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The spirit of the M&M

By James Spinosa

ILWU International President

Technological change is coming to the West Coast waterfront.

Everyone knows it’s going to happen and has to happen. The only questions are how it will happen and who will benefit.

Our current situation is very similar to that on the docks more than 40 years ago—containment and movement. The shipowners are trying to contain the employers’ cargo and stop it from being unloaded lawfully. There is no question of jurisdiction. It is a question of how and where the work will be done. The ILWU is determined to have the work on the docks and to non-union workers in Utah, Arizona and other right-to-work states. They have been using off-dock terminals to store and process containers and using non-ILWU workers to do the labor even though our contract clearly states that long as the container is in the control of one of our employers, it is our work. And they have not cooperated to give us the intra-port drainage that is contractually our work.

Our committees are identifying the work and who is doing it. We need to strategize on how we will get it back and what steps we are willing to do with the contract to get it. The Longshore Division has to have all these things figured out before we enter into contract negotiations.

In the last three contract negotiations we have gotten nowhere with the employers on this all-important issue of jurisdiction. In the last negotiations the ILWU team overhauled the contract’s Section One on jurisdiction to follow the work, but the employers wouldn’t budge from the current language. So we are facing a monumental problem and an obstinate employer, but the Coast Committee feels confident that if the Longshore Division remains united we can address these issues and get through them. But we must be prepared.

Five years after signing the M&M Harry Bridges, in a statement to the 55th Annual Convention of the American Association of Port Authorities Sept. 14, 1966 reflected on the deal he and the ILWU had just made. "Although we got all the money we bargained for, if we had to do the job all over again, we would have asked for and fought for more," Bridges said. "At that point this is strictly a case of 20-20 hindsight.”

We don’t want to be in that same position when we look back at the deal the union will make on the introduction of new technology. We have to be ready so we don’t miss anything this time around.

The 2002 negotiations will be most critical for the union and its productivity. We can’t let our guard down. Look at the jurisdiction battles in Charleston, South Carolina and what happened just three years ago in Australia and before that in Liverpool, England to see the potential that may lie ahead for us. As our committees prepare for hard bargaining, too much it individual members get their own financial houses in order and be ready to do whatever it takes to protect our future.

PRESIDENT’S REPORT

For the union any question about technology is a question of jurisdiction

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Longshore Caucus prepares for talks:
sets new policies, extends solidarity

With its sights on the future, the Coast Caucus is confronting issues of technology and jurisdiction, new policies and procedures to deal with discrimination and harassment in the workplace, and solidarity with workers in other trades. It would be meeting in San Francisco March 12-17.

The Coast Committee, composed of ILWU Presidents Jim Spinosa, International Vice President Ben McEllrath, and Coast Committee members Ray Ortiz Jr. and Joe Wendl, presented its report on jurisdiction, taking the position "that it is not in the best interest of the Longshore Division at this time to open our PCL&LA contract to early negotiations," as requested by the employer. While acknowledging the need to continue open dialogue with the employer on issues of technology and jurisdiction, the Coast Committee proposed that the Division's committee need to do more research and preparation before entering into collective bargaining.

"The complexity of the technological systems, the discussions necessary to reach a meaningful implementation, and the Employer's appetite for a 6.3 steady workforce at the expense of the Hub are only a few examples why the parties are not prepared at this time to enter negotiations," the report stated. (See the President's Report on page 2 for a more detailed discussion of this issue.)

The Caucus spent an entire afternoon session discussing technology and discrimination issues, with technologies, clerk and walking bosses getting clear on what each one's jurisdictional concerns were, where they overlapped and how they could support each other before voting unanimously to adopt the Coast Committee's recommendation.

The Coast Committee also presented a new policy and expedited procedures to deal with issues of automation and discrimination that are not ready at the workplace. All members of the Division will receive a copy of the policy and the Employer's letter on the automated systems and those named in such complaints. The Caucus authorized a few changes to the documents and the Coast Committee has discussed those with the Employer representatives and hope to have the agreement finalized and implemented without much difficulty.

Since the laws and policies affecting the implementation of the Americans with Disabilities Act have been rapidly changing over the last few years, the Coast Committee developed a new policy to deal with how the union must accommodate people with disabilities in its research and dispatch. The new policies and procedures will be posted at all local offices and given to all members. Final agreement with the Employer on training schedules for local officers and LBCs on how to handle these and other issues has not yet been reached.

