healing as the two worked together to help the JORE workers bargain and continue an organizing partnership on the Duwamish River.

Not having fought an organizing battle, the 75 workers at JORE were never particularly active as unionists, rarely going to union meetings or filing grievances. Over the years contract extensions were granted with only modest improvements in wages and conditions. But with an eye toward further organizing on the Duwamish, the union started giving more attention to the JORE members. The workers responded, getting fired up, holding rallies and wearing union caps around the yard in a show of solidarity.

The contract was not set to expire until Dec. 31, 1998, but the company, looking for labor stability so it could go after new business, sought an early agreement. The owner began making overtures last November, but his first proposal didn't offer much. The employer wanted to base seniority on his personal judgement of performance. But he conceded the demand, establishing a regular seniority system based on a worker's hiring date. Overtime work will now be assigned—to those requesting it—in seniority order.

But on wages the owner agreed only to the COLA, plus a one percent contribution put into the workers 401(k) retirement plan (they already have a 12 percent employer contribution). But the contract had other gains, including a third week of vacation for those with five years on the job and a system to move casuals up to regulars based on total number of hours rather than at the discretion of the employer. So when it came to another vote May 8, the agreement passed.

The experience changed the JORE workers and things will likely be different on the docks now and in the future. "This left us with a core group of activists and good shop stewards," said Jeff Engles, IBU Puget Sound patrolman who worked on the contract campaign. "Union consciousness was raised and the employees knew it. It made him nervous and it was effective."

—Steve Stalle

PMA DROPS CHARGES AGAINST LOCAL 75

The Pacific Maritime Association withdrew its complaints against ILWU Watchmen's Local 75 Secretary-Treasurer Bill De La Mater without comment June 30.

"They just didn't have a case," De La Mater said.

The complaints arose from two separate incidents. The first occurred on the morning of April 29 when De La Mater set up an informational picket line and passed out leaflets in front of Marine Terminal's facility at San Francisco's Pier 40. He was protesting the company's use of dogs to replace gate men in violation of Local 70's contract with the PMA. In his flyer De La Mater pointed out that now longshore workers, clerks and gate men were being expected to endure the stench of dog urine and excrement in the workplace. Marine Terminals charged De La Mater with causing an illegal work stoppage and violating the section of the contract requiring all disputes to be settled through the grievance machinery.

But before De La Mater got the chance to make his arguments in front of an arbitrator, PMA abandoned the matter.

—Steve Stalle

BORAX LONGSHORE WORKERS WIN NEW CONTRACT

Local 20A, whose members transfer borax mined in the Mojave Desert to rail cars and then load it onto ships in the Los Angeles harbor, ratified a new contract for the hearing De La Mater argued that in the first instance Local 10 and SSA also charged De La Mater phoned the U.S. Coast Guard for the hearing De La Mater argued that in the first instance Local 10 and SSA also charged De La Mater phoned the U.S. Coast Guard that in the first instance Local 10 and SSA also charged De La Mater phoned the U.S. Coast Guard

"They just didn't have a case," De La Mater said.

The complaints arose from two separate incidents. The first occurred on the morning of April 29 when De La Mater set up an informational picket line and passed out leaflets in front of Marine Terminal's facility at San Francisco's Pier 40. He was protesting the company's use of dogs to replace gate men in violation of Local 70's contract with the PMA. In his flyer De La Mater pointed out that now longshore workers, clerks and gate men were being expected to endure the stench of dog urine and excrement in the workplace. Marine Terminals charged De La Mater with causing an illegal work stoppage and violating the section of the contract requiring all disputes to be settled through the grievance machinery.

But before De La Mater got the chance to make his arguments in front of an arbitrator, PMA abandoned the matter.

When negotiations began with Rio Tinto, the largest private mining firm in the world against whom an international union campaign is being waged because of its worker and human rights violations, the company proposed cuts in health and welfare and contracting out of much of the local's work. But after a show of solidarity, the local emerged with a successful contract.

The agreement includes wage increases ($6.00 per hour the first year, $5.50 the second and $5.50 the third), retirement benefits and liberal time (an extra $6 per month per year of service) and a job guarantee for all members for the next three years. Layoffs can only occur if there is a drastic drop in sales, not because of contracting out work, the introduction of new machinery or job consolidation.

The company wanted to impose a ten percent co-payment on the health care plan, but the local's negotiators were able to get that off the table and retain the Kaiser HMO.

"On behalf of myself and the Local 20A membership, I would like to thank all the International officers, the International Executive Board and all the members of the ILWU who backed us up during these negotiations," said Local 20A President Gary Harvey. "All of you proved that solidarity is still strong in the ranks of the ILWU."

