



The DISPATCHER

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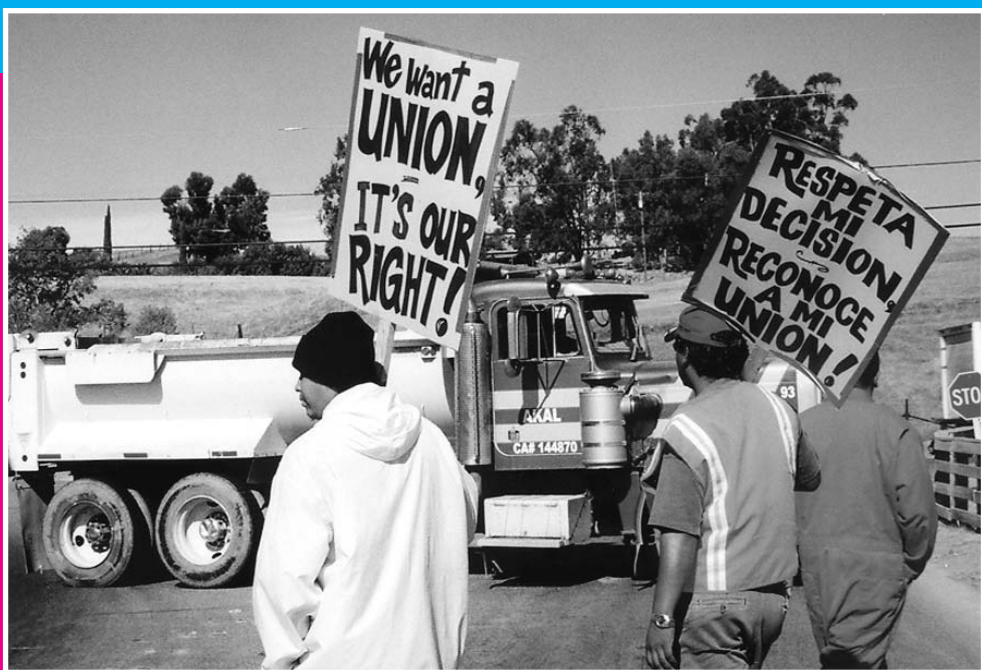


John Kerry for President

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ILWU members canvas for Kerry

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Inside Line

WHILE YOU'RE CANVASSING...

While the ILWU has been keeping an almost laser-like focus on the November election and the re-defeat of Bush, the other work of the union continues. It keeps on organizing, negotiating contracts, building solidarity and advocating for its members. In this issue we report on some of this work.

Workers at a landfill in the East Bay city of Livermore, California, tired of making lower wages than union workers doing the same job at nearby dumps, decided they wanted to join those warehouse Local 6 members (see page 9). Even though 15 of the 16 workers in the unit signed cards saying they wanted ILWU representation, the employer, Republic Services, ignored their demand. Frustrated, the workers took direct action. They downed their tools and picked up picket signs. With some truckers respecting the line and the operation slowed down, the company relented within a few hours and consented to talk to the union. Within three weeks, they agreed to recognize and bargain with Local 6.

In Hawaii, where nearly everything but the tourists comes in by ship, members of the Inlandboatmen's Union, the ILWU's Marine Division, are essential to the day-to-day economic life of the state. They operate the tugboats that guide the cargo ships to berth at the Port of Honolulu and the barges that then shuttle goods around the islands.

Still, when their contract expired, the employer, Hawaiian Tug & Barge/Young Brothers, came to the table seeking to cut crew size and refusing to grant more time off (see page 6). Both moves spelled "safety hazard" to the IBU members who ply treacherous currents for days on end. So they docked their boats and manned the picket lines. In four days they had a deal which preserved manning and gave them more time off.

The International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) draws 600 unions under its umbrella, including the ILWU. Several ILWU International officers and the International Affairs Director went to the ITF Dockers' Section Conference in Singapore to build strategy and solidarity for confronting threats to seafarers, dock workers and their unions worldwide (see page 7).

Unions always deal with bread-and-butter issues that keep families alive—pay, health care, pensions. But nothing hits closer to home than your home. On Hawaii's main island of Oahu some 300 people, mostly ILWU pineapple workers and their families, live in Poamoho Camp, old plantation housing run by their employer Del Monte (see page 6). Del Monte was about to give up its long-term lease on the land and the camp's residents faced eviction. But the tight-knit community organized with the help of ILWU Local 142, its political clout and social connections. They found a local developer to buy the land and are working out how they can buy their homes and keep their community together.

And all the while, members were pounding pavement to make sure these efforts can continue next year (see page 5).

See you on the sidewalks...

—Steve Stallone' Editor

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Pull out all the stops

By James Spinosa
ILWU International President

More than a year ago the democratically elected delegates to the ILWU International Convention voted resoundingly to make the defeat of George W. Bush in this November's election our number one priority. Since then, even while doing the day-to-day work of the union, negotiating and administering contracts, organizing new workers and defending our jurisdiction, we have kept our focus on that top goal. We have been planning and building toward it, coordinating our collective imagination and energies. Now we are in the final stretch of the race, time to pull out all the stops.

This program is not driven by ideology, by some partisan distaste for a Republican presidency. It comes out of our own experience.

We must never forget how Bush abused the office of the president during our 2002 longshore contract negotiations. He intervened on the side of the employers with the intent of destroying the ILWU. He directly threatened to send the military to seize the docks and take our jobs. He threatened to pass legislation eliminating our collective bargaining rights and to invoke the dreaded Taft-Hartley injunction should we exercise those rights and strike. And in an unprecedented move he did impose Taft-Hartley on the workers and their union when the employers closed all West Coast ports with their lock-out.

His blatant bias and callous disregard for the lives and well-being of working people weren't demonstrated just in the ILWU's situation. Every policy he has initiated in the last four years has had that intent and effect. His tax cuts for the rich and subsequent cuts in programs aiding working and poor people; his proposals to privatize Social Security and individualize pensions for the good of Wall Street bankers and investors at the expense of workers' retirement; his war in Iraq that has cost the lives of a thousand sons and daughters of American workers, created a budget deficit of unprecedented size and made the world safer only for oil profits—the list could go on and on. What they all have in common is that the rich get richer and the workers get screwed.

The American labor movement will not likely survive another four years of these policies. And the ILWU, with the longshore contract expiring in the summer of 2008, will be in the crosshairs of a Bush lame duck presidency.

We cannot let this happen and we won't. As part of our strategic plan the ILWU is working with the AFL-CIO on its nationally coordinated effort to beat Bush. As part of that, like just about every other union in the AFL-CIO, the ILWU will be sending rank-and-file activists to key battleground states to get out the vote, to make sure every anti-Bush, pro-John Kerry ballot is cast. We of course will be focusing much of our efforts in our home states of

Washington, Oregon and Hawaii, but since it is clear California and its 55 electoral votes will go to Kerry, we will be sending activists from there to the nearby swing states of Nevada, Arizona and New Mexico. Working together with other unions doing the same thing we will dramatically increase our chance of ousting Bush. As we fight side by side with members of other unions, we will strengthen the ties that bind the labor movement as well. We will put ourselves in a better position to advocate for our issues in a Democratic administration and remind Kerry who helped him win.