In December 1998 the federal OSHA announced new standards for powered industrial truck (PIT) training and certification. The standards require all operators of hostlers, tophandlers, transtainers, strads, etc. to be trained. Any operator of a piece of equipment before they would be allowed to operate them. The ILWU and the Employer sued, arguing that this would shut down the ports. A settlement was reached wherein the union and the employers would work out an agreement identifying who was trained and/or experienced or needs training to satisfy the OSHA regulations. Those requiring it will have to be trained by June 2001. Final agreement with the employer and the Coast Labor Relations Committee is still pending.

The Automatic Dispatch Committee reported that currently only Local 13 is experimenting with an automated dispatch on a contractual mandate trial basis.

The Education Committee reported on its plans for its upcoming leadership seminar in Palm Springs March 28-April 1 called "Caucasians of a Greater Inheritance: Longshore Leaders of the 21st Century." The seminar will focus on contract language, grievance procedures, arbitrations, fair representation and other related duties and responsibilities of local union officials and is designed primarily for new or young officers and others interested in union service as selected by the locals.

The Coast Legislative Action Committee, composed of Local 13 President Mike Mitre, Peter Peyton (Local 13), Lawrence Thibeaux (Local 10), Mark Hamlin (Local 40) and Max Vikich (Local 24), along with a group of rank-and-file longshore workers, will be going to Washington, D.C. April 29-May 4 to lobby their Congressional representatives on issues of concern to the Division.

The Coast Budget Committee reviewed the Division's finances and found them in sound shape.

ILWU and ILA stand together

The American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO) will host a conference of the coastwise workers in 2001 to celebrate the history of the workers and their struggles. The conference, called "Caretakers of the 21st Century" will open in a show of the renewed solidarity between the West Coast and East Coast unions.

"We work for the same carriers. We work for the same stevedores," he said. "Today's world is turning fast. If we are not together, we lose," he said.

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ILWU and ILA stand together
The Marine Transportation System Initiative: Good, bad or just plain ugly?

By Lindsay McLaughlin
ILWU Legislative Director

Numerous discussions have taken place in ILWU union halls, national government initiatives and in various public forums. Later this Spring, President Joe Miniace, President of the Inlandboatmen’s Union of the Pacific (ILWU), will present his slanted White Paper to the ILWU Council regarding the future of maritime transportation. The Council is being asked to vet the report before the unofficial White Paper is released to the public and membership. ILWU President Joe Miniace (right) presents his slanted White Paper to the ILWU Legislative Director Rodney Slater to participate in the Council's ongoing initiative to develop the ILWU White Paper to the ILWU Legislative Director Rodney Slater to participate in the Council's ongoing initiative to develop the ILWU's Legislative Director.
ON TRAINING
AROUND THE UNION

Straddle carriers are long-legged, eight-wheeled container transporters that lift and move containers on the deck onto trucks or rail cars. "Strads" by their operators, the lifters shift stacks of containers two-high or three-four-high in the yard.

Proper training is vital; it's exacting work. You're in trouble," Mason said. Local 23 has had two strad carrier operator fatalities in the last seven years.

On the East Coast it's up to each terminal to provide training, while on the West Coast the employers have consolidated training into regional operations.

Managers at Maher Terminals in Port Elizabeth contacted the Port of Tacoma last year to explore the possibility of training there. The official request came from the New York harbor commission and the group that pays the bills, John Bush, the Port's Senior Director for Operations and Maintenance, discussed the issue with Mason and Local 23 President Roger Cernadas, Executive Vice President of the ILA, told him: "We have straddle carriers, but we're so busy we don't have anybody to train the members. They don't use strads in Los Angeles, so Mike called me and told me of the ILA's problem."

"We met and we started talking at the convention and we soon got it moving," Cernadas told The Dispatcher. He is also President of ILA Local 1235 out of Newark, New Jersey. "Since then it's been a win-win situation."

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Mary Peterson asked the woman from the Jenkins $7 per hour and offering benefits that
or go on strike, or their job moves,
ly, after an aggressive union -busting
union," Peterson said. "The union -
day, they staged a sit-in in the lunch-
people. For women on 'WorkFirst,
exploited and barely covered by the
stingy employers, shifting taxpayer
money to corporate coffers.

"I'm a college graduate and coor-
ation and training that would help
and workers a chance to push for

"Unions, advocates for the poor, civil rights
groups, immigrants' rights
groups, and women's groups—the more we
accomplish," said AFL-CIO Senior Policy Analyst Charity Wilson. "Coalitions in
any state these workers are covered by wage and
law and anti -discrimination
includes:

"Raising the minimum wage for
workers.

"Expanding the funding available for
workforce programs that help workers
and stabilize and move out of poverty.
These include training programs for work-
for work, unemployment insurance, and
health insurance.

