Longshore contract passes by huge margin

page 3

Contract
YES!

Lula! Lula!
Worker elected Brazil’s President

pages 6-7

Local 8’s Norm Parks:
A lifetime of union service

page 11

INSIDE
President’s Report: Learning from our past to prepare for our future ............ page 2
Washington Report: The attack on the nation’s transportation workers ............ page 4
Unions build the anti-war movement ........................................ page 8
Tragic dock accident ends Local 18’s Elmer Chin’s long run ....................... page 11
By James Spinosa
ILWU International President

T hey say that hindsight is 20-20. If that’s true then we should be using our recent experiences to envision our future. We have emerged victorious from an historic struggle—major attack on the very existence of our union by the coordinated forces of international business and the Bush administration. Yet through it all we learned that we have much still to learn and, I fear, too many reasons to do so.

But before looking ahead, I want to say something about what will always stand out in my mind as our defining struggle in the 2002 contract fight. Through all the tense times on the docks, especially during the lockout and the Taft-Hartley injunction, the rank and file of the ILWU displayed admirable unity. Although internally we certainly had debate, we still acted as one, as a union. That solidarity, more than anything else, made the difference. It inspired the support of the AFL-CIO, the Teamsters and the dockers’ unions around the world.

While we came out defeated and with a contract that secures our future and brings stability to our industry, the employers and the government will continue in their efforts to change and control our workplace. Because of these concerns we must better prepare for future conflicts so that our union and jobs remain secure.

In February the Coast Committee is convening a meeting of the Longshore Caucus’ Legislative Action Committee, Education Committee and Public Relations Committee. Together they will analyze the work each has done over the last year and make recommendations to the Caucus on where to go from here and how to do it better. Rather than disrupt the committees after the struggle, we will carefully consider what work each has done and how to make it better. We will analyze the work each has done over the last year and make recommendations to the Caucus on where to go from here and how to do it better. Rather than disrupt the committees after the struggle, we will carefully consider what work each has done and how to make it better. Rather than disrupt the committees after the struggle, we will carefully consider what work each has done and how to make it better. Rather than disrupt the committees after the struggle, we will carefully consider what work each has done and how to make it better. Rather than disrupt the committees after the struggle, we will carefully consider what work each has done and how to make it better.

After the lockout, the federal judge recently decreed a binding arbitration. (see Washington Bureau, page 4). This is not new territory. We have been fighting PMA over new technology since the beginning of our union—nothing works without effective union representation. We will fight against the arbitrators deciding this for us.

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Published monthly except for a combined July/August issue, for $5.00, $10 non-members, a year by the ILWU, 1188 Franklin St., San Francisco, CA 94109-6988. The Dispatcher welcomes contributions, photos and other submissions to the above address. © ILWU 2003.
January 2003

Longshore contract ratified by huge margin

The ILWU’s Longshore Division officially ratified its long-awaiting new contract by the largest margin in the history of the union. The Balloting Committee certified the vote count Jan. 22-7,485 in favor of the contract and 888 against it or 90.5 percent to 9.7 percent. The agreement passed by large margins in every local on the Coast.

The ILWU’s Ten Guiding Principles say that when given the truth and the opportunity to determine their own course of action, the rank and file in 99 cases out of 100 will take the right path,” Spinosa said. “In this case each member received a complete copy of the contract. They had union meetings to question the negotiators about it and plenty of time to debate it among themselves. They understood the terms of the agreement, the times it was negotiated in and the victory it represents.

Going into bargaining the union set three priorities: maintain its 100 percent employer paid health care benefits, increase pension rates and win jurisdiction over operating the new technology.

“The ILWU battled three for three on its main concerns,” Spinosa said. The contract guarantees the medical benefits for the next six years in a time when health care costs are rising dramatically and most other unions are being hit with cutbacks and increasing co-pays. The pension increases are the largest in the history of the American labor movement. And the contract gives the jurisdiction over the port computer technology—the issue that ignited the employer lockout—to the union.

“The contract says that the new work operating the new technology will not be outsourced to non-union workers,” Spinosa said. “That work will be done by ILWU marine clerks.”

Still, the union expects Pacific Maritime Association member companies to challenge that and to seek regular arbitrations to minimize clerk work as much as possible. PMA has been forcing clerkJurisdiction issues to arbitration ever since computers were first introduced to the docks more than 20 years ago and a number of PMA companies opposed the current jurisdiction deal. The new arbitration process on technology will likely be tested early and often.

But even Peter Hurtgen, the federal mediator who helped work out the contract language, said its intent is to give the jobs to union members. At the press conference held Nov. 24, the day after the contract was tentatively agreed to, Hurtgen said, “It contains the framework for new technology in all the ports. That is going to make the ports more efficient. It is going to increase productivity. It will cause some reduction in jobs, but the

Hawaii longshore contract ratified

The nearly 500 ILWU longshore workers in Hawaii approved their new tentative contract Jan. 31 by more than 95 percent.

The pact with their employer group, the Stevedoring Industry Committee (composed of Hawaii Stevedores, Brewer Environmental Industries, Honolulu Terminals and McCabe, Hamilton & Renny) is usually referred to as “the Hawaii Longshore Agreement.” The agreement was reached Jan. 16 and contains the same health and pension provisions. But on the issue of the introduction of new technology, the Hawaii clerks secured only the language in the West Coast contract on implementation and not the language on jurisdiction. The clerks will vote on their contract Feb. 6. The maintenance and repair mechanics are still negotiating their contract.

“We had it easier in Hawaii because there was no government intervention here and we didn’t get all of the ammunition needed for the agreement—the West Coast fought the fight for us, said Hawaii Local 142 President and chair of the negotiating committee Bo Lapenia. “We thank our brothers and sisters on the West Coast for showing us the way to hold the line—we will always be in solidarity with our fellow ILWU members there.”