This will take a tremendous grassroots effort. We need every rank-and-file member to find time to volunteer in your own areas to register voters and make sure they get to the polls. (Contacts in your area are listed on page 5.) It is your responsibility not just to vote for Kerry, but to make sure all your friends, family members and neighbors do too.

It is an unfortunate but well-known fact that campaigns of this magnitude require money. For the last few months the ILWU has been raising money for our Political Action Fund and many of our

members have already contributed generously. Others have not yet and they need to step up because time is growing short. Instructions on how to make your contribution are on page 10 of this issue of *The Dispatcher*. You will also be receiving a mailing at home soliciting a political action donation.

We will be using these funds to power our get-out-the-vote effort and to contribute to key Senate and Congressional races around the country, targeting pro-worker candidates so that when Kerry does win the

presidency, he'll have a Congress that will pass his programs.

Do not be discouraged by polls that imply Bush is leading this race. These polls have many statistical irregularities. Mostly they only measure "likely" voters, defined as those who voted in the last election. We have been recruiting many new voters, people who felt disillusioned or powerless in the past, but now, motivated by Bush's disastrous policies, see the need to get involved. The polls can't measure the passion of the opposition and the united activism Bush has incited. Remember, the only poll that matters is the one taken on Nov. 2.

Do not let others define the terms of the debate. We're up against a corporate media machine that sows confusion and blows smoke to cover up the real issues. Some of our members have deeply felt concerns on social issues that may push them towards Bush. It's up to us to keep the focus on the real stakes in this election. We are fighting to save our unions and any hope of a decent future for the working families of this country.

We will win this election because we must win and because the working people of this country are the majority. And when we unite, organize and mobilize the American labor movement cannot be beaten.



"We're fighting to save our unions and any hope of a decent future for the working families of this country."

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Black ferry workers targeted, arrested

By Steve Stallone

Washington State Ferry ticket seller Jesse Eaton sensed something wrong as soon as he arrived at the Port of Seattle's Colman Dock June 6. As he took the elevator to the mezzanine to start his 3:15 p.m. shift that Sunday, he noticed a terminal auditor who normally worked only Monday through Friday, nine to five. The concourse was empty and a state trooper he didn't recognize lurked by the lobby door.

"It gave me an eerie feeling," Eaton said. "I felt like turning around and going home."

As he walked into the lobby, three plain clothes detectives swarmed him and asked if he was Jesse Eaton. They told him he was under arrest, slapped handcuffs on him in front of the ferry passengers queuing up and walked him across the lobby to a vacant room.

The detectives read Eaton his Miranda rights. At first Eaton started answering their questions. They told him there were four arrests that day. Eaton asked if they were all African Americans, but they declined to answer. Instead they asked him if he'd heard rumors about surveillance cameras in the ticket booths and told him they had videotapes of him reselling tickets. Eaton asked for an attorney.

During the interrogation, Steve Rodgers, a Washington State Ferry manager, handed Eaton a suspension letter. The "Notification of Leave Due to Conduct Violations" letter placed him on administrative leave with pay "until further notice" because the WSF "obtained information" that he had committed theft and violations of cash/check handling procedures.

Eaton was hauled off to the county jail, informed he was under investigation for theft and released on his own recognizance at 2 a.m.

The other three African American ticket sellers had similar experiences. Richelle Gregory worked the morning shift and was supposed to go home by 1:45 p.m., but her supervisor asked her to stay late. About 3:20 p.m., three plainclothes detectives and one uniformed state trooper surrounded her booth, arrested and handcuffed her and marched her to a private room for questioning. They asked her if she'd stolen thousands of dollars and if she used drugs. They searched her bag and personal effects. Rodgers, the WSF manager, came into the room and handed her the same suspension letter he gave Eaton. Gregory was taken to the county jail and released on her own recognizance at 2 a.m.

Dana Clark, working in the booth next to Gregory, got arrested at the same time. She was handcuffed and paraded across the terminal to an interrogation room. The detectives asked her how much money she stole.

"Zero," she said. The detectives claimed to have a videotape of her stealing and pressed her for information about the other accused ticket sellers. When Clark wouldn't tell them what they wanted to hear, Rodgers gave her the suspension letter. She was taken to the county jail and released after midnight.

Romain Jackson was the last of the four to arrive at Colman Dock that day. As he entered the lobby he was surrounded by three state patrolmen, cuffed, searched and taken to interrogation. They claimed they had him on tape "commingling funds" and stealing \$15. They pressed him for information about his other accused co-workers, but he had nothing to offer. Rodgers came in and gave him the suspension letter. The detectives told him he could be charged with criminal conduct, but proceeded to let him go.

"It was a racist round-up. They've been trying to push us out of here for

a long time," said Eaton, who is a shop steward, a member of the IBU Puget Sound Region Executive Board and an IBU convention delegate.

Eaton noted both he and Gregory have racial discrimination lawsuits pending, in his case for being called "nigger" and being spat upon. He was also a witness in an another case where an African American co-worker was charged with theft and has filed several unfair labor practice charges against WSF.

Handcuffing the ticket sellers in public and parading them through the lobby like fishermen showing off the day's catch was racist and unnecessary, Eaton said.

"It was beyond humiliation," he said. "I've been at Colman Dock for 15 years and I know many of the people there. It was really embarrassing."

IBU National Secretary-Treasurer Terri Mast was outraged by what she said was clearly a racially tinged set-up.

"These four ticket sellers don't normally all work the same day and shift and one was kept overtime," Mast said. "And the only African

American supervisor who normally works that day was rescheduled for Friday and sent to a different dock."

The whole arrest procedure violated the workers' rights and the WSF's own Code of Conduct, IBU Puget Sound Regional Director Dennis Conklin charged. The WSF can confront employees with allegations, instruct them to cooperate with an investigation and place them on administrative leave, but there is supposed to be a fact-finding investigation and a hearing in which the employee gets to rebut the charges before any arrests are made, he said.

"There's nothing on the tapes, the allegations are just a theory," said Conklin, who has seen the video.

The union mobilized to protect its members. Conklin filed ULP charges against management for breaking the contract's rules on discipline and for changing the conditions of work by putting the surveillance cameras in the booths without consulting the union. He and Mast organized a delegation, including representatives from the Washington State Labor Council, the King County Central

Labor Council, the NAACP, the A. Philip Randolph Institute and ILWU International Secretary-Treasurer Willie Adams, to make a call on the head of the WSF, Mike Thorne.