"Legislating basic workers' rights
for welfare recipients in 'community service'
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"Lowering the income limit for "work-
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health insurance.
The “Wisconsin Works” or “W2” program started even before PRWORA and, in the words of then-Governor Tommy Thompson, "a new era in welfare reform." Former Wisconsin Governor Tommy Thompson rode it to a place in the history books that he does not want to remember.

W2 has been a massive failure at work, and the worst case scenario for welfare recipients. A 2000 national study by the Urban Institute found three-fourths of W2 welfare recipients were working in service, clerical or retail positions.

Once on the job, women in welfare programs often find themselves without the disability as other workers, said Rebecca Gordon of the Applied Research Center (ARC) at (510) 205-2733. "They would have no source of income. They're much more vulnerable to the everyday person who might scuff.

UNFAIR WORKFARE

Some states also require “workfare,” work done in exchange for a benefit check, rather than wages. But some people are assigned to workfare, said Gordon, looking for jobs. In others, they get shifted into “community service” if they hit their program’s benefit cap. A TANF workfare worker finding a job. Either way, they must often take over jobs formerly done by unionized city workers.

In San Francisco, some 3,000 recipients of General Assistance were working sweeping beaches and working at the city hospital before the People Organized to Win Employment Rights (POWER) blew the whistle.

The City wasn’t giving any benefits, just the chance for a job, no transportation, no safety equipment or training. They were cleaning graffiti-filled city streets, working for the city’s Independent Budget Office. "You’d be working just as hard as the city worker next to you, who was paid—$16 an hour,” added POWER’s lead organizer Cindy Wiesner.

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In Wisconsin, 20 percent of welfare funds used to go to administering the program, paid to contractors such as Maximus, which currently administers welfare in California. "We're organizing folks who aren’t considered workers, but who are making $1.80 an hour in decent work,” said POWER’s Steve Williams.

The employers only pay the difference between workers’ CalWORKS grants and minimum wage. When one training cycle is over, they get a fresh batch of workers.

WELFARE REFORM

will transportation assistance.

• Ending time limits for families with the highest barriers to self-sufficiency.

• Making it easier for women in the Work First system to get education and training that would help them move and families out of poverty. This would include two- and four-year college programs. English as a Second Language classes and union-run training programs.

• Requiring translators at welfare offices and translate information into the languages spoken by recipients.

• Strengthening bans on displacing current workers with workfare or welfare-to-work participants.

For more information: The AFL-CIO is in the process of developing policy on welfare reform, but information can be found on-line at www.aflcio.org or by calling ARQ at (510) 205-2733.

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Women in (Wisconsin) who’ve been placed in job training working in factories, hospitals, nursing homes, in a grocery chain which has a union contract, but getting their check instead of their union pay. "We always see the need for solidarity. We need to see how people on welfare can be used to undermine organized labor. Our inclusion is to protect workers, so you don’t have people who can be used as..."

Slaves,” he said.

 slur and                                                    

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CHARLESTON 5 CAMPAIGN SPREADS

The campaign in support of the Charleston longshore workers continues to grow.

Five longshore workers from International Longshoremen’s Association Locals 1422 and 1771 at the Port of Charleston, South Carolina have been hit with felony rioting charges punishable by up to five years in prison, and after 600 union members and law enforcement officers attended the trial, the case was dropped.

The ILWU joined an international movement demanding the South Carolina state Attorney General drop the bogus charges. The movement is also demanding the criminalization of a company that hired the scab workers, the ILA locals and 29 of their members for $1.5 million in alleged financial damages caused by the picketing. Unions and other community and civil rights organizations are also raising money for the legal defense fund and planning protest actions for the first day of the trial.

Local 1422 President Ken Riley and other members of the local have been crossing-the-country, speaking out about the struggle, galvanizing support and raising funds. Local 1422 met in Charleston March 9 and 10 where he spoke at a teach-in at Spelman College sponsored by students, unionists, and the Central Labor Council. AFL-CIO Vice President Linda Chavez-Thompson shared the stage with Riley and in a rousing speech he pledged the full support of the AFL-CIO to the Charleston struggle and endorsed the international day of solidarity actions planned for the first day of the trial of the Charleston 5 is scheduled. Riley also spoke to the United Auto Workers, the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers and a local chapter of the Green Party.

Riley has also traveled to New Orleans where he spoke to a forum attended by students, unions and unionists held at Tulane University Friday, March 16. The following week Riley went to Atlanta, Georgia to meet with community organizers sponsored by the local chapter of the Black Panthers. Riley also met with the Central Labor Council in New Orleans where he received a pledge of support and involvement in the campaign.

“The people in New Orleans are fired up,” Riley said. “They are starting up defense committees and getting fundraisers going.”