—Steve Stathis

The Longshore Balloting Committee, (l to r) Danny Caruso (Local 54), Lawrence Thibeaux (Local 10) and Richard Kahoali (Local 18), certified the contract vote.

The agreement also provides that the union will retain its traditional jurisdiction in the jobs as changed. And that of course was a very difficult but important piece that took a long time to negotiate.

AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Richard Trumka, who sat in on the final six weeks of negotiations, praised the agreement.

“In a time when more working families than ever are struggling with rising health care costs and insecure retirements, the ILWU has won a historic contract which sets a much-needed benchmark in health care, pensions and living standards,” Trumka said. “Through the tireless leadership of President James Spinosa and all the ILWU leaders, and through the courageous solidarity of the membership, the ILWU has won a victory not only for dockworkers, but for all of America’s working families.”

Spinosa said the contract is also a victory for the collective bargaining process.

“Throughout the almost seven months of negotiations the workers’ right to collective bargaining were being challenged. The employers threatened to bring in troops to seize the ports if we had exercised our legal rights. The employers locked us out rather than bargain. And Bush invoked Taft-Hartley to try to force a settlement on us. But through it all we held fast and kept talking until we finally came out with a negotiated agreement. This shows the process can work if given a chance.”

The new six-year contract is retroactive to Nov. 23 and runs through June 30, 2008. It covers all 10,000 ILWU longshore workers on the U.S. West Coast.

The vote was held Jan. 6-13 at the locals and the ballots were sent to the International office in San Francisco to be tallied Jan. 22 by the Coast Balloting Committee consisting of Lawrence Thibeaux (Local 10); Danny Caruso (Local 54) and Richard Kahoali (Local 18).

Steve Stathis

Canada longshore negotiations continue

(Cher’s note: ILWU-Canada’s Longshore Division is still negotiating its contract with its employer group. The Negotiating Committee put out the bulletin below to update members on their progress so far.)

Your Longshore Negotiating Committee has met with the employer’s committee 26 times since early October 2002. We presented our demands put forward by the Membership and the Longshore Caucus and have been trying to reach agreement on a new Collective Agreement.

The first thing we did was agree to form several sub-committees filled with rank-and-file members to address certain issues such as Grain, Maintenance, Lines and Dispatch. These committees have met with various employers’ representatives to review and discuss issues specific to these categories. This approach has been quite successful and we have been able to deal with quite a few issues.

As all the members are aware the employer came to the table with a considerable number of demands this time around. One of their most distasteful demands was the elimination of our First Aid Attendants. We have enjoyed and relied on our First Aid coverage for many years and this was something our committee could never agree to. The safety of our fellow workers is an area where we cannot compromise.

Progress has been slow so far and the Parties are still dealing with non-monetary demands, but your commit tee expects that we will be dealing with money issues shortly.

As all the Members are aware Health and Benefit coverage is a major issue due to the cutbacks that the Campbell Liberals in Victoria have imposed. Costs to our plan and every other plan have increased dramatically as this Liberal government has downloaded costs, and workers are being pushed further over the edge of these attacks. We are reviewing our costs and attempting to come to terms with this Liberal government’s attacks on workers.

The committee will issue further bulletins advising you on our progress as we move through the bargaining process.

Tom Dufresne, President ILWU Canada
Kent Birmingham, President Local 502
Glen Edwards, President Local 505
Al Russell, President Local 508
We are not alone:

Attack on nation’s transportation workers

By Lindsay McLaughlin

ILWU legal aid derailed

The year 2002 will become a major part of the ILWU legend. Looking back, it is difficult to comprehend how from the ILWU’s remains strong given the array of forces lined up to destroy this union and all who stand with it: shipowners and stevedoring companies, the politically powerful retail industry and the United States government all colluded in waging a war against the working people of this union because they don’t like what the ILWU stands for. This union stands for real power in the hands of workers. This union stands for social justice. This union stands for an end to the exploitation of workers. Make no mistake about it. These forces wanted Congress to pass legislation to destroy the power of the ILWU. They still do.

Consider the fact that Chuck Raymond, Chairman of the Maritime Transportation System National Advisory Committee and CEO of CSX Lines, Inc. in Baltimore, wrote in the Journal of Commerce supplement (Jan. 13, 2003), “The major industry challenge for 2003 is to maintain the existing transportation system with laws and practices that keep our people working and goods flowing.” The extortionary Taft-Hartley Act is not a good enough tool for anti-labor, anti-worker forces to control workers. Raymond echoes the values of many in business in this country who place the flow of goods and the values of social justice and the empowerment of workers first.

Let’s face it. The ILWU greatly benefited from the solidarity of unions around the world, particularly the unprecedented support of AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Richard Trumka and his staff of hard-working trade unionists. We needed that solidarity to win the battle for a fair contract. Why are so many airline industry workers facing a similar predilection? The industry is using its economic trouble, and the tragedy of 9/11 to push through Congress legislation to take away the collective bargaining rights against aviation workers. Just as the A-F-C-I-O came to our aid, the ILWU must do whatever is necessary to help these struggling unions in the airline industry. It is imperative that we join the movement demanding Congress refuse to take away collective bargaining rights for any worker, including aviation workers. If the airline industry gets away with destroying its unions, the ILWU will be next on the hit list. It is in our self-interest to act now.

Here’s the issue: Senator John McCain (R-AZ) introduced the Airline Labor Dispute Act, S. 1327 in the last Congress. That bill would take away collective bargaining rights for aviation workers. McCain’s staff is currently rewriting the bill. It would give authority to the Secretary of Transportation to declare an “air transportation emergency” and force arbitration upon finding that a labor dispute involving an airline serving a hub airport threatens the local economy, foreign commerce, the balance of payments, or U.S. national security or foreign policy. In reality, the bill is an avenue to strip the airline industry into arbitration and collective bargaining will become a thing of the past. The bill does not even call for a fair arbitration process. The McCain legislation introduced last year includes language that prohibits the arbitrator from selecting the union’s proposal for a multitude of reasons if the union’s proposal increases costs, while there are no stipulations to ensure that the arbitrator from selecting the management proposal for any reason. Airline unions call the legislation what it really is, the “Management Cramdown Bill.”