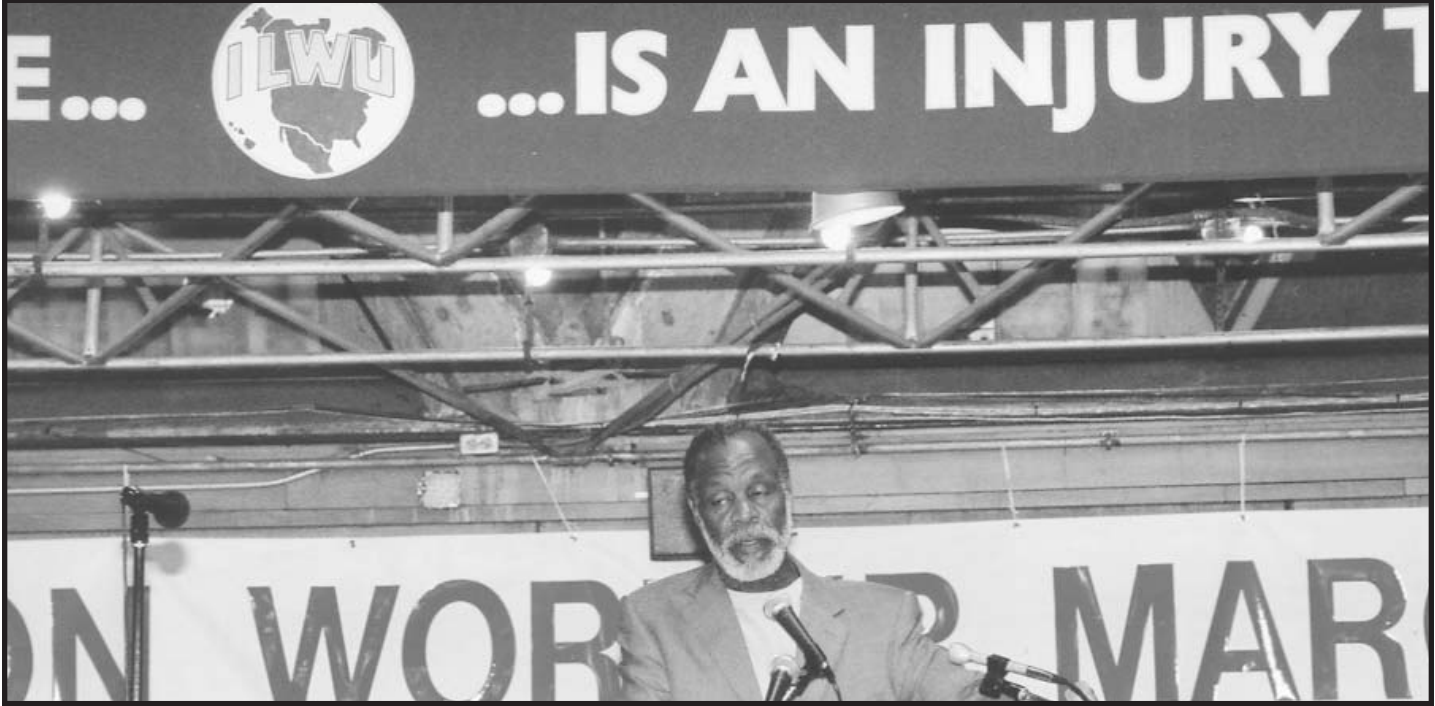
At the meeting the union delegation asked Thorne why he had the workers arrested rather than using the proper process. Thorne said he knew nothing of the situation. But interoffice e-mails obtained by the IBU in its investigation showed Thorne was kept updated on the process preceding the arrests.

The union had U.S. Senator Patty Murray (D-WA), Congressional representatives Jay Islee (D-WA), call Thorne to inquire about the situation. Thorne has since "resigned" his position.

WSF fired Eaton, Gregory and Clark. Jackson remains on administrative leave. No charges have been filed, although the state has up to two years after the arrests to do so. Conklin plans to take the terminations to arbitration and feels confident of victory.

"I believe we're going to win their jobs back," he said.

Workers to converge on DC for social justice



Tom Price

Actor and activist Danny Glover joined ILWU longshore Local 10 at its hall for the Million Worker March kick-off rally May 22. The local has put out a call for rank-and-file workers to converge on Washington, D.C. Oct. 17 to demand that politicians listen to those who pay their salaries and that they take seriously the needs of working families.

The Million Worker March will rally workers, their families and supporters the Lincoln Memorial to demand power be taken from the corporate oligarchy and restored to the people.

Local 10 president Henry Graham, Chris Silvera, Secretary-Treasurer of Teamsters Local 808 in New York and Chair of the Teamsters National Black Caucus, Brenda Stokely, President of AFSCME District Council 1707 in New York and journalist Alexander Cockburn and striking CWA phone workers were among those in attendance at the rally.

"We have to wake up not just the labor movement, but the entire country, to let those in Washington, D.C. know that 'we the people' are the United States of America," San Francisco Labor Council Secretary-Treasurer Walter Johnson told the rally. "To talk about a million worker march is one thing, to do it is something else. But dreams come true only when we work on them, and that's what we have to do here."

Among other things, the workers will demand universal healthcare, a national living wage, an end to the Iraq war, and protected and enhanced social security. Unfair trade deals like NAFTA and WTO must be scrapped. The cities must be rebuilt, housing must be secured, public schools and transit must be advanced. The Million Worker March organizers believe power must be taken back from the corporate elite to gain these demands.

Other demands list many things wrong with this country. The anti-labor Taft-Hartley Act must be repealed. Privatization and contracting-out must end. Environmental

laws must be strengthened and enforced. Bush's faith-based pseudo science must be stopped and global warming must be recognized as a major threat to workers and their children. Corporations must pay taxes, and the tax code must be made more progressive.

Longshore Local 10 passed the initial resolution proposing the march and clerks' Local 34 followed suit. The Longshore, Clerk and Walking Boss' Caucus of the ILWU endorsed the march at its May 17-22 meeting. Congresswoman Barbara Lee (D-CA) has signed on, along with activist Dick Gregory. Scores of union locals and hundreds of individuals have added their names to a growing list of sponsors.

Some critics of the march have said it will take the focus off John Kerry and the effort to re-defeat Bush. The AFL-CIO and the ILWU's International Executive Board have declined to endorse the march. Local 10 executive board member Clarence Thomas, co-chair of the march's organizing committee, says it isn't really about the election.

"This march is about putting together a workers' agenda, because who ever is elected president, there's not going to be any change until that agenda is addressed," Thomas said. "When you look at the struggles of working people in this country, the only time we get any concessions from the system is when we organize independently of the Republicans and Democrats. There wouldn't have been a Black Power movement, there wouldn't have been a civil rights movement, a women's movement, a peace movement had it not been for working people and others organizing in their own name."

—Tom Price

Million Worker March info:
Website: www.millionworkermarch.org
E-mail: mwm_committee@yahoo.com
Telephone: (415) 771-2028.

WASHINGTON REPORT

John Kerry, ILWU's choice for president

By Lindsay McLaughlin
ILWU Legislative Director

The ILWU Executive Board endorsed Senator John Kerry (D-MA) for President of the United States at its April 15 meeting and unanimously affirmed this decision with a Statement of Policy at its Aug. 26-27 meeting (see page 10). This endorsement was no close call. Throughout Kerry's 18-year Senate career, he has voted for labor's position 90 percent of the time.