At the end of the month Riley went to New York City where he addressed a gathering at City University of New York’s Queens College campus and at Hunter College. Activists there are also setting up defense committees and have asked Riley to return for further organizing events.

Other locals of Local 1422 have been traveling too. Local Executive Board member Ken Riley and Charles Braze have made appearances in Chicago, New York City, Philadelphia and Washington, D.C. garnering more support for the cause and raising money for the defense fund.

The South Carolina Progressive Network, a coalition of 34 grassroots and community groups, has endorsed Ken Riley with its annual Thunder in the Carolina Nightingale Award. The award is named after a song by the Frederick Douglass quote that “those whose voices are stilled before the wind to fave freedom...are like those who want rain without thunder and lightning.” The action came at the same time that the state legislature was busy passing three anti-worker bills—one that would prevent members of the ILA from serving on the state PSC Authority Board, one that would limit the minimum wage to federal standards and another that would beef up the state police’s rights to Investigate union operations and delay the Charleston campaign, is also working to defeat these bills.

Back on the West Coast, Ken Riley, along with ILA General Vice President Benny Holland and ILA Secretary-Treasurer of the South Atlantic and Gulf Coast District Clyde Fitzgerald, visited the ILWU Longshore Caucus March 14 (see story page 3). At the Caucus delegates unanimously passed a motion assessing longshore workers $2.00 per month for the Charleston defense fund. In separate actions, the members of two of the smaller ILWU longshore locals, Local 32 in Everett, Wash., and Local 31 in Astoria, Ore., donated $1,000 each to the defense fund. ILWU Canada locals also pledged $15,000 to the defense fund.

The rally begins April 21 at noon on the 33rd anniversary of the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr.

Large-scale demonstrations are scheduled for April 21 at the San Diego-Tijuana border, in San Francisco and at the Washington State-British Columbia border. In San Diego a teach-in is planned for April 20 at 4190 Front St. from 4 to 10 p.m. That same day a rally is planned for Larsen Field in San Ysidro, on the Mexican border at noon, and a bi-national festival is scheduled for 7 p.m. On April 22 a cross-border solidarity conference is planned, but locations are not yet finalized. For more information call 626-403-2530 or visit www.parkmountain.com/border or www.actions.org/border.

In San Francisco activists are sponsoring a rally and march in Mission to protest the eviction of poor people from their homes in theaura. The rally begins April 21 at noon on the 33rd anniversary of the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr.

For more information see www.stopftaa.org.

In Vancouver a rally is planned for April 21. The rally will begin at 10 a.m. at the Parliament buildings in Ottawa, trying to present demands to the Parliament. At the rally demonstrators will march to Parliament Hill and will march to Precita Park for entertainment and discussion. For more information see www.stopftaa.org.

The ILWU also has a Statement of Policy on the FTAA passed by the International Executive Board at its meeting last December. The ILWU joined on May 100 spon- sors of an April rally at Peace Arch Park in Blaine, Wash. The ILWU has spoken out against the border from White Rock, B.C. Longshore Locals 19 and 53 have signed on, as well as the IBU and the Puget Sound District Council. From Canada longshore Local 500 and marine section Local 400 are on board. The rally will begin at 10 a.m. and includes music and entertain- ment as well as speeches. For more information see www.stopftaa.org/peacearch.

This is the first really large rally at the peace arch since 1952, when Paul Robeson delivered the ILWU's famous speech. The ILWU’s “Ballad of Joe Hill” before an esti- mated 30,000 supporters, including a large ILWU contingent. Robeson and Harry Bridges’ lawyer Vince Hallinan had been invited to Vancouver B.C. by the miners union earlier that year, but the U.S. State Department denied them the right to leave their own country. One spring hundreds of protesters have been denied access to Canada from the U.S. side.
Recollecting Industries thought it could buy its way out of a union drive and get away with it. After all, the firm worked one overtime shift the second time the company tried, the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) foiled its scheme. The Board recommended Feb. 28 that the company be ordered to bargain for a unionizing committee at Recycling Industries. The NLRB sustained several of the company's objections and included new violations to the election, charging that the company didn't present anything. Their lawyer just said they couldn't present anything. The workers see people with their rights. "Our number one concern is fairness and equality across the board. Number two is a contract issue is fairness and equality across the board. Number two is a contract issue is fairness and equality across the board. Number two is a contract."

The workers decided not to unionize. On Feb. 28, 2000 the company announced that year's increase would be only 30 cents. Around the same time, they had a new bargaining team that made workers' lives miserable. They reduced better wages, and they didn't treat us right," said Jorge Ontiveros, an organizing committee member later hired by the company. "The boss wasn't fair, and he was cheap," Orozco said. The workers called the company Recycling Industries. They signed a union card, and the union filed for an election May 24, 2000.