Most of the airline industry, including the notoriously anti-union Federal Express, are united behind the legislation and believe its prospects for passage are good. Air Transport Association (ATA) President Carol Hallett declared Dec. 19, 2002 that the Railroad Labor Act, which governs contract negotiations for airline industry workers, “urgent-ly needs correction,” and has created “agreements that are routinely weak- ened airlines.” Hallett said that the prospects for passage of the legislation are bright and that 240,029 workers would be affected. But Hallett emphasized, “There are real concerns about the McCain proposal. The Republican Congress, the House, Senate and White House.

Battle of the bunker tax begins in California

Bunker oil is the thick, nasty and rarely refined fuel that propels the world’s merchant ships. Since Jan. 1, the State of California has imposed an 8.25 percent sales tax on that fuel that might complicate doing business in California. A letter will be delivered to your representatives in Congress:

The Honorable
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

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By Lindsay McLaughlin

Mass layoff stats to go unreported

The Bureau of Labor Statistics released a longer report on “mass layoffs,” according to its last Mass Layoff System supplement. The BLS had published MLS monthly since 1994, recording and compiling data on lay-offs of 50 or more workers in a single enterprise. Its November report was posted on Christmas Eve.

While the dismal figures on job losses will be available, the term “mass layoffs” indicated a rare moment of truth in government. It described the stark reality faced by millions of workers.

The BLS cited budget shortfalls as the reason for closing down the MLS. But the BLS, U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration has actually picked up the $6.6 million annual tab. ETA claims it wants to concentrate on its core mission of providing jobs, jobs, jobs “displaced” by overseas competition.

State governments and the AFL-CIO have joined in the effort to keep MLS. States used the information to track lost industries and to steer workers to other occupations. Administration critics, including the AFL-CIO, claim the MLS is a hollow argument for more and more an attempt to hide empiri-cal proof of the negative effects of Bush’s economic policies.

In the last MLS report, for November, there were 2,150 mass layoffs affecting 52,966 workers. The first 11 months of 2002, there were 17,799 mass layoffs affecting 1,080,856 workers.

Other MLS figures indicate the long-term deindustrialization of the U.S. Factory owners eliminated nearly two million jobs in 2001 and 2002. The trade deficit, another alarming figure, leap 13.9 percent between October and November, to a record $40.1 billion. Imports from China alone, mainly through West Coast ports, led the way, despite allegations of a longshore work slow-down.

A trade deficit occurs when a country imports more than it exports. While the raw numbers reported by the BLS don’t show direct causes, the relationship between falling factory employment and rising manufactured goods deficits is fairly obvious. Factory jobs are among the most portable, and in order to maximize profits compa-nies ship jobs to low-wage sweatshop nations like China.

In early January the BLS reported manufacturing job losses of 65,000 for December. By way of comparison, Microsoft Corp., the darling of the ultra-tech world, employs only 50,621 worldwide. Since the Bush regime took over nearly 1.6 million jobs have disappeared.

HOMELAND INSECURITY...

“There is real opportunity for this legislation to move forward, Halley emphasized.

Much as PMA organized the West Coast Interface Coalition, the airline industry has formed the so-called “Communities for Economic Strength Through Airports” (CESA) which, it’s estimated, comprises 400 organizations to lobby Congress for legislation adverse to airline union interests.

It is very difficult to pass legislation through the United States Senate without some level of biparti-san support. Just as the Pacific Maritime Association hired a former Democratic member of Congress from California, Mel Levine, to lobby fellow Democrats in Congress against the ILWU, the airline industry has done the same thing. The industry has retained former Rep. Vic Pazio (D-CA), and former Senator Chuck Robb (D-VA) to garner support from Democrats in Congress. These former members of Congress—all of whom have decent labor voting records—would demonstrate that most politicians can be bought to trample on the rights of American workers. The airline industry, and the entire labor movement appear to have few permanent political friends.

In light of the extreme year includes language that prohibits the arbitrator from selecting the union’s proposal for a multitude of reasons if the union’s proposal increases costs, while there are no stipulations to ensure that the arbitrator from selecting the management proposal for any reason. Airline unions call the legislation what it really is, the “Management Cramdown Bill.”

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Battle of the bunker tax begins in California

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By Tom Price

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By Tom Price
Four years ago, the backlands workers at the Los Angeles Export Terminal (LAXT) saw one colleague killed and another paralyzed when a petroleum coke stacker fell over. Three years ago, they won ILWU representation, closing a festering hole in the union’s jurisdiction and reviving longshore Local 13’s Allied Division. Two years ago, they sat through months of nerve-grinding negotiations and walked a picket line in sheeting rain and howling wind to win a contract.

Now LAXT has hit the skids and they’re wondering what will happen next.

Six months ago, almost one-third of them got laid off. The rest have no idea how long they’ll be working or who they’ll be working for.

“It’s a never-ending battle and we can’t get out from underneath it,” said Local 13 Allied Division President John Regas.

The LAXT Corporation came together in 1993, financed by a public-private consortium of American and Japanese corporate investors and the Port of Los Angeles. The Port put some $60 million towards building the facility and spent another $18 million to buy a 13 percent stake in the venture. The terminal was to ship coal and petroleum coke from the western United States to energy-hungry Asian countries like Japan, South Korea and Taiwan.