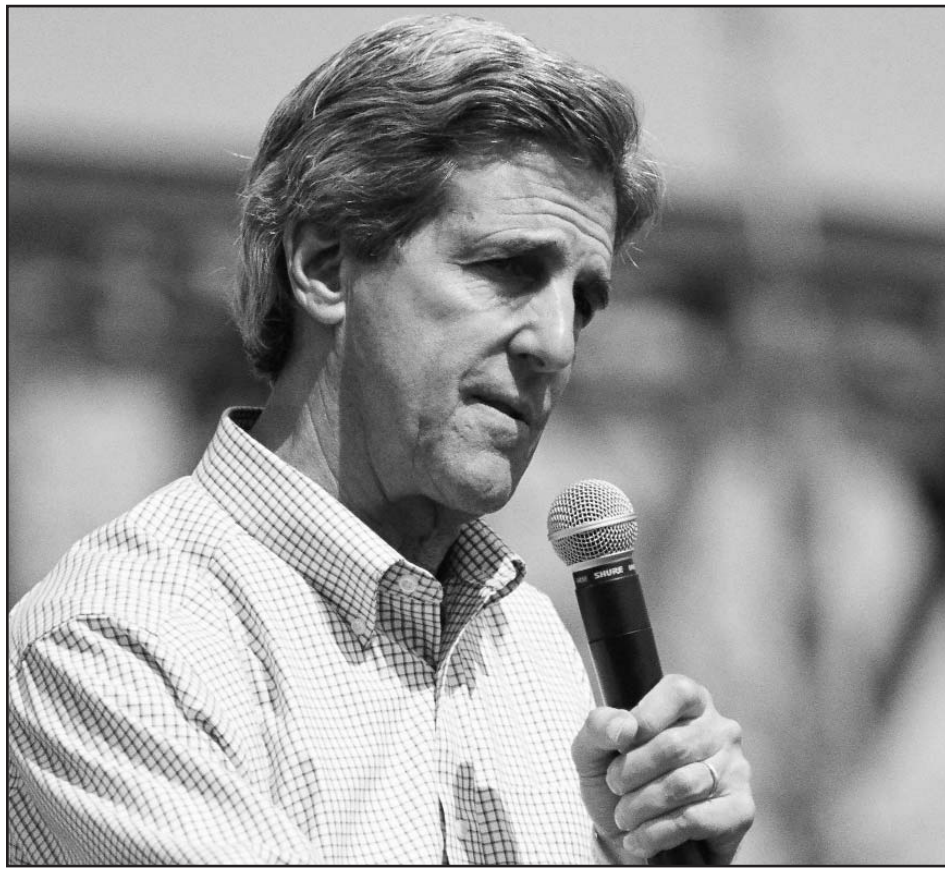
Kerry supports workers' right to organize and have card-check recognition in organizing drives. He opposes Bush's plan to eliminate overtime pay, supports ergonomic safeguards on the job, has co-sponsored legislation to outlaw striker replacement and wants to index the minimum wage to inflation and extend and improve unemployment benefits.

But Kerry's record is not perfect. In the past he has supported the free trade policies of both the Clinton and Bush administrations that have been so devastating to the nation's manufacturing base and its good blue-collar jobs. However, Kerry's position has evolved. He is committed to voting against the Central American Free Trade Agreement and the Free Trade Agreement of the Americas unless these agreements include meaningful labor, environmental and human rights provisions.

Kerry has stated publicly that he agrees with the ILWU that seal checks and inspections of empty containers should be part of an overall port security strategy. He wants to focus on real homeland security programs without attacking the civil liberties of longshore workers and other workers in America.

On the critical issue of health care coverage, Kerry plans to extend affordable health care to 95 percent of Americans so they get the same coverage as members of Congress. Health experts have asserted that Kerry's plan will lower private health insurance costs and expand the number of people covered. Lowering the cost of care will help the ILWU retain health coverage for its members.

Kerry is very concerned about the outsourcing of American jobs. He has vowed to stop tax breaks to companies that send American jobs overseas and create tax incentives to keep good jobs at home. Kerry also advocates



denying government contracts to companies that move offshore.

The American labor movement, and the ILWU in particular, cannot survive another four years of George W. Bush and his band of megalomaniac advisors. In less than four years, the Bush administration has turned a record budget surplus into a record budget deficit. The economy has lost 2.6 million jobs in manufacturing alone. It has lost over 1.8 million more jobs than were created during Bush's reign. The unemployment figures from July show only a paltry 32,000 new jobs were created that month.

Bush has used "national security" and the Sept. 11 tragedy to justify an attack on American workers' collective bargaining rights and civil liberties. During consideration of the Homeland Security bill, Bush insisted on unprecedented power to strip collective bargaining rights from hundreds of thousands of federal workers. Bush allies even had the audacity to attack Sen. Max Cleland (D-GA), a Vietnam War veteran and triple amputee, for being soft on terrorism when he disagreed with this wholesale theft of rights.

In the wake of the Sept. 11 tragedy, Bush pushed the so-called

Patriot Act through Congress. The Patriot Act allows the FBI to investigate American citizens and residents based in part on their exercise of their First Amendment rights. The FBI can spy on people because it doesn't like the books they read or the web sites they visit. It can spy on people who write letters to the editor criticizing U.S. government policy or on union members who stand up for their rights.

Who could forget the Bush administration's conduct during the 2002 longshore negotiations? It threatened to take away the Longshore Division's collective bargaining rights. An administration official acknowledged that they were prepared to use federal troops to replace striking longshore workers. In an unprecedented move, the administration invoked the Taft-Hartley Act against the ILWU in an employer lockout.

ILWU members did not bend under the lockout and Taft-Hartley injunction. The solidarity among members proved to be the deciding factor in the ILWU's ability to obtain an acceptable collective bargaining agreement with the Pacific Maritime

Association. This contract expires in 2008. If Bush gets another term, he most likely will attack ILWU collective bargaining rights again.

The Bush administration pushed through changes in regulations to eliminate overtime pay for as many as six million American workers despite a strong opposition vote from a majority of Congress members. With these rules changes, Bush undermines the 40-hour week American workers died to win.

Even though most union members have collective bargaining agreements protecting their right to overtime, the rules changes will hit them as well. Most union contracts specify that overtime hours must be compensated at time and a half. But when those contracts expire, all bets are off. At that point the employers can insist on negotiating new language because, for the first time, many workers who had a federal right to overtime pay will no longer have it. To maintain their current protection, union workers might to have to give up other benefits or accept smaller increases.

Congress can repeal these egregious regulations, and certainly Kerry will reverse them if he becomes president.

Recognizing that working families will suffer tremendously if Bush wins in November, the 2003 ILWU International Convention made the defeat of Bush its top priority. Accordingly, ILWU members are stepping up to the plate to elect Kerry president. Washington and Oregon are so-called battleground states that could go either way. Fifteen longshore workers were trained by the AFL-CIO on Aug. 18-19, 2004 and will be placed in states where their help is needed. Some 50 ILWU members will travel this fall to different states to help get out the vote.

Though House, Senate and governors' races are important this year, there is no more urgent need than to send Bush back to Crawford, Texas. The only way to do that is to vote him out of office and elect John Kerry.

As ILWU President Jim Spinosa said in a recent letter to ILWU members, "It is vital that you register and get out there to vote this year. More importantly, don't just vote. Get your family members and their friends out to the polls in November as well. The very existence of the ILWU is at stake."

Make your vote count

Fraud and theft at Florida polling places threw the 2000 election to George Bush, and this sorry story rang a huge wake-up call. A closer look at elections around the country revealed voting rights violations everywhere, from intimidation and lies to spoiled ballots and bad purges of voter rolls.

"Millions were denied their right to vote as much by faulty technology and lack of preparation as by purposeful fraud and deceit," the AFL-CIO Executive Council said in a statement from its March 2004 meeting.

Determined to see this year's huge get-out-the-vote effort is not wasted, the Federation joined Election Protection 2004, a coalition of more than 60 civil rights, religious, political and labor groups, including the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists, the A. Philip Randolph Institute, the Labor Council for Latin American Advancement and SEIU. The coalition is educating voters on

balloting procedures and setting up a network of poll watchers to catch fraud and abuse.