March 2001

THE DISPATCHER

BOARDS SEEKS BARGAINING ORDER FOR SACTO FIRM

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The workers decided not to unionize. On Feb. 28, 2000 the company announced that year's increase would be only 30 cents. Around the same time, they had a new bargaining team that made workers' lives miserable. They reduced better wages, and they didn't treat us right," said Jorge Ontiveros, an organizing committee member later hired by the company. "The boss wasn't fair, and he was cheap," Orozco said. The workers called the company Recycling Industries. They signed a union card, and the union filed for an election May 24, 2000.

This time the company raised the price. Soon after the filing, the management announced a wage increase that ranged from 90 cents to $3.70 per hour. The increases were to take effect March 1 and were to show up in the paychecks due the day after the election. To further dampen the union drive, after requiting a pay raise, management picked a date the workers. To be eligible for the raffle, workers had to fill out a questionnaire that reflected badly on the hospice. The 22 nursing and office workers at South Coast Hospice has touched many in the community. It operates like a home health service, with RNs and LPNs and nursing assistants and caring for people who have six months or less to live. Such care demands a high level of skill and commitment. The workers see people with end-stage diseases and terminal pain. It's a vulnerable, often difficult time. Because they go out to the patients, workers lack on-site backup available to hospital nurses. "The hospice treats patients with care, concern, love and compassion," said Local 12's Jennifer Gumm. "Management treats employees with an iron rod."

Though she never worked as a nurse, Executive Director Linda Furman-Griele micromanaged in a way most often described as dictatorial. Hospice workers asked to speak to The Dispatcher anonymously for fear of retribution, but said they faced routine harassment and intimidation on the job. The 22 nursing and office workers at South Coast first talked about organizing about two years ago. They also initiated a letter-writing campaign. Already around 40 people have written to Furman-Griele asking her to bargain in good faith.

As Hospice negotiations unroll, the police, firefighters and city workers in Coos Bay are also carrying on contract talks, sitting across the table from Bill Grile. He already earned their ire by contacting out the city's wastewater treatment and reorganizing the Fire Department to cut the number of union workers. "Which side are you on?" could become a very pertinent question in this town over the next few months. —Marcy Ran

CONTACT YOUR ORGANIZER

International Director of Organizing
Peter Olney 415-775-0533
Southern California Organizer
Mike Diller 310-835-2770
Northern California Organizer
Jerry Martin 415-775-0533
Agustin Ramirez 415-775-0533
916-371-5638
Columbia River Organizer
Michael Cannarella 503-223-6057
Puget Sound Organizer
Paul Bigman 206-448-1870
Ian Ruskin as Harry Bridges

Ian Ruskin will appear in a series of one-man plays, “Chautauquas,” as the late ILWU International President Harry Bridges. Chautauquas began in the town of Chautauqua in upstate New York—in the late 1800s. They were educational presentations of historical figures, from Julius Caesar to Thomas Jefferson. They grew in popularity and became family events staged at town halls and community centers. But by the 1930s a new form of communication, radio, was the new form of entertainment. Chautauquas have been revived in recent years as a way for scholars and educators to share their knowledge with the public.

The Harry Bridges Chautauqua will present this extraordinary labor leader and social reformer. Harry will talk about his early life, the influences that helped form his philosophy and the major events of his life. These will include the 1934 General Strike in San Francisco, the forming of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union, and Harry’s struggle to become a citizen. Harry Bridges had a profound impact on the lives of all Americans, and particularly Californians. His work on behalf of worker’s rights, to fight prejudice and discrimination, and to achieve social justice continues to impact our lives today. This Chautauqua presentation will take you through some of Harry’s most turbulent years with one of his most dynamic figures, Harry Bridges, as your guide.

WORKING OUT WEST: A Conference for Labor Communicators, Historians and Activists

From May 3-6, 2001, in Portland, Oregon, a joint conference will be held by the Pacific Northwest Labor History Association, the Western Labor Communications Association, and the Western Region AFL-CIO. The “Working Out West” conference will provide a unique opportunity for union members, labor communicators, and labor historians to meet and examine the rich heritage of working class struggle in the Pacific Northwest, and to discuss the challenges labor faces in the 21st century. Program highlights include keynote addresses by James Green, Professor of History at the University of Massachusetts, and author of “Taking History to Heart;” Kent Wong, Director of the UCLA Center for Labor Education and Research; and Deborah Bourque, National Vice President of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers. Participants are expected from California, Oregon, Washington and nearby states, as well as from web sites in British Columbia.