The Southern California ILWU locals began fighting for jurisdiction at LAXT before the construction even began. They argued it was a new port with community and environmental groups to force the corporation to address the air quality hazard created by open piles of petroleum coke. Their efforts won the dockside jobs for the ILWU and an Air Quality Management District order to cover the coke piles—but the backlands workers, the ones who loaded the coal and coke from trains and trucks for transfer to ships—to get paid in the backlands.

After a rough organizing drive and rougher negotiations, they signed a contract in April 2001 with Savage Pacific Services, the company hired by LAXT to run the backlands operation.

Then the Japanese economy and the world coal market both went sour. LAXT had no coal orders for the last Japanese fiscal year and has none for the coming year, Regas said.

“No one from the U.S. is selling coal on the world market,” said Tom Warren, former president of marine clerks’ Local 63 and a member of the Los Angeles Harbor Commission. “Ria Tinto [the infamous Australian firm] took another twist when the Port of Long Beach. The directors accepted Oxbow’s offer, but the gory situation took another twist when Metropolitan turned up the political heat and filed a lawsuit.

The suit, filed Jan. 3, 2003 in California Superior Court in Long Beach, charges the LAXT directors with violating California’s open meet- ing law by discussing the Oxbow sale in closed session. (In a suit filed before LAXT opened, the ILWU established that this law applies because the Port, a public body, is part-owner of LAXT.) Metropolitan also asked the judge for a temporary restraining order that would block the sale until the suit is decided.

The Harbor Commission gets the final vote on the offer for LAXT. If the commissioners don’t take either one, the facility would close. The Port could sell the assets and put the land to other uses. With container storage space in short supply in LA/Long Beach, that could be quite profitable. It’s a tough call, Warren said.

“We have a fiduciary responsibility to the Port, we have responsibilities to the businesses and workers in the area, and we have to look at the community and environmental impacts,” he said.

Community groups are pressing to shut the facility down and end the truck traffic and coke dust. Oil compa- nies don’t want to see Metropolitan Stevedore run the place, because that would give them a monopoly on coke shipments out of the Ports of LA/Long Beach. The workers now employed by Savage just want to hang on to their jobs—and their union.

Their contract has a successor clause, but that only kicks in if Savage gives up the work. Regas said. If LAXT dissolves, Savage would have no contract. If a new company takes over, it might keep Savage on. It might hire the current workers directly. Or it might hire new people.

Whatever the scenario, Local 13 is committed to helping the Allied Division. “We are doing everything we can to preserve ILWU jurisdiction,” said Longshore Local 13 President Ramon Ponce de Leon.

“Any Harbor Commission has until March to make a decision. It’s a very wrong when people have gone out, risked their jobs and put it all on the line and they’re out of work,” Regas said. “We have highly skilled welders, heavy equipment operators, mechanics and electricians. They brought back jurisdiction to the union and there’s nothing I can do to help them get ILWU jobs right now.”

**CONTACT YOUR ORGANIZER**

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c/o Local 17 916-371-5938 ex 23

**Southern California Organizers**

Rodolfo Gutierrez 310-835-2770

Carlos Cordon 310-835-2770

**Puget Sound Organizer**

Paul Bigman 206-448-1870
Interview with Brazilian union leader Julio Turra

OCT. 27 BEGAN MORE THAN 20 YEARS AGO

"Brazil is in a new situation after Oct. 27, This country does not come from nowhere. It’s not a bolt of thunder in a blue sky, but rather it is the cumulative product of struggle that has been unfolding in the city and the countryside through-out Brazil and which found its form and expres-sion with the election of Brother Lula to the presidency.

"Lula had the roots in the trade union movement. He was one of the founding leaders of CUT. Historically CUT and the PT (Partido dos Trabalhadores, Workers Party) were born out of the same process of struggle against the military dictatorship, the PT in 1981 and the CUT in 1963 as the result of initiatives by unionists who were part of the Workers Party. Despite the fact that Lula’s program this time was extremely moderate, people saw and understood him as a candidate who was persecuted by the military, who waged struggle in the streets for the first time in Brazil, built a mass workers’ party. For that he became the repository of all the expectations and the aspirations of the entire people.

LULA’S WIN WAS A WIN FOR UNIONS EVERYWHERE

The victory of the PT candidate is a victory of the CUT. The CUT took a decision in its national assembly of delegates last year to sup-port the candidacy of Lula as the candidacy closest to our platform, even while the CUT defines itself clearly as autonomous.

This is the first time the CUT supported a candidate so openly. A majority of union members worked for him. We put the whole apparatus of the trade unions into the campaign.

On a global scale, Lula’s election shows there’s an alternative to the policies Bush is putting forward. Bush is using 9-11 and the war on terrorism to derail our movement, as you can see very clearly in relation to the ILWU, with Taft-Hartley and all the other stuff imposed on you. So it seems impor-tant that there’s a government in Brazil that could be compelled to rigorously oppose the FTTAA, a government that would refuse to be part of this Bush program. Bush is putting together, a government that seeks to promote peace among peoples, that questions the orthodoxy of the IMF’s structural adjustment policies, and that could help support the struggle of working people in the U.S. against the very same model.

"The war Bush is carrying out on a world scale has its U.S. component. Anyone who’s not in agree-ment with Bush is the internal enemy. That’s part of this offensive against unions. The fact that Lula as he visits Bush will also visit with the AFT-ClO is a signal that he not only needs to communicate through the government, which he is obliged to do, but through the AFT-CIO to the American labor movement. I don’t know of any other world leader who on his first visit before taking office goes to meet with the unions."

WHAT UNIONS WANT

CUT would like to see changes in the labor law which would allow more freedom and autonomy for workers, as well as a shift to an economic policy that would meet workers’ needs.