"Calculated and determined efforts at intimidation and suppression" of voters of color started in the post-Civil War Reconstruction period and continue today according to "The Long Shadow of Jim Crow," a report issued by the NAACP and People for the American Way. The report details more than two dozen incidents taking place over the last 25 years. Earlier this year, for example, armed plainclothes officers visited elderly Black voters at home in Orlando, Florida. Native Americans could not vote in South Dakota's March 2004 primary unless they showed photo ID's. No law required ID.

Nearly two million citizens cast "spoiled ballots" that did not get counted in the 2000 presidential election, according to investigative reporter Greg Palast, author of "The Best Democracy Money Can Buy." About half of them were African

American and some 180,000 voted in Florida. That state took another 57,700 people off the voter rolls as felons. Most weren't felons, but a majority were Black. More than 90 percent of the Black electorate votes Democrat, Palast said, and Bush's margin of victory in Florida was only 547 votes.

"Spoiled ballots" may result from jammed machines, stray marks, or bad punches. Even seemingly innocent election-day foul-ups are more likely to block voting by working people and people of color, said Cecelie Counts, director of the AFL-CIO's Civil, Human and Women's Rights Dept.

"The Republican chair of the Election Advisory Commission set up by the Help American Vote Act of 2002 (HAVA) said publicly, 'We already know where polls are going to open late, run out of ballots by 2p.m. and have machines break down after 6p.m. when people come to vote after work,' Counts said.

The AFL-CIO is producing a "Voters Bill of Rights" tailored to each battleground state and advises union members and activists to take some basic steps to secure their votes:

- Call the local election office to be sure you are registered and know where to vote.
- Be especially sure to check your registration if you have moved or changed your name or have not voted recently.
- Check for any new voting procedures or ID requirements.
- Know that you have the right to vote a provisional ballot if your name does not appear on the list at your polling place.

—MER

For more information, go to www.myvotemyright.com, e-mail votingrights@afl-cio.org or call the AFL-CIO's Civil, Human & Women's Rights Dept. at 202-637-5270. For a copy of "The Long Shadow of Jim Crow," go to www.pfaw.org.

House by house, union members fight the power

Still hanging back, thinking about doing some election work? John Philbrook of longshore Local 21 has a few words for you.

“It’s easy and it’s positive when you go talk to other union members,” Philbrook said. “Sometimes I go to the door and people don’t know too much about what’s going on and I leave them with more information. I’ve registered people to vote, and that’s a feel-good thing.”

Forget the stage fright, Philbrook said. “I always stumble at the door, but I just tell people we’re union volunteers talking to other union members,” he said.

Philbrook is one of a half-dozen ILWU members who are helping the AFL-CIO coordinate its work in the battleground states of Washington and Oregon. Dozens of other members in those states are logging miles in precinct walks to educate and register union voters. So are members of Hawaii Local 142. The Coast Legislative Action Committee brought in a trainer from the AFL-CIO Political Dept. to give core activists strategy and tools. Pushed by necessity, the ILWU is unrolling its biggest election mobilization ever.

“I tell people, if you want to have your union survive, you better participate,” said longshore Local 19’s John Munson, president of the Puget Sound District Council.

Labor can turn the election by focusing people-power where it counts and turning out entire union households, according to Suzanne Granville of the AFL-CIO Political Dept. She led the Aug. 18-19 training at the International headquarters organized by the Legislative Action Committee. Fifteen members from longshore Locals 8, 10, 13, 19, 23 and

46 and marine clerks’ locals 52, 40 and 63 attended.

First they mapped the fight, then they talked tools. The AFL-CIO is focusing on 16 states: Washington, Oregon, New Mexico, Nevada, Arizona, Iowa, Missouri, Michigan, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Ohio, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Florida, Maine and New Hampshire. New polls as well as the 2000 election results predict close races in these states. In 2000, 66 percent of all union members voted Democratic. AFL-CIO strategists say this will need to go up five percent this year to beat Bush.

Keeping the focus on “kitchen table” issues like job flight and health care will be crucial to this effort, Granville said. “If we’re not keeping labor issues out front, debate over ‘personal character’ and social wedge issues will take over,” she said. And intensive worker-to-worker campaigns will play a crucial part in highlighting those issues and moving voters.

“In any campaign, the most valid endorser is a fellow worker,” Granville said. “People want sincerity, not mind-numbing legislative details.”

The ILWU plans to send around 50 members to swing states in the final weeks of the election. Most will come from California, where Democrats have a strong edge. Members from Oregon and Washington have their work cut out for them closer to home. The AFL-CIO has also asked the ILWU for immediate help in Arizona and Nevada. Tim Scott (Local 63) and Patricia Tuck (Local 63) are leading the efforts there.

The Columbia River District Council hosted a special barbeque night July 27 for Labor 2004 in Oregon. Some 75 union members, 30 from ILWU Locals 5, 8 and 40,

and Bush’s tax cuts for the rich have de-funded social programs. Add to that an intractable war in the Middle East and limitless defense budget increases and union families have plenty of reasons to get active.

“Bush ran on theory of being a compassionate conservative and a uniter. Yes, he’s united the Democratic Party against him,” Adams said.

ILWU officers went to workshops and receptions, focusing everywhere on the issues important to working people. Spinosa also discussed worker issues with Sen. Ted Kennedy (D-MA) and other international union presidents in Hyannis Port.

“What we want most from a future Kerry administration would be attention on the issues affecting working families,” Wenzl said. “For the ILWU port security is first amongst these, but in general healthcare, trade, outsourcing, and the passage of the Employees’ Free Choice Act are very important. That act would allow workers to have union representation if a majority signed cards saying so. It would also require the employers to bargain with workers and would mandate an arbitrated first contract if one could not be agreed.”

The AFL-CIO wasn’t invited to the Republican Convention, Wenzl noted.

“This current administration doesn’t even answer the phone calls of the president of the AFL-CIO,” Wenzl said. “With Kerry in office we would have at least a chance to present our issues to the administration. We believe Kerry will be better on labor, healthcare and education. Winning this election is the first step in taking back our country.”

—Tom Price



Longshore Local 8 members Gordon Wescott (at left) and Brian Harvey (at right) canvassing July 27 in Portland. Some 75 union members, 30 of them from Locals 5, 8 and 40, walked the neighborhoods that night after a barbeque hosted by the Columbia River District Council.

downed burgers and hot dogs courtesy of CRDC before fanning out to talk to Portland union members. The next week ILWU efforts helped bring a highly visible union presence to the 60,000-strong rally that marked the end of the Kerry/Edwards “Believe in America” bus tour. The crowd packed Portland’s Waterfront Park and spilled into the surrounding blocks.

“The most exciting thing was all the energy from all the people being there,” said CRDC President Jeff Smith.

ILWU teams in the Puget Sound area and Southwest Washington have been doing similar work with the Labor/Neighbor programs there. They have hosted GOTV barbeques, helped mobilize for the Aug. 28 Kerry rally in Tacoma and registered new voters. Local 23 volunteers have registered close to 200 people just by setting up a table at the hall.

At the end of August, organizers in the battleground states got busy trying to build the labor movement’s biggest one-day election mobilization ever. They set a goal of fielding 15,000 people to knock on a million doors Sept. 2 while George Bush accepted

his nomination at the Republican Convention.