—Steve Stalle

LOCAL 63 OCU NEGOTIATES TEN CONTRACTS

Local 63 Office Clerical Union has two weeks to try to resolve many members now say they were hit hard in 1995 and many new contracts. This year ten contracts expired more or less at once by union design, and from May 18 to July 2 the Local bargained and won almost identical, three-year agreements for its members:

- Al
- E UNION
- ILWU Watchmen's Local 75
- Pensioners Association President Lou Loveridge and Local 13 B registrants dedicated to giving back to the community, took 160 harbor area kids on an educational cruise on the ports
- MFDISPATCHER
- Cruising the ports

The ILWU "Yes, We Can" organization, a group of Local 13 B registrants dedicated to giving back to the community, took 160 harbor area kids on an educational cruise on the ports.

68 President Jim Larkins, Southern California Pensioners Association President Lou Loveridge and Greg Mitre.

The boat was secured by Mitre, a Local 13 member formerly with the IBU's Southern California Region. He got Catalina Cruises to donate the vessel for trip and five IBU deck hands donated their time.

All the kids were given "Yes, We Can" t-shirts and white longshore caps. They were told that someday they might have these jobs on the waterfront and that with the new longshore criteria it was important for them to stay in school.
job security and long-term improve-

The pilots, who guide the huge

.container ships through the narrow

canals and shallow waters of the

Port of Los Angeles, went out on

strike July 11, 1997 over wages, ben-

efits, safety conditions and job protec-

tion. Their employer, the port and the
city, held out for months, running

harbor operations with sub pilots and
enduring constant delays during the
peak shipping season. Then, 137
days later, both parties signed an
agreement Nov. 25, granting the
pilots immediate raises and other
benefits and conditions they sought.

But the agreement was never
implemented because of a Memoran-
dum of Understanding attached to
the contract on how watches would
be assigned. The document merely
stated that pilots would be assigned
to the same watches they had been
before the strike and that the same
seniority system assignments would
be used. Although Port Director
Larry Keller personally signed the
MOU, he reneged on it, claiming the
union had misrepresented the senior-
ity system when he agreed to it.

This dispute held up implement-
ing the entire contract, including the
pilots' wage increases. Local 68 sought
an arbitration and filed six unfair
labor practice charges against the
port. But before hearings were held
Keller conceded to the union's posi-
tion. At press time Local 68 President
Jim Larkins said the matter was
resolved and he was just proof reading
the offer Keller had made.

"I don't look for any particular
problems," Larkins said. "The hold-
ups that existed have been removed."

Local 8 has Mercy

A group of Local 8 longshore workers put in some
overtime Saturday, June 6 and got paid nothing—
except the satisfaction that they'd helped some people
in need.

"It was a labor of love," said Will Luch, Secretary-
Treasurer of Local 8, who organized the work gang.
The longshore workers loaded supplies aboard
the Caribbean Mercy, one vessel of the Mercy Ships
fleet, a non-profit agency that brings medical care and
supplies, relief aid and long-term sustainable change
equipment to people in poverty around the world. On
this voyage the Caribbean Mercy was bringing med-
ical supplies, well-drilling equipment to provide clean
water and materials for new housing foundations
to Nicaragua.

Some Local 8 members had gone down to the
docks for the annual Rose Festival, saw the Caribbean
Mercy and talked to the crew about what they do.
But then the day had gone well, it had a good time.
"They asked if we would help," Luch said.

Around the same time a representative from Mercy
Ships called Local 8 because they were worried about
stepping on their jurisdiction and didn't want to create
any labor problems.

"I spent most of the day there," said Local 8 mem-
ber Carl Lunde. "They would send us the hook and a
room, cafeteria, bridge and hold."

"I spent most of the day there," said Local 8 mem-
ber Will Luch. "They would send us the hook and a
room, cafeteria, bridge and hold."

"I had a good time," said Lunde. "They're real
nice people and they really appreciated the help."

—Steve Stallone
In December of '33 we moved to Wilmington. We went through the '34 strike and got a house in San Pedro late that year. During the strike I used to sell papers at the scale compoud, hear things the scales were talkin' about, and tell my father where I thought these people were gonna be the next day. This allowed the union to know where to demonstrate with a great amount of vigor. One day the scabs or the Pinkertons started giving me false information so my cover was blown. Finally they wouldn't let me back in there anymore.

I really didn't realize what the hell was going on until after the shit of all the longshoremen during the 1934 strike. That was a clear recollection I could identify with. I knew many longshoremen. Their kids were in my age group and we hung around together. So that was an impact that really started me to be aware of what my father was up in.

My dad was a marine clerks' local officer through the '30s and '40s. When World War II came, he got me a couple of jobs on the waterfront, but I was in the Navy for most of the war. From 1948 to '50 I was a marine clerk. During the 1948 longshore strike we had a committee for procuring food. We used a boat. I had to catch fresh fish that was distributed through Local 13's food distribution service.

President Truman stopped the '48 strike under the new Taft-Hartley Act. During the injunction period you did just enough to stay on the payroll. The work in the rands was such that from 12 to 18 hours a day and a half or two before they were ready to go again. One time I was delivered down there to deliver my papers and five or six longshoremen were getting roughed up. They had hot steam towels they'd drape out and put on. Their legs were all sore and bruised.