"Lula in his campaign promised one of his pri-orities was to combat unemployment, which is increasing by the day in Brazil. The official statis-tic is nine percent, but in the industrial region around Sao Paulo, where half the country’s indus-trial production takes place, real unemployment is double that, or 18 percent.

CUT thinks the new government has to move forward in creating new jobs with full benefits and rights. Much work now takes place in the informal economy or in contingent jobs. Lula said in his four years in office he will create 10 million jobs in a period of 175 million workers, or smaller than the United States in area. It’s an audacious goal."

BREAK THE GRIP OF DEBT

"So you understand the challenges, the coun-try is swamped by the foreign debt and interest payments on the debt. They estimate the deficit at $217-$230 billion in the last 20 years. Brazil has already paid $270 billion in interest in the last 18 years.

"As long as that debt exists, the IMF imposes austerity measures. Lula inherits from the previ-ous administration a budget that was already voted by the current administration. It has already been earmarked for the first fiscal year. It ties his hands.

People understand you can’t take the sky by assault. People want simple, basic things—but it is impos-sible to obtain these small things without a ru-pure with the current economic model, where all the resources of the country have been commit-ted in advance to pay interest on the foreign debt and where the machinery of the economy has been geared to earn dollars to pay back the foreign debt. And that’s why even in this country of 175 million people the priority is not the internal market, but export to get money to pay back the debt. That’s why wages have to be cut to be competitive. That’s why you see privatization, so our national patrimony can be sold off for dollars to pay the debt. That’s why the best lands can’t be distributed to the MST (Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra, the Landless Rural Workers’ Movement), because they’re going to plantation crops geared to the for-eign market."

SOMEONE HAS TO PAY

"The debt is not an ideological issue. It is a con-crete problem. Sixty-seven percent of the govern-ment’s budget goes to pay the debt. If people are going to eat three meals a day, as Lula promised in his campaign, the money has to come from some-where. I prefer it come from the pockets of the international bankers than from the pockets of the workers who still have some sort of a job.

“There’s a lot of pressure saying, ‘Those of you who are privileged, who still have a job, you should give up so that we can share with those who are hungry.’ There’s lots of pressure from people who want to keep the status quo to say, ‘Well, we can’t back the debt. If we want to redistribute wealth, we have to redistribute poverty.’

Now 54 million Brazilians live on less than $25 per month. 54 million. That’s last week’s sta-tistic. (as of Dec. 8, 2002—Ed.) A guy who makes minimum wage, which is $50 per month, is priv-i-leged in relation to the guy who makes $10.

"Brazil has one of the greatest income dispari-ties in the world. It also has tremendous wealth and resources and could make a lot of money to redistribute. It has industries, it has auto—it’s not a banana republic."

NEGOTIATE, DEMONSTRATE DEMONSTRATE, NEGOTIATE

If Lula wants to move in the direction of responding to the needs of the Brazilian people, particularly with the 10 million jobs, at a certain point he will have to take measures in defense of
The real fight begins

SOLIDARITY HITS THE AGENDA

"Let's imagine the situation if Brazil says no to the FTAA, no to the IMF, and begins to organize its economy on the basis of the needs of the immense majority of its people—for example, recovering for the national patrimony the enterprises that were privatized, the enterprises that were privatized. That will provoke a clash of interests the U.S. will not be able to resolve by sending Marines to Brazil. We would hope the U.S. working class and youth will stand in solidarity with us, and mothers would say, 'Don't send our boys to Brazil, Brazil has the right to be a sovereign nation.' That's the road we seek to open. We can be sure that if our government takes policies not in the interests of multinationals and the U.S., the U.S. will seek to isolate Brazil from the interests of the majority of the blacks, Latinos and working people in the U.S. We are working so that will not happen. We are certain such a move by Brazil will be viewed as an enormous incentive to the struggle by people in Argentina, Chile, Bolivia, Mexico, in all the countries suffering from the implementation of these policies."

Joao Vaccari, who is a Lula supporter, said at our meeting, the same opponents. For example, the AFL-CIO called it, "Trade Promotion Authority," short-circuits debate. It can help, for example, the U.S. have a free hand to move ahead and respond to the FTAA negotiations around the FTAA. Joao Feliciao, declared that if the bosses give nothing, there would be a price freeze. The CUT has said there's no way for a wage freeze. We have been sacrificing, over the last years we have lost much. We want to negotiate too. As a trade union we're about more normal than that we in CUT, with 50 unionists from Brazil and Argentina have the same problems and are confronting the same opponents. For example, you in the U.S. campaigned against Fast Track, and that was very important to us. The U.S. Congress will have to approve the terms of the FTAA. The AFL-CIO called it, "Trade Promotion Authority," short-circuits debate. The movement will have to be voted up or down with no discussion, amendments or changes. Congress passed Fast Track last summer—Ed.

The attention of the continent is turned to Brazil, and this is to bring down anything it considers a counterfeit. We have no illusion that this government has a free hand to move ahead and respond to every one of our needs. It is a government of coalition, which has contradictory interests reflected within it."

STOP THE FTAA

"Lula in his campaign said clearly that the FTAA as it has developed in the ongoing negotia-
tions amounts to an 'annexation' of Brazil by the U.S. The FTAA is an extension of NAFTA throughout the continent. Its goal is to bring down anything it considers a barrier to deals, to the business of the multinationals. In this continent, that means mostly U.S. multinationals. In the U.S. in the popular movement, in the MST, in student unions there has been mobilization to stop the FTAA, to prevent it from being signed. We held a plebiscite last September and got a spectacular response. More than 10 million people mobilized and voted massively against the FTAA, in favor of withdrawing from negotiations around the FTAA and against allowing the United States to use the island of Alcantara off northeast Brazil as a military base.

We organized brigades and had voting booths in the public squares, in union halls, in schools, in churches. The largest organizations like CUT put more resources into the infrastructure so the vote would be the same everywhere. In all 26 states and the Federal District there was a popular vote organized by the activist base.