A labor history bus tour on Thursday afternoon will kick off the conference, and a welcome reception will be held that night at the Oregon Historical Society. Plenary sessions and a variety of workshops on historical as well as contemporary labor issues will take place on Friday and Saturday. A Saturday night banquet and concert with Charlie King, labor singer and songwriter, will wrap up the event.

The “Labor Person of the Year” award will go to Ed Whalen, longtime Oregon labor and political activist. A special award—“Making Labor History in 2001”—will go to ILWU Local 5 for its historic organizing campaign and first contract at Powell's Books in Portland. Both awards will be presented at the Saturday night banquet. Registration fees for the conference are $50 ($10 for students, seniors, and the unemployed). Tickets for the Charlie King concert are $10. Accommodations are available at the Portland Marriott Hotel in Portland, and in the dorms at Portland State University. For more information, call (503) 725-3295, check the web site at http://www.oregon.ee.org, or e-mail Libby at libby@oregon.ee.org.

Open to all interested parties.

SCHEDULE OF PUBLIC EVENTS

The following five public presentations will be offered with free admission to the public.

SAT. JUNE 2ND, 2001 AT 7PM
Banninng’s Landino Community Cultural Center, Walker Street, Wilmington (Los Angeles Cultural Affairs Department)
Contact: Zoot, Arts Center Director
310-546-2496
THURS. JUNE 28TH, 2001 AT 7:30PM
Los Angeles Maritime Museum
Berth 84, Foot of Sixth Street, San Pedro
Contact: Dr. Lee, Director
310-546-7618
THURSDAY, JULY 5TH, 2001 (BLOODY THURSDAY) AT 6PM
San Francisco Main Library
Auditorium
100 Larkin Street, San Francisco
Contact: Susan Goldstein
Librarian II, City Archivist
415-577-4563
SAT. JULY 7TH, 2001 AT 3PM
The Tall Ship Balchunta (United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service)
Contact: John R Cummone, Supervisory Park Ranger
415-566-1230
SAT. JULY 21ST, 2001 AT 7PM
Southern California Library for Social Studies and Research
6120 South Vermont Avenue,
Los Angeles
Contact: Sarah Cooper, Executive Director

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:

**SECTION 2.** The International shall have 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 way shall any member be required to pay more than his/her pro rata share of the union’s collective bargaining expenses. Reports on the status of the fund and the 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 Fifty Cents ($1.50) of each March and July per capita payment to the International Union shall be diverted to the Political Action Fund where it will be used in connection with federal, state and local elections. These deductions are for charitable contributions 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 judgment, the financial condition of the International warrants suspension.
- For three or more months prior to each diversion such dues paying member 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 desire, in advance of the member making his/her dues payment to the local union for 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.

- No contributions: I do not wish to contribute to the ILWU Political Action Fund. I understand that the International will send me a check for the difference between my contribution and the entire amount of the Political Action Fund contribution (up to $50) prior to March 1, 2000.
- Less than $.50— I wish to contribute more than the minimum voluntary contribution (up to $.50) to the ILWU Political Action Fund. Enclosed please find my check for $___.

RETURN TO: ILWU, 1188 Franklin Street • San Francisco, CA 94109
NOTE: CONTRIBUTIONS ARE NOT DEDUCTIBLE AS CHARITABLE CONTRIBUTIONS

MAY IS MEDICAL, DENTAL CHOICE MONTH

Active and retired longshore families in the ports where members have a choice can change medical plans during the open enrollment period May 1 to May 31, 2001. The change will be effective July 1, 2001. San Francisco locals and Portland/Vancouver (Wasl.) active and retired longshore workers may change dental plans in the month of May for coverage effective July 1, 2001. In addition to the May open enrollment period, members may change their health coverage once at any time during the Plan Year (July 1-June 30).

MEDICAL CHOICE: The medical plan choice is between Kaiser Foundation Health Plan and the ILWU-PMA Indemnity Plan for Southern California Locals 13, 26, 29, 63 and 94; Northern California Locals 10, 18, 34 (San Francisco, 34), 54 and 91; and Oregon/Columbia River Locals 4, 8, 40, and 92.

In the Washington State area, the choices for Locals 19, 23, 32, 47, 52 and 98 are Group Health Cooperative and the ILWU-PMA Indemnity Plan.

DENTAL CHOICE: For Los Angeles locals, the choice is between Delta Dental Plan and the Sakai, Simms, Simon and Sugiyama group plan. For San Francisco locals, dental choice is between Delta Dental Plan and Naismith group plan. For Portland/Vancouver locals dental choice is between Blue Cross of Oregon DentaCare, Oregon Kaiser Dental Plan and Oregon/Washington Dental Service.