Before the 1934 strike longshore work was all heavy, hand-handled work, and the men were fighting the speed-up at every turn. After those 12 and 18 hour shifts some longshoremen would go to the Bobel Inn, a transit hotel in San Pedro where I used to go to drink and get completely exhausted. They'd sleep eight, ten, 12 hours. It was usually a day and a half or two before they were ready to go again. One time I was delivered down there to deliver my papers and five or six longshoremen were getting roughed up. They had hot steam towels they'd drape out and put on. Their legs were all sore and bruised.

In the '50s the employers rolled over on us. They tried to hide behind the flag and the Korean War, but in '51 we got added holidays, more vacation, a real benefit in the pension plan, and a welfare plan for shipowners' industry and beat 'em. Our discipline in the ranks was such that a dock worker would bring those empty boards on three trailers from the dock or out of a boxcar to the ship's gear. The cargo would be hoisted. Then that jitty driver would bring those empty boards back to the dockside for more cargo—and only three loads an hour would be hoisted. The trick was to pull that all day and stay on the payroll.

The '48 strike had historic significance that nobody realizes yet. We won, and we went back to work with a dignity that we hadn't taken on this shipowners' industry and beat 'em. Our dispatch hall—the employers had attacked it—was intact. Now we could prove to 'em how good we were. We kept tellin' the employers that 1951 we're gonna get what we didn't get in '48 and more. That wasn't just common to L.A. Either that was happening in San Francisco, Seattle, Portland, Coos Bay and everywhere else.

By 1960 along with nine of the ten Longshore Caucus delegates from Local 13 I became a CLC member in '63 I was a Longshoreman. In those years everything was break bulk cargo. Besides that example, came in 190 pound units. That was tough work because you had to pick a big, heavy load such as a dead weight confined in a very small area. Two of you maybe would have to get it out. But there was something anywhere from three to six or eight hours. We got stowed properly. You'd put in eight or ten hours; in those days you didn't have any trouble sleeping, either.

The advent of loading hand-stowed cargo were a lot harder or a lot more detailed than what the words "hand-stowed" say. Visualize a Grace Lines vessel going down to South America. They had upward of 26 ports of call on every voyage. There had to be block stowage of cargoes for 26 different ports. That means the shipowner had to stow the ship sea-worthy but in such a way that you had to have that cargo available for discharge when you got to that port.

The second thing that went into hand-handling of cargo was break bulk loads—corridors, so-to-speak—of cargo that were masterpieces of work that longshoremen learned through experience. Whether it was cartons, bags, sacks, loads of lumber, whatever, every voyage the shipowners' industry and beat 'em.

I voted against the first M & M Agreement in 1960 along with nine of the ten Longshore Caucus delegates from Local 13, and went down and talked against it on the basis that I wasn't opposed to the concept, but I was opposed to the amounts that were settled upon. After I got over my mad at not having enough money, I went to work on the basis that we needed this type of contribution to survive and grow, and that whether we kept the old contract or got this new one, those were going to come on the waterfront rather rapidly.

There were a lot of people in the Local Caucus level that wanted to status quo to continue. There was good reasoning for that, with a slungload limit and the make-work practices that had developed up and down the conference table and some of that was going to be wiped out. Some people were leery that there wasn't enough protection in the agree-
ment as presented at the Coast Caucus level to preserve those long-standing conditions we'd gained that were based on informal "top pocket rules." But by and large the ranks had accepted the idea, and that showed up in the vote even in the first M & M Agreement that Local 13 turned down. The rest of the locals, or the majority of the workers, passed it.

Probably the biggest objection to both the 1960 and the 1966 M & M Agreement came when we had not really done our homework on the waterfront. We had an eye on the ILWU and the employers' organization, the Pacific Maritime Association (PMA) and the waterfront employers didn't have any costs completely taken care of.

As for the one percent, the reason we never got them as longshoremen in the optional program. Our main thrust has always been that we have a program that makes the longshoreman's work safe and the employer believes it's not safe, and there would be penalty.

A few years before M & M, in 1957 and '58, I'd been elected as a Local 13 Business Agent. You could only serve two years, you had to get up my term in '59 and immediately got put on the local's LIR, which meant that all the locals we had and also took care of members' disputes with the employers. In '63 I was elected to International office as a CLCRI member. As part of the job duties assigned to me as a Coast Committee member, I became Administrative Trustee for the ILWU-PMA Pension Trust and Welfare Fund. When you're an Administrative Trustee, there's certain things that come up over a period of time that you just can't cover in writing out a trust agreement. The philosophy of the parties in the ILWU and the employers' organization, the Pacific Maritime Association (PMA) and the waterfront employers, was that when you had qualifications—and these were very lenient, by the way—was entitled to a pension. Now, PMA and the waterfront employers didn't have any records that went back through World War II even. Various companies had some records, but a lot of them had none at all. So the job there of verifying that certain longshoremen were here in those years.