This was unofficial but now we are discussing whether under the Lula government it could be repeated as an official plebiscite that would have the force of law. Given the relative weight Brazil has in the hemisphere—half the territory and half the population of South America—what happens in Brazil has massive repercussions in neighboring countries.

With Brazil's refusal to the FTAA can't continue. The main target of the U.S. government is Brazil. Mexico is already in NAFTA. Argentina has collapsed. Now there is the Brazilian market, which alone is larger than all the rest of the countries. So Brazil wields tremendous weight to prevent the destruction of its economy and the whole regional economy.

UNIONISTS CALL WESTERN HEMISPHERE CONFERENCE

To press the fight against the FTAA, Brazilian union activists decided to call brothers and sisters throughout the hemisphere together for a conference to be held in July 2003 in Sao Paulo. Several union leaders from Brazil and the U.S. have already signed the Conference Appeal. Brazil and the U.S. are co-chairs of the FTAA negotiations between now and 2005.

"Today I read in the Brazilian press an interview with Stan Gacek of the AFL-CIO's International Dept. about Lula's visit there. The critique the AFL-CIO has of the FTAA is very similar to Lula's. It points to the FTAA's hesitance and reticence in relation to the FTAA—so for the trade union movement in Brazil to call for a conference, starting with 50 unionists from Brazil and 50 from the U.S., would demonstrate that workers in the U.S. and Brazil have the same problems and are confronting the same opponents. For example, you in the U.S. campaigned against Fast Track, and that was very important to us. The U.S. Congress will have to approve the terms of the FTAA, but "Fast Track" or "Free Trade" is what the U.S. has been doing since the NAFTA was signed. That has happened many times in history. But that can happen only under certain conditions. The movement must continue to organize, there can be no social peace, no employers that can freeze or truce in our struggle, and the dynamic must be set by the mass movement itself.

"That's where the CUT is. Our goal is to help develop that movement to break with the policies of the IMF. The deep significance of the movement of the Oct. 27 elections is the affirmation of the exotic Brazil where the workers can have their demands met. That can reinforce the struggle of workers throughout the continent of the Americas and around the world."

For more information on the Western Hemisphere Workers' Conference Against the FTAA (to be held in July 2003 in Sao Paulo, Brazil), call 415-641-8616, go to the Open World Conference web site at www.owcinfo.org or e-mail owc@energy-net.org.

When Brazil's President-elect Lula (left) came to Washington, D.C. Dec. 10, he paid his respects to the AFL-CIO and got a warm welcome from AFL-CIO President John Sweeney (right) and the Federation officers and staff. With Lula's catchy campaign music filling the AFL-CIO lobby, a PT banner hanging behind the podium and the assembled staff chanting, "Lula! Lula!" the event felt like a campaign rally. "Pray for me, cheer me on, because if I do well, you also do well," Lula said, adding the story of the baby symbol means a symbol for those who live from labor. In Brazil the workers elected a president who believes it is possible to win. Si se puede!" "Si se puede!" his audience answered, taking up the rhythm, accelerating clap that goes with that chant.
BUSH PLAN TO ROB WORKERS OF OVERTIME HIGHLIGHTS POTENTIAL EXECUTIVE ACTIONS

By taking executive actions that don’t need Congressional approval, the Bush administration plans to undermine workers’ overtime and pension rights and saddle unions with stricter financial reporting requirements.

A new Labor Dept. rule would reclassify low-level supervisors as “managers,” under the Fair Labor Standards Act, the nation’s basic overtime law. As a rule, managers don’t get overtime pay.

“Right now, some professionals are covered by overtime law, and the private sector has always wanted to get a lot of people out of overtime by calling them ‘managers,’ ” said AFSCME labor specialist Marge Allen.

The proposed federal rule, which would broaden the definition of managers in the public sector, would be a first step in that direction. Allen expects the department to announce the new rule in mid-January.

A new Treasury Dept. rule announced in mid-December would make it easier for companies to cut the pensions of their older workers with most seniority.

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“A new Treasury Department rule, announced in mid-December, will make it easier for companies to cut the pensions of their older workers with most seniority,” said AFL-CIO President John J. Sweeney.

“Many workers who fit the wealthy—and his proposal to tax dividends—which would benefit the richest 5 percent. The Bush recession produces state deficits of $140 billion combined

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IEB prepares for International Convention in April

The ILWU International Executive Board will hold an emergency session Dec. 17 to handle a few preparatory matters for the upcoming International Convention, which begins on Jan. 10, the day after the New Year.

After swearing in Robert Zahl, the new member representing Hawaii's sugar industry, the board voted to recommend an International Convention budget of $1 million for the ILWU's five-conference cycle, with a 2.5 percent increase for the second year per capita would increase that amount to $1.025 million, making the total budget $2.025 million, or 5.25% of the participant's benefit as of the January 2003

The ILWU Pension Plan for Officers and Staff is a defined benefit plan. The participant's benefit includes the Welfare Area Directors and $3,325 per month ($95 x 35 years); nor-

spouses are entitled to fifty-five percent of the ILWU-PMA Benefit Funds Office, respective payrolls to the Plan, an amount is available at age 55; and surviving

SURVIVING SPOUSES

This increase has been factored into the ILWU's share of the new member representing

the longshore industry pension plan. We,

change brings the benefit for active par-

the first one from August 1, 2003 through

January 31, 2004 and the second one from

change in underline/strikeout

Rule 17.E requires the IEPC to hold

Rule 17.G requires the IEPC to issue its

The International Election Procedures Committee (IEPC) has decided to

the required hearing be held on

the 21st day following the IRC report

Rule 17.F requires the IEPC to hold

this paragraph in Article VI, Section

The International Election

Committee, and any challenges and documents forwarded to the International Election Procedures Committee shall be made available to the property of the International Election Procedures Committee, and may not be

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Mt. Diablo medical techs win large wage hike

A fter nearly five months of fruitless talking, warehouse Local 8 in Concord, Calif., tech workers were ready to do some walking. Their placards in hand, 170 union members availed themselves when management made some faltering moves toward settlement just hours before the contract expired.