Information on the dental plans, and Kaiser and Group Health Cooperative medical plans, and forms to change plans can be obtained at the locals and the ILWU-PMA Benefit Plans office. The ILWU-PMA Indemnity Plan description booklet is under preparation and will be furnished as soon as it is available.

All enrollment cards must be completed and submitted to the Benefit Plans office by May 31 for the change to be effective July 1.
Local 91’s first woman walking boss

Paula Christie takes the step from Longshore Local 10 to Walking Bosses Local 91, becoming the first woman to do so.

“I’m real happy that they accepted me,” she said before the swearing in ceremony. “I worked real hard to get here.”

Christie (right) started on the docks in 1989. Vice President Charles Villeggiante (left) administered the oath. The ceremony also contained a moment of silence marking the passing of Chester Nelson, who served as local president from 1969 to 1983.

“When I was in Local 10 I had to do the work,” she said. “Now it’s my job to see the work gets done.”

Summer School for Union Women

The Labor Education and Research Center at the Evergreen State College in Olympia, Wash. will be holding its 12th annual Summer School for Union Women from June 27 to July 1, 2001 with the theme of Empowering Workers through Organizing.

The school will focus on building analytical and practical organizing skills that will strengthen the participation of rank and file women in their unions. The School provides a forum for union women to look critically at labor history and economics, as well as at their workplace, union organizing strategies, and the broader labor movement. Discussion and report back will be done through small group discussion that maximizes participation, with group facilitation provided by past graduates of the school.

Contact Lucielle Lisa White sell for brochures at 360-867-5036 or email her at whitesell@evergreen.edu. The registration form can also be downloaded from the web at www.evergreen.edu/univ/Labor_Center/home.htm.

Longshore retirees, deceased and survivors

RECENT RETIREES:
Local 4—George Carter Sr.; Local 10—Michael Deady, John Middleton; Local 18—Manuel Garcia; Local 19—Gerald Bowers, George Skinner, Breard Williams; Local 21—Georges Lucas, Richard A Anderson, Humbert Palaisier; Local 47—Del Edgbert, Local 63—Pilar Aldapa Jr.

DECEASED:
Local 10—Ted Miyovich (Beth), William Halligan (Sebastian), Charles Loggins (Alice), David Benton (Candace), Eric Norling, Angelo Linda, Muhammad Handaullass, Charles Christensen, Billy Erath, Floyd Montgomery, Henry Silva, Pedro de Garcia; Local 13—Leonard Townsell (Mary), Charlie Sotelo (Ruth), Joshua Murray (Ida), John Pandora (Beverly), John Gregg (Lucy), Melvin Heard (Lonnie), Ramon Vasquez (Catherine), Lauri Kortela, Robert Silvas, Ignacio Hernandez, Don Karhu, Tony Townsend.

FAMILIATHE:
Local 14—Jack Shirley; Local 19—Herbert Mason (Vera), Earl Kemper (Ida), Local 21—James Hurley; Local 29—Wellington De Haven (Ruthie); Local 34—Peter Lovey; Local 52—Edward Covert (Francois), Warren Monie, Carl Basier; Local 53—Russell Ruddiman (Gail); Local 54—Paul Fowler (Gerry), William Harmon, Marcus Romero; Local 81—Rosa Webb (Lynda); Local 96—Randy Lora; Local 200—Alvin Faber. (Survivors in parenthesis).

DECEASED SURVIVORS:
Local 10—Ray Schmidt, Mary Lynn, Fannie Haywood; Local 13—Leonard Driggers, Nellie Hoffman, Alice Morales, Marie Ybarra, Jessie Middleton; Local 19—Willie Lee; Local 21—Barbara Easley; Local 32—Berenice Dalquist; Local 34—Helen Walsh; Local 47—Buehla Schrauwer; Local 68—Dorothy Miladionvich, Lorene Graham; Local 94—Frances Grassi.

It’s politics, stupid

"Concentration on the political education of the worker would not only keep labor politics on the public agenda, but it would also revolutionize American politics, by teaching millions of voters that politics is a struggle of ideas and ideals and not just a contest among labels, names and prejudices." —Gay Tye

TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE ILWU IN THE COLUMBIA RIVER DISTRICT COUNCIL:

We—you, the ILWU and organized labor—won big in Oregon in this election. Nearly every candidate we endorsed won and nearly every issue we opposed lost.

Think how different the after-math of this election would have been if Katherine Harris, Florida’s Republican Secretary of State, had raised her to the same responsibilities and standards as the American just for partisan victory. Nobody could have faulted her for making sure there was time for a full and careful count.