That the parties had agreed to was that longshoremen could prove they worked in the industry in those years prior to the 1942, then that was enough to grant them credit. Pension payments were made for the first time in 1951. All those people who qualified with 20 years went back to '31. So quite a few of 'em had to have sworn statements that were notarized that said, "Yes, I remember John Doe. He was here in 1933 or '33 or whatever." We went to a great deal of trouble to make sure that all those longshoremen had their day in court, and when you look back on our track record of that original charter member pension plan, 99 percent of the people entitled to a pension got one. That included people who were still retiring in 1963 and all the way up into the '70s where they had to have credit for years that were way back prior to World War II. As for the one percent, the reason we never got them was because they never raised the issue—we never heard from them.

Now, as to welfare coverage, the goal of the Longshore Division has always been to have absolutely no out-of-pocket expenses for members in health plans. We pretty much achieved that all these longshoremen had their day in court, that we'd had a good contract offered to us, there was more there and let's get more.

For any strike I'd been involved with in the ILWU before '71, we always wanted something that was going to be a permanent part of an agreement. The '48 strike and the efforts made prior to World War II sought to build in certain safety precautions. In 1979 there was a departure from that. There were several issues—the steady man question existed, but it wasn't the catalyst. The prime emphasis was more money, not some condition that was going to be an integral part of upcoming contracts. A lot of us found that to be a flaw in the thinking of the people advocating the strike. So when the strike was over, in effect, what we had done was go out for 134 days for 10 cents. In 1979 I was appointed to the committee that was formed by the Department of Labor (DOL) in Washington, D.C., to put together safety standards for marine terminals. I served about nine months. There were two people from the ILA. I was the only one from the ILWU. There were employers from the East, West, and Gulf Coasts, and some representatives of the public.

The employers were quite apprehensive of any changes. The first four months of sessions were taken up with the representatives of labor and the public lobbying the employer members to loosen up. We said, "There's no tragedy in some of these regulations, like having marked throughfares for cranes on docks, having guard rails adjacent to cranes where they are run on a track so that people can't walk into 'em, and having marine-type stretchers available and safety things that we've had on the West Coast for ages." But in a lot of places in the Gulf and the South Atlantic, that was pretty foreign to most of those employers.

To be fair, there were a few times we introduced things that were in the Pacific Coast Maritime Code that we'd been enforcing out on the West Coast, and in Hawaii for years. But trying to have that put into the national code wasn't something those employers were prepared to do. A lot of times that meant moving our position to get something into the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA) standard code. But this didn't usurp our protection because that is covered under the ILWU-PMA longshore contract. We still have our marine code here on the West Coast. It is better than OSHA's in some instances.

The terminal safety code that resulted wasn't complete by any means, but it was a great improvement. There had been some very unsafe practices, especially in bulk-loading terminals where machinery was antiquated and not electric-proofed and there were sparks on practically a daily basis. Once you get enough dust in the elevators, with the right amount of cool air or hot air as the case may be, you had an explosion. So that was taken care of because all these elevators had to change over to spark-proof machinery.

I stepped down from the Coast Committee in 1983, went back to longshore clerking where I started, and then served briefly as interim CLCRI Committeeman in 1990. Today I can look back and compare things to when I came on the docks the first time in 1943 as a high school student. The only thing I took home was a straight-time wage, with overtime after six hours.

When registered longshoremen leave the docks after a day's work, they take home a very high wage and benefit credits toward pensions, holidays, and dental coverage for them and their families. They have a fair dispatch system. They have the freedom of a 40-hour week. They can make themselves available for work just one day a month if they wish—that doesn't guarantee 'em the benefits, but it does guarantee 'em a job. Is that a great union or what?
The United Steelworkers of America (USWA) joined the Made in America Foundation July 13 in filing an unprecedented federal lawsuit challenging the constitutionality of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

"We believe that NAFTA is a treaty of international law that has been subject to a two-thirds ratification vote by the U.S. Senate as called for in the U.S. Constitution," said USWA President George Becker. "We are taking this legal action because NAFTA has been an unmitigated disaster not just for our members, but for working people throughout North America."

The lawsuit, filed in U.S. District Court in the Northern District of Alabama, claims the constitutional challenge is needed if NAFTA is a treaty and, if the answer is yes, declare the agreement null and void because it was not approved by the constitutionally required two-thirds vote in the Senate.

The Senate vote on NAFTA's adoption held Nov. 15-16, 1993. Sixty-one of 100 senators opposed NAFTA. "Had NAFTA been considered by our founding fathers, there is no doubt in my mind that they would have considered it a treaty," Becker said. "It would be difficult to imagine how any international economic agreement could be treated in a Constitution if it were not one. It binds the three signatories into the economic equivalent of a military alliance.

The USWA filed the lawsuit because of the huge loss in jobs, the huge increase in poverty, the plight of the Puerto Rican workers to exercise some measure of control over the island's future. The USWA is seeking a declaration that NAFTA is unconstitutional and asks the court to order the immediate termination of the agreement.