Mt. Diablo-ohn Muir Health Systems in Concord, Calif., had claimed serious financial hardships during the last two contracts. In response, the 44 X-ray, ultrasonic, CAT scan, mammography, nuclear medicine and radiation oncology technicians had agreed to raises of less than half the cost of living. Their pay was 13 percent below industry average when the contract expired last July. When talks on a new contract started, management would meet with Local 6 only sporadically, and then only to turn down union proposals. The workers believe they deserved something better.

“If you were good at your job, would you settle for $5 less an hour than you could?” said Steve Strickland, a bargaining team member with 14 years experience at Mt. Diablo. “Our employer says it wants to provide top-notch service with bottom-dollar wages.”

By November, management’s excuses were wearing thin. After a 14-hour bargaining session Nov. 14, produced no progress, workers were ready to strike. The contract expired just settled with nurses for a 28 percent pay increase over four years that included retiree health benefits.

The nurses supported the Local 6 workers by wearing stickers at work and taking time out to support the strike. At the last minute Erin Spaulding, the federal mediator, shuttled back and forth between the two parties and came to the union with concessions from the company that indicated they were willing to budge about bargaining.

“When it came right down to the wire things started happening,” bargaining team member and chairwoman Debbie Kurita said. “It was the biggest move we had seen from management in a long time.”

For the next month both sides bargained intensively. The workers gave up on demands for early retiree health benefits and agreed to an increase in medical co-pay. Members will now pay the first $200 annually in medical costs, up from $100.

But what they got in return is stunning. That includes a nine percent pay increase for the first year, retroactive to last July 1. They will see a raise of seven percent in July 2003, and six percent for the remaining two years. Wages currently range from $19.00 to $25.57 an hour.

The ratification vote was 31 to 3 in favor.

“This followed suit with the rest of the Bay Area as far as wages are concerned,” Local 6 BA Jill Duke said.

The new deal recognizes the skill of mammography technicians with a two a half percent skill differential. Other skilled workers will get an eight percent raise. However, raising the team management inserted one more demand.

“I was a little disappointed at the end because management slid back into their last offer something we had rejected earlier,” Kurita said.

The previous practice of paying time and a half on the sixth consecutively day worked would not apply if a person had worked a premium-paid day during the previous five days. This means that if a person were called in, or if they worked a holiday during the workweek, they wouldn’t get paid the time and a half on the next day. Kurita realized that this wouldn’t affect a large number of people, however, and wasn’t quite the poison pill it might have turned out to be.

“They kind of shot themselves in the foot on this, because people will have no incentive to work those extra days,” Kurita said. “It was hard negotiations this year, but really, it always is. Jill Duke and Local 6 Secretary-Treasurer Fred Pecker were wonderful, they stuck it out for the entire process. We had a really strong team.”

—Tom Price

Northwest members organize toy drive

A union hall full of toys awaits disadvantaged kids in Portland. courtesy Local 8

Members from longshore Locals 8 and 23, and clerks’ Local 40, took time out from the toughest contract negotiations in decades to return support to the communities that supported the ILWU.

Local 8’s toy stash, pictured above, brought cheer to 300 families in the Columbia Villa housing project in the Portland area. Jeff Smith from Local 8 and Dawn Desbrisay, from Local 40, wanted to do something to help out the disadvantaged during the holiday season. They went to the county housing and school agencies, which suggested the housing project as a recipient.

With help from Local 40’s Jerry Bitz, and Local 8’s Jim Daw and Kathleen Harrison, they collected enough from members and supporters to buy 550 toys, including 21 bikes. They also got a good discount on 100 blankets, and the Portland Police donated helmets for each bike.

“We put a lot of smiles on children’s faces,” Desbrisay said. “And a lot of smiles on longshoremen’s faces too. It motivates us to do more.”

Smith and Desbrisay credited Local 8 Federal Credit Union’s Gayla Dreith for her hard work.

Up in Tacoma, Pam Conn and John Simmons of Local 23 started a toy drive for the children of striking Teamster sanitation workers. They knew that Local 23’s Gary Brown had worked on the Kaiser Aluminum strike support and asked if he would help.

“We set a jar out in the hall and members put money in.” Brown said. “Pam went out and got the sizes and ages of the kids and filled out slips with what the kids wanted. The members bought the gifts and we distributed them.”

Enough money was left over to give each of about 20 families $175 to help out on holiday expenses. Some members “adopted” families and took them out to the grocery store and bought holiday food. Then longshore Local 7 in Bellingham kicked in $500 dollars for the strikers, and Local 23 gave that to Teamsters Local 313 strike fund.

Talks continue to settle the strike, and Local 23 held recently held a big spaghetti dinner and raised more money for the Teamster workers.

—Tom Price

IMPORTANT NOTICE ON ILWU POLITICAL ACTION FUND

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

“SECTION 2. The International shall establish a Political Action Fund which shall consist exclusively of voluntary contributions. The union will not favor or disadvantage 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 per capita share of the expenses. Returned bargaining expenses shall be paid, unless the status of the applicant does not warrant the use of the Political Action Fund. The Titled Officers may suspend either or both diversions if, in their judgment, the financial condition of the International warrants suspension.