That last is not unknown in Oregon. You can rise to your larger responsibilities and make sure Stinemore and his bosses don’t win in Oregon next time by joining your Columbia River District Council in getting more ILWU members connected with their elected public servants—of both parties.

The anti-labor people will be back to bash us. What can we do? We can lie down and be bashed or we can use basic union organizing principles to win. If we leave it to the other guy, the other guy will leave it to us.

WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN YOU GET INVOLVED

Members of the ILWU are held together by mutual issues and values. Some of us are relatively conservative Republicans. Some of us are confirmed Democrats. Some are Independents and some are political naive. Given such variety, it should be easy to find ILWU members to work in all sorts of campaigns.

It has been nearly impossible to find campaign workers. Part of the reason is that union members have not made political involvement a high priority. Part of the reason is that our union has not made clear how you can help. Whatever the cause, it has made the ILWU a non-player in Oregon and local-level politics. You can expect to make the ILWU a political player again; expect to be involved yourself.

In this letter we are asking every ILWU member served by the CRDC to contact with some elected official. Council representatives are going to begin with whomever contacts them saying he/she wants to help. Next, your council delegate will help you decide where you should connect. Third, you and your representative will set up contact. Finally, you and our lobbyist will make that contact and help that elected public servant understand it is a good idea to be on our side of issues. In this process members needing help stating union goals and positions on issues will receive help they want.

The council hopes to connect an ILWU member to an office-holder in every district where ILWU members live or own real property or work. We are going to help some of your fellow citizens become better public servants. We will help them understand how important a democratic union is in their lives and the life of our state and nation. We will help them make us understand what they want to do for our families and for working people. We will make sure they don’t help the labor-bashing right steal an election in this state—ever.

Begin now. Write to:
THE COLUMBIA RIVER DISTRICT COUNCIL
c/o ILWU Local 8
2435 NW Front Ave
Portland, OR 97209
or email us at RCAMore@aol.com

—Art Wagner

Pensioner Dinner

ILWU walking bosses Local 98 will host its annual dinner to honor retiring and retired foremen on Thursday, May 10, 2001 at the Doubletree Hotel at SeaTac. All active and retired ILWU members and their spouses or guests are invited to attend.

For more info call Local 98 at 800-824-7945.
ILWU Book & Video Sale

Books and videos about the ILWU are available from the union's library at discounted prices!

BOOKS:
The ILWU Story: unrolls the history of the union from its origins to the present, complete with recollections from the men and women who built the union, in their own words, and dozens of rare photos of the union in action. $7.00
The Big Strike By Mike Quin: the classic partisan account of the 1934 strike. $16.50
Workers on the waterfront: Seamen, Longshoremen, and Unionism in the 1930s. By Bruce Nelson: the most complete history of the origins, meaning, and impact of the 1934 strike. $13.00
Reds or Rackets: The Making of Radical and Conservative Unions on the Waterfront By Howard Kimeldorf: a thoughtful and provocative comparison of the ILA and the ILWU. $11.00
The Union Makes Us Strong: Radical Unionism on the San Francisco Waterfront By Bruce Nelson: the most complete history of the origins, meaning, and impact of the 1934 strike. $13.00
Workers on the Waterfront: Seamen, Longshoremen, and Unionism in the 1930s. By Bruce Nelson: the most complete history of the origins, meaning, and impact of the 1934 strike. $13.00

VIDEOS:
We Are the ILWU: A 30-minute color video introducing the principles and traditions of the ILWU. Features active and retired members talking about what the union meant in their lives and what it needs to survive and thrive, along with film clips, historical photos and an original musical score. $7.00
Life on the Beam: A Memorial to Harry Bridges: A 17-minute VHS video production by California Working Group, Inc., memorializes Harry Bridges through still photographs, recorded interviews, and reminiscences. Originally produced for the 1990 memorial service in San Francisco. $28.00

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Bound Dispatchers for sale

Beautiful, hardcover collections of The Dispatcher for 1997, 1998, 1999 and 2000 are now available. These are a must for Locals and individuals keeping a record of the union's activities. Get your supply of the ILWU's award-winning newspaper while the limited supply lasts. Send a check for $50.00 for each volume (year) to The Dispatcher at:

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...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.

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(310) 547-9966

ADRP—Northern California
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San Francisco, CA 94133
(415) 776-8960

ADRP—Washington
Richard Borsheim
506 Second Ave., Rm. 212
Seattle, WA 98104
(206) 621-1038

ILWU WAREHOUSE DIVISION

DARE—Northern California
Gary Atkinson
255 Ninth Street
San Francisco, CA 94103
(800) 772-8288

EAP—British Columbia
Bill Blox
745 Clark Drive, Suite 205
Vancouver, BC V5L 3J3
(604) 254-7911