Hawaii Local 142 has trained more than 130 members to register voters. While the volunteer registrars on Maui are visiting ILWU families at home, registrars on other islands have found they do better talking to co-workers on the job. After the Sept. 18 primary, they will re-focus their efforts towards informing people about the candidates endorsed by the union and getting out the vote.

Wherever they go, the ILWU volunteers try to make the union connection and practice respect to win over voters with different priorities.

“When we say we’re longshore workers coming out because we want to share this information, it lightens people up a bit,” said Local 23’s Holly Michael, who’s brand-new to canvassing. “I try to tell them to just look at the issues and decide for themselves. Sometimes they have other issues like abortion and guns. I tell them people’s jobs and supporting our families are important too.”

—Marcy Rein

John Showalter contributed to this story.

ILWU officers make presence felt at the DNC

The ILWU on all levels has pledged to remove George W. Bush from the White House and regain a Democratic majority in Congress this November. Members, retirees and families are on the move to do it. As part of this effort, International President James Spinosa, International Secretary-Treasurer William Adams and Coastcommitteeman Joseph Wenzl went to Boston July 26-29 to attend the Democratic Convention.

Spinosa and Wenzl were guests of the AFL-CIO, while Adams was an at-large delegate from California.

“As far as I know this is the first time an international officer of the ILWU has been a delegate,” Adams said. “What impressed me was that finally the Democrats had a loud, clear precise message. It didn’t matter what part of the Democratic Party you were from, we were all on the same page. Whether someone spoke very eloquently, like Bill Clinton or Barack Obama, everybody was saying the same thing—that it’s time for a change. Somehow in America we got off course, and we’ve got to fix it.”

Political action has become a major focus of the labor movement, especially since Bush took office in the flawed 2000 election. After losing the popular vote, Bush began an attack on working people that is unprecedented in American history. He still plans to contract-out nearly 850,000 federal jobs, and his Patriot Act denied union rights to 170,000 federal workers. The Bush administration threatened military intervention against the ILWU in the 2002 longshore lockout, and more jobs were lost on his watch than any time since the Great Depression. Massive trade deficits have wiped out U.S. jobs

and Bush’s tax cuts for the rich have de-funded social programs. Add to that an intractable war in the Middle East and limitless defense budget increases and union families have plenty of reasons to get active.

“Bush ran on theory of being a compassionate conservative and a uniter. Yes, he’s united the Democratic Party against him,” Adams said.

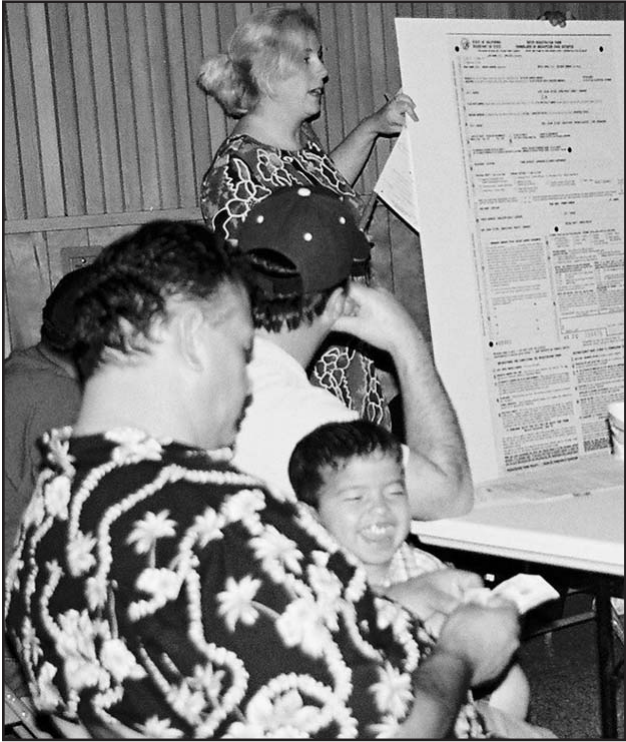
ILWU officers went to workshops and receptions, focusing everywhere on the issues important to working people. Spinosa also discussed worker issues with Sen. Ted Kennedy (D-MA) and other international union presidents in Hyannis Port.

“What we want most from a future Kerry administration would be attention on the issues affecting working families,” Wenzl said. “For the ILWU port security is first amongst these, but in general healthcare, trade, outsourcing, and the passage of the Employees’ Free Choice Act are very important. That act would allow workers to have union representation if a majority signed cards saying so. It would also require the employers to bargain with workers and would mandate an arbitrated first contract if one could not be agreed.”

The AFL-CIO wasn’t invited to the Republican Convention, Wenzl noted.

“This current administration doesn’t even answer the phone calls of the president of the AFL-CIO,” Wenzl said. “With Kerry in office we would have at least a chance to present our issues to the administration. We believe Kerry will be better on labor, healthcare and education. Winning this election is the first step in taking back our country.”

—Tom Price



Marcy Rein

Clement Mejia from Waste Management (foreground) holds his son Manuel as Margaret Hanlon Gradie of the California Labor Federation explains the voter registration form to the shop stewards’ council of warehouse Local 6. The stewards used their Aug. 7 meeting for a pre-election training focused on passage of Prop. 72, the Health Insurance Act. Prop. 72 would insure more than a million working Californians by requiring employers to either offer medical benefits or pay into a state fund to cover the uninsured.

VOTER REGISTRATION DEADLINES

What’s your deadline to register to vote Bush out?
Depends on where you live...

Washington St.	Oct. 2
Oregon	Oct. 12
California	Oct. 18
Hawaii	Oct. 4
Alaska	Oct. 3*

* Regional elections offices will be open from 12 noon to 4p.m. Sunday, Oct. 3.

SIGN UP, ALREADY!

To find out how to get involved, talk to your local’s political action coordinator or call the president of your area’s District Council.

Puget Sound District Council: John Munson, (360) 224-3957 (cell)
Columbia River District Council: Jeff Smith, (503) 709-8805 (cell)
N. California District Council: Henry Graham, (415) 776-8100 (Local 10)
S. California District Council: Joe Radisich, (310) 521-8796 (SCDC office)

AROUND THE UNION

LOCAL 142 HELPS MEMBERS KEEP THEIR HOMES

The 300-plus residents of the tight-knit Poamoho Camp community are looking forward to buying their homes instead of losing them, thanks to their own determination and strategic help from ILWU Local 142.

Poamoho is an old pineapple plantation camp run by Del Monte for its employees. Most of the residents are Local 142 pineapple members, their families and retirees. The camp sits on 30 acres out of 2,200 leased by Del Monte from the Galbraith estate near Wahiwa on the island of Oahu.

Del Monte told Poamoho residents in February 2004 that they would have to move by the end of June. The company planned to let the lease expire, demolish their homes and return the land to the estate. The notice surprised and dismayed the residents.

"Many of the people living at Poamoho grew up here, just like me," said Boyd Isnech, chair of the ILWU Unit at Del Monte. "We know each other and have a bond. Even though the camp is along the main highway, it's still a little secluded and lets us preserve our country lifestyle with gardens, chickens and other animals."

The place has a unique spirit, said Haunani Tyrell, who also was raised there.