Becker made clear that the lawsuit is not aimed at Canada, Mexico or its workers. "We will not stand for a race to the bottom of the economic ladder, where corporations compete for the cheapest labor and the lowest environmental and safety standards," he said. "Instead we want a trading system that is fair and reciprocal to the economy and allows people to organize for a better life."

We need to wipe NAFTA off the books and fashion a hemispheric economic community that will serve the interests not just of Wall Street and the bond market, but of workers, consumers and the environment in the United States, Mexico and Canada."

After NAFTA was implemented, more than 2.1 million jobs were lost in U.S. manufacturing from 1994 to 1996. More than 1.4 million jobs were lost in the textile industry alone.

Becker said NAFTA also has an impact on workers in the U.S. Many U.S. firms, he said, have used NAFTA as a way to raid the island as a business-friendly environment, host to the maintenance of social services. The two unions at the company, the Independent Union of Telephone Workers and the Independent Brotherhood of Telephone Workers opposed the privatization plan from the start. They believe that the new owners will lay off large numbers of their 4,000 members in order to cut costs and pay the debt. The unions also say the privatization means an attack on the ability of Puerto Rican workers to exercise some control over the island's economic fate.

On October 1 last year the the Independent Brotherhood representing mostly white-collar classifications, struck for a day. An angry crowd of over 100,000 people turned out in front of the governor's mansion to support them, the largest gathering of Puerto Ricans in history.

Ashley Rosello said the move was "unlawful as well as illegal." Rosello accused the company of "stealing" the island's public telephone system.

"It was not an option," he said. "We are going to continue fighting for what is ours by law, by constitution.""
Workers at Clean Coastal Waters, an oil spill response company in the Los Angeles Harbor, were joined by Inlandboatmen's Union Southern California Region members and representatives of Communities for a Better Environment (CBE) in a demonstration outside the firm's Long Beach office July 31 to protest its refusal to bargain in good faith with the employees.

The workers voted to join the IBU Southern California Region March 18 and have since been unable to get serious negotiations for a first contract off the ground with management. It took more than two months to set up the first bargaining meeting where the union's negotiating committee presented its proposal. At a meeting a week later management simply rejected the proposal in its entirety and offered nothing in its place.

The union proposal would maintain the current health coverage, but simply guarantee it in writing. They want to get a fair wage, health insurance, and an end to the attitude that they were "off the ground with management. It took more than two months to set up the first bargaining meeting where the union's negotiating committee presented its proposal. At a meeting a week later management simply rejected the proposal in its entirety and offered nothing in its place.

In response to the stonewalling the union filed an Unfair Labor Practice complaint with the NLRB July 13, charging the company with failure to bargain in good faith. The board conditionally dismissed the complaint, saying there was not sufficient evidence at this time to sustain the charge, but is keeping it on file to be reinstated if and when more evidence is presented. The move seems to have gotten the company off its back.

At a negotiating meeting July 28 Clean Coastal Waters presented a counter proposal that basically offered the same wages and benefits the workers were seeking, but before they organized. The company's "profane language was not offensive because it was not in the context of sexual harassment." 

"I told them 'Why would the workers want to pay dues if we agree to this?'" said Miller. "The workers' negotiating committee will respond to the offer at the next bargaining meeting Aug. 12."
The military leaders who have **revoked their independence from Britain in 1960 have entrenched themselves in the web of profits spun by the mammmoth oil industry that has made Nigeria into the continent's most industrialized nation. Oil accounts for 95% of Nigeria's foreign earnings. More than $12 billion of the crude oil is exported annu-

ally with more than 40 percent going to refineries in the United States.**

The strike temporarily shut down the Nigerian oil industry and consequently Koko and Dabibi were detained without charge or trial.

Their incarceration was cruel and barbarous. Both men also added a pro-

vision limiting medical malpractice suits. Perhaps most insidious of all is that this bill would preempt state consumer protection laws—like one in California—that provide stronger patient protections.

The Republicans in the Senate, led by Senator Don Nickles (R-OK), are working on similar legislation to the Gingrich plan. But the fight is far from over. Your calls and letters will make a difference in the upcoming debate in the Senate.

*—Lindsey McLaughlin*

**AFRICAN NAFTA UPDATE**

The African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) journey through the Senate Finance Committee as just one bill and has emerged a puppet of every job-killer, free-trade sell-

out. The Senate Finance Committee has already voted in favor of it. After passing by an 18-2 vote July 21, it will go to the full Senate, where it is like-

ly to acquire even more amend-

ments, perhaps enough to sink

*—Nancy Snyder*

Based on the NAFTA and Multilateral Agreement on Investment (MAI) models, this act would require Nigerian agreements to submit to Interna-
tional Monetary Fund (IMF) austerity plans and join the World Trade Organization (WTO), surrendering much of their sovereignty to world capi-

tal, as a condition for loans, investments and lower trade barriers.