For three consecutive months prior to each diversion each dues paying member shall be notified in writing of the date, time and place of the diversion. The purpose of the diversion shall be explained. The Titled Officers shall have the exclusive right to determine whether a person has been notified of the diversion in writing. The diverted funds will be used to provide political support to members and to provide the members with the opportunity to support political candidates or to contribute to political candidates. Contributions shall be within the discretion of the International Union, shall be sent in check form and the divisor to be determined by the Political Action Fund, may be made from any amount of the contributions from the Political Action Fund.

The contribution will be paid to the political candidates or shall be returned to the contributor in his/her request, unless the beneficiary shall be determined by the Political Action Fund.

The contributions are not deductible as charitable contributions.

RETURN TO:

ILWU, 1188 Franklin Street • San Francisco, CA 94109

NOTE CONTRIBUTIONS ARE NOT DEDUCTIBLE AS CHARITABLE CONTRIBUTIONS

LABOR ARCHIVES and RESEARCH CENTER
San Francisco State University

Come Celebrate Our 17th Anniversary

Friday, February 28, 2003 7:00 p.m.

Featuring Keynote Speaker Gilbert Gonzalez, UC Irvine

“US Economic Imperialism in Mexico and Migrant Labor in California”

Also featuring Renee Saucedo, Day Labors Program

Music by Dr. Loco

The event will be held at the ILWU, Local 34 at 2nd and King, on the Embarcadero next to Paicell Park.

Light refreshments served at 6:00, program begins at 7:00.

Open to the Public • Free

January 2003

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Norm and Diana Parks receive lifetime achievement awards

When the Coast Committee stopped by longshore Local 8 hall during their tour of the Coast to explain the new contract and answer questions, they took time out Dec. 18 to honor longshore Negotiating Committee member Norm Parks and his wife Diana for their many contributions to the union.

Parks has been a longshoreman for 50 years. He joined the union in 1953 and served the local as secretary-treasurer for three separate terms.

Parks credits many people with guiding him along, but two stand out. One is his wife of 38 years, Diana, who also received a reward for 20 years of service to the union, especially for her role in arranging housing for the longshore negotiating committee. The other is Everett Ede, an early mentor. "Ede always said that if you take care of your union, it will take care of you," Parks said.

"One of my wife's sayings is that the only mistress she had to put up with was the union," Parks said. "She's made more sacrifices than I have, she's the one who missed all the trips and had to sacrifice for all the work I've done. I chose to do it, she didn't, she chose by marrying me."

Parks took over the International Executive Board seat held by Local 8's Bill Ward in 1978. "Back in the 1980s I worked on the container safety committee in negotiations, we got 22 of 26 demands into the contract," he said. Parks chaired the International Committee and went to Mexico when the government privatized the ports and to England in support of the Liverpool dockers.

Parks was dubbed "Father Time" by his fellow Negotiating Committee members in this last session, partly because of his role as timekeeper, polling and filing committee members who were late for meetings, but also in recognition of his seniority.

"One of the most rewarding things of my union career has been the friendships that I've built up over the years," Parks said. "My wife and I both feel that way. But without my wife's help I could never have accomplished anything over the years."

—Tom Price

Longshore retired, deceased and survivors

RECENT RETIREES: Local 4—Darryl Taylor, Richard Atwell; Local 7—Ronald Corbitt; Local 10—Cecil Anderson, Lonnie S. Parks; Local 18—Matthews, E. Hayes; Local 14—Laurence L. Smith, David Waggoner; Local 18—Patrick McGahill, Floyd Dugger, Douglas D. Smith, Perry Perkins; Local 21—Willard Harris; Local 23—George Ringus, William Stepp, Robert B. Johnson, Larry Cresap; Local 26—James G. Morris; Local 32—Pete Cupid; Local 34—Clayborn Zuber, Salvadore Day; Local 48—Montgomery Nip, Marvin Gebhardt, Larry Wingert; Local 51—Lester Boening; Local 52—Robert Vaux Jr., Carl Woeck; Local 63—Roy H. Staton; Local 86—Rudolph Eriksen (Patricia); Local 18—Camille Ellis; Local 24—Colin Harter; Local 25—Joe Berry (Mattie), Roy Booker (Zola), Manuel C. De Oliveira (Alexandrina), John Parada, Julius Johnson, Jose W. Calderon, Local 12—Rudolph Johnson; Local 13—Alfred Salas (Dolores), Abel Garcia (Anthony), Ben Chandler (Peggy), Louis Ngio, Nelson Becerra, Ada Jenkins; Local 14—Lester Boening; Local 23—Gerald Hartman (Carol); Russell Eriksen (Patricia); Local 46—James Montgomery, PA; Local 65—Kimberly, Glennwood Smith, Local 98—Russell Eriksen (Patricia), Floyd Clark.

DECEASED SURVIVORS: Local 8—Verna Swendsen; Local 10—Stojija Barulich, Martha Church, Agnes Taylor, Othola Collins, Julianeet King; Local 13—Otelia Bescerra, Ada Jenkins, Goldie Ives; Local 19—Camille Ellis; Local 24—Doritha Zohowski; Local 34—Doris Sanchez, Agnes Church, Etta Harrington; Local 49—Ivy Smith; Local 47—Ruby Halverson; Local 50—Sylvia Rainey, Local 52—Velma Noyer, Katherine Mercer; Local 54—Earline Takachibi; Local 94—Dorothy Wilson.
**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. $6.50
- **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
- **The Union Makes Us Strong:** Radical Unionism on the San Francisco Waterfront by David Wellman: the important new study of longshoring in the ILWU. $15.00 (paperback)
- **A Terrible Anger: The 1934 Waterfront and General Strike in San Francisco** by David Selvin: the newest and best single narrative history about the San Francisco events of 1934. $16.50
- **The March Inland: Origins of the ILWU Warehouse Division 1934-1938** by Harvey Schwartz: new edition of the only comprehensive account of the union’s organizing campaign in the northern California warehouse and distribution industry. $19.00

**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. $5.00
- **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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