"Poamoho was a great place to grow up," Tyrell said. "We kids could go into anyone's yard, help ourselves to a fruit, play with the animals, talk story. Everyone treated us kids like their own family even though we were

of many different cultures. There's no place like Poamoho. I can't imagine it gone. It holds so many fond memories for me. My roots are there."

The union helped the Poamoho residents organize and mobilize political and community support. Allies in the state legislature introduced two resolutions that called on Del Monte to extend the lease until at least December 2005 or provide financial aid so residents could remain in Poamoho. The resolutions also asked the Galbraith Estate to consider leasing the land to either the Poamoho Camp Community Association or another group of the residents' choosing. Poamoho residents rallied at the state capitol and testified at a hearing on the resolutions April 2.

A week and a day later, the residents voted to approve an offer by local housing developer Peter Savio to take over the lease, buy the land, and then sell the homes to them. Details took some time to work out, but by June 12, the residents were ready to celebrate their successful fight against their eviction.

At a press conference held before the party that day, Community Assn. President Vaeleti Tyrell thanked the state legislators who introduced the resolutions on their behalf—State Senate President Robert Bunda, State Reps. Marilyn Lee, Michael Magaoy and Marcus Oshiro—as well as City Council Chair Donovan Dela Cruz and Council member Ann Kobayashi. (The City and County of Honolulu covers the whole island of Oahu.)



Voice of the ILWU

Poamoho resident Randy Sanborn at the rally and press conference the community held at the Hawaii State Capitol April 2, 2004.

"Residents have a lot of work ahead of us before we are 100 percent secure in our homes, but we will continue to work with all parties to save the camp," Tyrell said.

The residents are studying ways to form a cooperative, because they want a structure that will let them keep their community and lifestyle, said ILWU International Rep. Tracy Takano.

"The community supported them preserving their lifestyle and housing, and they feel they shouldn't let the place become something for profit," Takano said.

Though the ILWU has experience converting plantation camps into affordable housing, the Poamoho project will be challenging, he said. The union is helping the residents find financing and find their way through the maze of permits and paperwork needed to upgrade the 1930s-era homes.

—Voice of the ILWU and Dispatcher staff reports

HAWAII IBU STRIKES TO WIN

Hawaiian Tug & Barge/Young Brothers played hardball with the Inlandboatmen's Union when contract talks began in early May. They kept it up until the old contract expired June 30 and the 60 IBU members who run the islands' lifeline walked out on strike. Four days of pickets changed the game. The company agreed to a new deal that gave members the extra time off they needed for safety, kept the crew size at a safe level and preserved medical care.

"We have a fair agreement now," negotiating team chair Kenny Ho said. "We're just looking forward to working hard and making this profitable for us and for the company."

The IBU members at HTB/YB crew the tugs that assist ships in the Port of Honolulu and tow the barges that carry goods to and among Hawaii's outer islands. Everything from rice to cars to toilet paper comes to Honolulu on ships and then gets transferred to barges for transport to Maui, Kauai, Molokai, Lanai and the Big Island.

Tug crews work hard in harsh conditions for days at a stretch.

"Our members routinely deal with huge, heavy cargoes and some of the largest ships in the world," said

Jonathan Lono Kane, the IBU's Hawaii Regional Director. "Our channels are well-known for their dangerous currents and strong winds and Hawaii is under small-craft warnings 300 days of the year."

Working tugboats is not a nine-to-five job, Kane added. Once on a boat, crew members can be at sea for two or three days, then go back to port, turn around and go out again. Sometimes they go as much as two months without real time off. This creates safety hazards, Ho said.

"We're dealing with Mother Nature and heavy equipment, sometimes working around the clock for days on end. People get injured," he said.

In these conditions, members' safety and well-being depends on adequate rest time. For every day at sea, they accumulate time off, and increasing the accumulation rate became the union's top negotiating goal.

The time off in HTB/YB's last, best and final offer fell far short of the union's demands. The company also proposed cutting one crew member, which would create another threat to safety, and making several unacceptable changes in work rules. Not one IBU member voted for the offer.

During their four days on strike, the HTB/YB workers enjoyed "unreal" support, Ho said.

"All different unions were dropping off food and water and walking the lines with us. The ILWU longshore brothers showed solidarity. We also had the ILWU International, AFL-CIO affiliate unions and building trades members with us," he said.

The four-year deal worked out during the strike provides six hours of accumulated time off for each eight hours worked, an increase of two hours over the old rate. It maintains the six-person crew and the employer-paid health benefits, though a co-pay will kick in if costs rise more than 32 percent. It includes a small pension increase after the first year, and cleans up some troublesome work rules.

Union members voted 42-1 to accept the deal early on the morning of July 4, and returned to work immediately.

—Marcy Rein

LONGSHORE LOTTERY



Tom Warren

Puget Sound Arbitrator Randy Vekich waded into the 20-foot-long bin of approximately 300,000 postcards sent in by people vying for one of the 3,000 new casual positions at the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach. With the lottery drawing, held at the offices of the Port of Los Angeles Aug. 19, the Pacific Maritime Association, the longshore employer group, finally conceded, although only partially, to longshore Local 13's demands for more registered workers and casuals. One thousand current casuals will also be elevated to "B" registration over the next couple of months as part of the agreement.

"This represents the largest influx of new longshore workers at one time in the history of the ILWU," said Local 13 President Dave Arian. "But it's still not enough to handle all the cargo coming our way."

Despite industry projections of 10 to 20 percent growth each year at the twin port complex, and despite Local 13's constant requests for an expanded workforce, the PMA waited to act until labor shortages backed up cargo handling and left ships at anchor out in the harbor for days awaiting available work gangs. Then PMA officials told the media they were surprised by the surge, as if its member companies hadn't booked all those containers on their ships months in advance.

Area arbitrators from up and down the Coast took turns pulling batches of postcards. The cards were then given a sequential order and the first 3,000 lucky names were posted on the ILWU and PMA web sites and at the local union halls. They are to be called up about 200 at a time for training and testing in lashing, UTR driving and general safety procedures.

Another nearly 15,000 cards were drawn and ordered to replace those in the first batch who may not pass the requirements and to be a pool to draw on in the future as retirements and expanded work make new casuals necessary.

—Steve Stallone

FROM THE LABOR MOVEMENT

ITF DOCKERS' SECTION MEETS IN SINGAPORE

Dockworkers from around the world spent two days at the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) Dockers' Section Conference in Singapore July 13 and 14 making plans to defeat port privatization, protect seafarers' shore leave and ensure the new maritime security system would not de-unionize seaports.

The ITF, representing 5 million transport workers from 600 unions in 140 countries, including the ILWU in the U.S. and Canada, has struggled for more than a century for worker rights. ILWU International officers attended the conference, including President Jim Spinoso, Vice President Bob McEllrath and Secretary-Treasurer Willie Adams. Coast Committeeman Ray Ortiz Jr. and Ray Familathe, ILWU Director of International Affairs, also represented the union.

"There's nothing better than looking your brothers and sisters right in the eye," Familathe said of the conference. "Not only to hear what they have to say, but to feel it, because the effects of globalization throughout the world are horrendous, and it's good to be able to not only listen to someone, but to feel their frustration first hand."

At the dockers' conference the ITF resolved to fight "ports of convenience," that is employer attempts to de-unionize longshore work, and new international security rules that restrict sailors' shore leave, making them virtual prisoners aboard their vessels.