*—Torn Price*
WARNING FROM NEW ZEALAND

I have been a keen reader of The Dispatcher for many years and have always liked to take the opportunity to warn you as Brother Workmen of the difficulties we faced when the ROU were in New Zealand on Feb. 23 of this year. I and 224 other NZ dock workers were thrown out of work by a company, using a USA company, paid all of its commercial debtors here in NZ and all I received was one week's pay. Most of the 225 who lost their jobs had 20-35 years service in the ILWU.

The reason for my letter is not to seek sympathy, but rather to warn our brothers of the lengths USA companies are prepared to go to in pursuit of its own ends. Nor are these actions a reflection on the matter legally. However, I have a feeling that this company has used NZ laws to throw the 225 of us on the scrap heap.

Brian McWilliams
Radio Officers Union

KEEPS UP THE FIGHT

We won one battle, Prop. 226, but many of us are aware that we have the war to win in November. We know that Gingrich has to go. Eleven more Democrats will do it.

Harry and the ILWU have meant much to me since 1937 and the Permit Hall. Please accept my additional contribution to the PAF to help carry on the fight. This one we must win. We all have to be involved.

Charles Aceto
Local 63 Retired
San Diego, CA

Radio Officers Union thanks the ILWU for its support. From left to right: ROU Technical Director Eugene Zweigle, ILWU Local 23 Longshore Division President Lee Braach, Local 23 Business Agent Scott Mason, ILWU International President Brian McWilliams and ROU Secretary-Treasurer Donald Dishinger.

GREETINGS FROM THE ILWU FEDERATED AUXILIARIES

The ILWU Federated Auxiliaries wish to take this opportunity to send fraternal greetings to all members, officers and locals.

We would also like to extend an invitation to the wives and other female relatives of you all to become members of the Auxiliary in your port.

Through your organizational experiences we feel that your wives would help enrich the life of the Auxiliary and help broaden the base for better understanding of the principles of unionism.

Many women view Auxiliary membership as an opportunity to join forces with other women in an effort to accomplish something of value. The conviction that their combined efforts will help to influence the course of events stimulates many and tends to build intense loyalty to the ILWU.

You are aware that Auxiliary membership has been slipping during the past few years, so we are appealing to you to aid us in our endeavour to strengthen our organization through a request to all wives of ILWU members to join the Union Auxiliary.

In areas where Auxiliaries have disbanded or have not been established, information can be obtained by writing to: Pat Marks, ILWU Federated Secretary / PO Box 2427 / Longview, WA. 98632. In areas where there is an active Auxiliary, information can be obtained by contacting the Secretary of the Auxiliary locally.

Jeff Ordonez
President
ILWU Federated Auxiliaries
Pat Marks
Secretary

NORTHWEST AREA FEDERATED AUXILIARIES MEET FOR 24TH BIENNIAL CONFERENCE

Auxiliary members from throughout the U.S. Pacific Northwest and British Columbia, Canada met in North Bend May 16 and 17 under the theme of "World Unity.

The conference addressed issues and adopted resolutions, including: strengthening ties between unions, vesting health and welfare benefits for working and retired ILWU members, Food Stamp reform, no reductions in pensions upon the death of vested members, and benefits for extended and terminal illness care. These resolutions will be sent on for consideration to the Federated Auxiliary Executive Board meeting in September at Boron, Calif.

Auxiliaries attending were: No. 1 North Bend, Oregon; No. 3 Seattle, No. 4 Everett, Wash.; No. 5 Portland; No. 14 Longview, Wash.; No. 35 Tacoma, No. 26 New Westminster, B.C. and No. 39 from Chemainus, B.C.

It was a rewarding experience to attend this conference and exchange ideas and common concerns with our Northwest Area Sisters.

Margo Erickson
Oregon Vice President
ILWU Federated Auxiliaries
IMPORTANT NOTICE ON ILWU POLITICAL ACTION FUND

Delegates to the 30th Triennial Convention of the ILWU, meeting in Honolulu, Hawaii, April 7-11, 1997, amended Article X of the International Constitution to read as follows:

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

"The voluntary contributions to the Political Action Fund shall be collected as follows:

"Up to One Dollar and Fifty Cents ($1.50) of each March and July’s per capita payment to the International shall be diverted to the Political Action Fund where it will be used in connection with federal, state and local elections. These deductions are suggestions only, and individual members are free to contribute more or less than that guideline suggests. The diverted funds will be contributed only on behalf of those members who voluntarily permit that portion of their per capita payment to be used for that purpose. The Titled Officers may suspend either or both diversions if, in their judgement, the financial condition of the International warrants suspension.

"For three consecutive months prior to each diversion such dues paying members of the union shall be advised of his/her right to withhold the contribution or any portion thereof otherwise made in March and July. Those members expressing such a desire, on a form provided by the International Union, shall be sent a check in the amount of the contribution or less if they so desire, in advance of the member making his/her dues payment to the month in which the diversion occurs.

"Those members who do not wish to have any portion of their per capita payment diverted to the Political Action Fund, but wish to make political contributions directly to either the Political Action Fund or their local union, may do so in any amounts whenever they wish."

ILWU members, retirees and friends met July 5 at the Local 10 hall for the 64th commemoration of Bloody Thursday. On July 5, 1934, during the coastwise waterfront strike, police murdered strikers Howard Speery and Nick Bordoise in front of the ILA hall on Steuart Street in San Francisco.

Police wounded 32 others, including many longshore workers. A total of six workers were shot or beaten to death and 75 others seriously injured in the course of the strike that lead to the San Francisco General Strike and the founding of the ILA’s Pacific Coast District, later the ILWU.

Workers placed flowers in front of the ILA hall that day 64 years ago, and this July flowers were placed on the cement. ILWU members met for other Bloody Thursday commemorations up and down the coast.

Joe Johnson, former National Secretary of the Marine Cooks and Stewards union, spoke to the nearly 200 people gathered. After the demise of the MCS Johnson became a registered longshoremans and a member of Local 10.

"I still haven’t really retired," Johnson told KPFA radio reporter Anthony Fest. "Our message is current. What we have to say applies to this very hour. When we founded this union we didn’t anticipate organizing on a world scale. Now these people who take our work out of the country force us to organize on a world scale."

—Tom Price

Bloody Thursday lives

Fighting Fund Referendum Alert

During the May 1998 Longshore Caucus the delegates voted to ask members to increase their regular contributions to the Division’s the Fighting Fund. The Fund was established by a referendum in 1984 for the purpose of protecting and preserving the jurisdiction of the Longshore Division. A second referendum in 1991 increased the initial assessment of $2.00 per member per month to $3.00 and raised the limit of the monies to be held in the Fund to $350,000, not to fall below $250,000. The Fund has remained unchanged since 1991. However, the Coast Committee and Budget Committee recommended to this Caucus that increases were needed in order to carry out the purpose of the Fund.

After the issue was fully debated on the Caucus floor, delegates adopted an increase of the individual assessment from $3.00 to $5.00 and raised the limit to be maintained in the Fund to $350,000 to $750,000 with an automatic initiation of the assessment whenever the Fund drops to $600,000. This decision is subject to a referendum vote of the entire Longshore Division membership.

Local officers should be on the lookout for your local’s supply of referendum ballots for your membership, which will be arriving by mail from the printer during the first week of August. The actual voting period will take place from Monday, August 10th through Monday August 17th. For locals who have mail balloting procedures, the referendum dates will be August 5th through August 19th. The Coast Committee will be providing detailed instructions on the procedures and schedule for voting as well as a tally sheet to be used by your local balloting committee.

PLEASE NOTE: By Longshore Division By-laws and Caucus Rules only Class A and Class B members in good standing are eligible to vote in this referendum.
Benefits Specialist
Jim Santana retires,
George Romero steps up

After more than 40 years with the ILWU, the last ten working for the longshore benefits program, Jim Santana is retiring. Over the last four years Santana has worked as the Coast Benefits Specialist, coordinating benefit plans for the union with the ILWU-PMA Benefits Office. His duties include working with Kaiser and other healthcare providers and the ILWU Federal Credit Union.

Great changes in the health and welfare field necessitated the creation of the office of Benefits Specialist, the Longshore Caucus decided at its Jan. 31-Feb. 5, 1984 meeting. Health Maintenance Organizations, for-profit medicine, Social Security privatization, all these changes in benefits were new then and the Longshore Caucus wanted someone to keep an eagle eye on them.

Since then, Santana has created the ground rules for the office that oversees and coordinates benefits up and down the coast with the ILWU-PMA Benefits Plans office, the pensioners, locals and the International Union.

Santana started on the waterfront in 1956 and in December 1963 registered as a B man. He achieved A status in October, 1966. His first office in Local 34 came on the Executive Committee in 1969. Between 1973 and 1975 he served on the Executive Committee and then did a ten year hitch on the Local 34 Labor Relations Committee. In 1988 he was appointed California Area Benefits Director, serving until his appointment as Benefits Specialist.

Santana remembered getting the Coastwise 401(k) retirement plan in place, straightening out the prescription drug plan, introducing PPO (Preferred Provider Organizations) medical plans and working with the Benefit Subcommittee under the Trustees of the Benefit Plan as highlights of his stint as Benefits Specialist.

At its meeting last May, the Caucus selected George Romero of Local 10 to step into Santana’s shoes. First coming onto the docks in 1969, Romero has handled many elected positions. As past president of Local 10, a former caucus delegate and a member Romero has had a hand in negotiating the contract benefits he is now helping administer. He also served as Secretary-Treasurer of the Bay Area Longshore Memorial Association.

“My greatest challenge will be to build appreciation for what we have, keep what we have and make it better,” Romero said. “I’m glad to have had the time with Jimmy to get to know the job better.” Benefits will certainly become more important as the Longshore Division goes into contract negotiations next year.

Jim Santana (right) hands over the Benefit Specialist office to George Romero.

Santana will not be far away from the union. He plans to remain active in the pensioner’s association, and his expertise will come in handy. When asked what he plans to do in retirement, he said: “It’s a whole new field, I’ll have to try it out and let you know.” —Jim Price

LONGSHORE PENSIONERS, SURVIVORS AND DECEASED

RECENT PENSIONERS: Local 8—Charles Bouoka, Scott Dunlap, Delbert Green, Lawrence Vanderwerf, Richard Wise; Local 10—Richard Coats, Billy Jackson, Allen Miller; Local 13—Ernie Burum Jr., Esquiel Carbajal Jr., Carl Dreyer; Local 21—Roger Tawes; Local 52—Ted Kimman; Local 63—Donald Gilkes; Local 92—Arnold Trachsel; Local 94—Donald Gardner.

DECEASED: Local 8—George Jones (Linda), Robert Pfeiffer, Albert Schumacher (Verna), Leslie Silvido (Verna); Local 10—Voyce Jones (Druclla), Robert Peer (Laurese), Sam Smith Jr. (Lula), Oris Williams (Georgia), Daniel Wilson; Local 13—Felipe Dagarro (Rebecca), Edward Denile (Heilen), Azel Garcia (Boula), Walter Greenwood (Teresa), George Kane, David Keesey, Herbert Long, Louis Miretti (Irina), Robert Prector, Nicholas Sanders; Local 19—Carl Bagwell (Leslie), Irvin Egger, Panton Jackson, Merlin Lewis (B. Lee), James Spellacy (Lorraine), Leslie Stensen (Lorraine); Local 24—E. L. Mackenzie (Gertrude), Tave Sear (Mary); Local 26—Diego Rodriguez (Judith); Local 27—Larry Nazum; Local 34—George Barbour, Bennett Carlson (Elise), Joseph Cassick (Bontu), Norman Lutich; Local 40—John Phillips (Hannah); Local 46—Jack Olivera (Emma), Local 51—Lester Erickson; Local 60—Leny Hallman (Irene); Local 63—George Geyer, Evar Jensen; Local 94—C. Bloomington (Charlotte), Tony Prizmich (Verna); Local 96—George Holthe. Survivor in parenthesis.

DECEASED SURVIVORS: Local 8—Dorothy Martin, Alice Miller, June Poleti; Local 10—Anna Rado, Novella Schumacher, Jessie Silva, Lucille Davies (Verna), Marie Nielsen, Alice Sussoff, Emma Phillips; Local 12—Edith Decoster; Local 13—Shirley Holland, Folsom Keedrick, Roberta Walters, Cassie Clemens; Local 19—Janet Olsen; Local 23—Linnie Petroski, Geneva Emery, Anne Sinclair; Local 40—Frieda Ball; Local 92—Alice Carigan; Local 98—Berrie Wilson.
Leadership Education and Development Institute

In keeping with the 1994 Convention action mandating internal education, and with the 1997 Convention’s budget decision to place the union’s priority on organizing, the Titled Officers want to ensure the development of new leadership with a firm grasp of ILWU history and traditions, as well as of union finances and administrative procedures. Participation in “LEAD” requires a member’s commitment to be of service to the union, to contribute to the internal mobilization necessary for effective union representation and new organizing.

Reprinted here is an application for the ILWU’s first Leadership Education and Development Institute (LEAD) to be held November 18-22, 1998, in Palm Springs, California. Participation is limited to 100 members of ILWU locals on the U.S. mainland and all IBU regions. You may send this completed form (or direct questions for additional information) to LEAD APPLICATIONS, c/o Joe Ibarra, ILWU Secretary-Treasurer, 1188 Franklin Street, San Francisco, CA 94109 (Fax: 415-775-1302).

International Longshore & Warehouse Union
Leadership Education and Development Institute
November 18-22, 1998
Palm Springs, California

APPLICATION

Name:
Address/City/State/Zip:
Phone: Email:
ILWU Local or IBU Region: Book/plug/registration number:
Year became ILWU member: Previous/other union affiliations/memberships:
List all positions held in ILWU indicating whether elected, appointed or volunteered. Was position paid? Full-time? Include all committees, executive board, district council, caucus or convention delegate & dates of service:

Describe participation in ILWU programs, such as organizing, political action, solidarity picket lines, type of involvement (attach more sheets if necessary):

Reason(s) for participating in LEAD (attach additional sheets if necessary):

Answers to the following items are entirely optional:
Employer:
Race/ethnicity:
Language(s) spoken/read:
Occupation:
Gender:
Years on the job:

LEAD will be conducted as an educational retreat. Participants are expected to attend all sessions. Participants will be housed in double rooms, but may upgrade to single room at own expense.

Send completed application to: LEAD Applications, Joe Ibarra, Secretary-Treasurer, ILWU, 1188 Franklin Street, San Francisco, CA 94109 (or by fax: (415) 775-1302).

All applications must be received at the International headquarters by 5 p.m., Friday, September 11, 1998.

A Helping Hand...
when you need it most. That’s what we’re all about. We are the representatives of the ILWU-sponsored recovery programs. We provide professional and confidential assistance to you and your family for alcoholism, drug abuse and other problems—and we’re just a phone call away.