The UN's International Maritime Organization recently passed the International Ship and Port Security (ISPS) Code, a measure that tightens port security and imposes strict security guidelines on ships and sailors. The IMO wrote the code in response to the 9-11 attacks and it came into force July 1, 2004. The IMO dedicated this year's World Maritime Day, Sept. 30, to maritime security. For the ITF, World Maritime Day is dedicated to promoting dockers' and seafarers' rights.

ITF General Secretary David Cockcroft met with the seven international ship owners' associations. Together ship owners and the ITF will meet with U.S. ambassadors or consulates to find ways to ensure seafarers' rights to shore leave.

"The world of shipping is united in its concern that innocent seafarers are being treated like terrorists," Cockcroft said in his statement. "Bizarrely, this is happening just as the new ISPS Code has recognized their vital role at the heart of maritime security. Shore leave is essential for the physical and mental health of seafarers."

While the ITF supports the new safety regulations under the code, it opposes any effort made by ports, governments or shipping lines to use it to de-unionize ports and lock-down seafarers on their ships.

The ITF promises a vigorous campaign against port deregulation plans that could force dock workers into a race to the bottom in wages and conditions.

"The ITF started this campaign against ports of convenience to deal with problems of privatization, which

displaces registered longshore workers with casual labor," Familathe said. "Unchecked, it could wipe out the standards of health and safety and allow the use of unskilled, untrained casual labor on the docks that we fought against throughout our history."

This process, the ITF says, could turn ships' crew into dockers and reduce dockers to casual laborers. The ITF spent more than five decades fighting the effects of the "flag of convenience" (FoC) scheme steamship companies imposed on seafarers shortly after WWII. Steamship companies registered their vessels in foreign countries with lax registration and labor laws. This corroded labor standards aboard ships. Union sailors were undercut by non-union ships. Steamship companies claimed they would have to re-flag or go out of business. For many sailors, the ancient craft of seafaring was reduced to a temp job aboard a floating sweatshop.

These same companies would impose this on longshore workers worldwide if they got the chance. But many FoC seafarers organized themselves with help from the ITF and many sailors now have ITF-approved labor agreements.

The ITF defines a port of convenience by a number of factors, including whether workers have the right to form effective unions; whether the UN's International Labor Organization conventions providing for the maintenance of a registry of dock workers and the protection of their jobs and the establishment of work safety codes with worker input is followed; and if there are seafarers or non-union dockers handling cargo.

Now, according to the ITF, some countries want to use the WTO to deregulate ports. This has been tried at the Tanjung Pelepas terminal in Malaysia, where dockers were casualized. Dockers at the port in Singapore, just a couple of miles away, soon felt the crunch as shipping companies Maersk-Sealand and Evergreen switched some work from Singapore to Tanjung, causing layoffs in Singapore. The result was clear—casualization created downward pressure on wages and work standards. The ILWU delegation met with Singapore dockers and compared working conditions.

"This is this kind of information the employers do not want us to share," Familathe said. "They think the oceans separate us. That's why

it's important we have regional meetings to exchange information."

—Tom Price

DEMONSTRATORS DENOUNCE SWEATSHOP SUPPLIERS TO LEVI STRAUSS, WAL-MART

Workers who make Levi's jeans for Wal-Mart in Haiti want to join a union. A score of anti-sweatshop activists marched to the Levi Strauss world headquarters in San Francisco Aug. 5 to ask the company why they shouldn't be allowed that right.

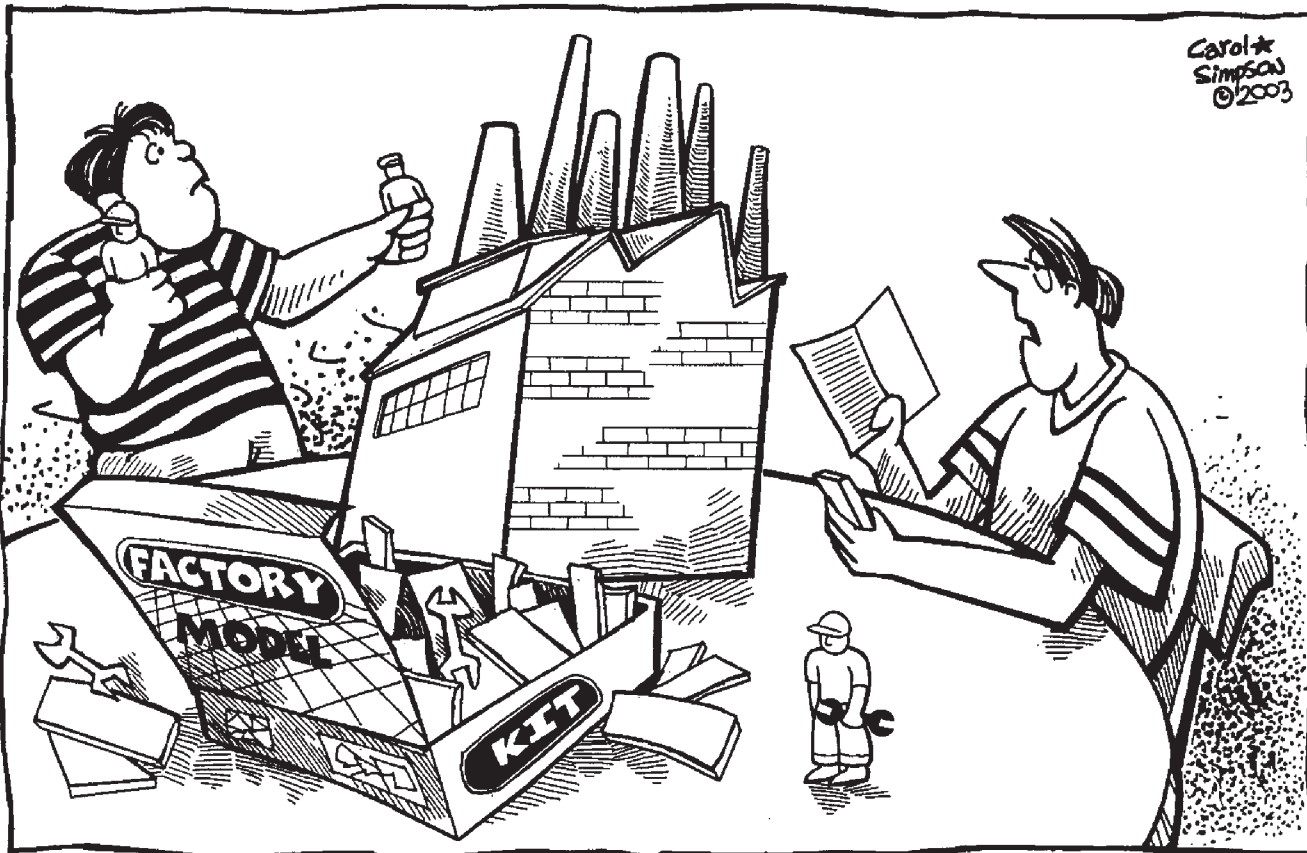
"Grupo M is making Levi's jeans in sweatshops for Wal-Mart. What's the lowest common denominator with these companies? Sweatshops and busting unions to keep labor costs down," Mike Dolan of the California Coalition for Fair Trade & Human Rights told the crowd.

Levi Strauss has a code of conduct for its suppliers, nearly all of which operate overseas. The code requires the contractors to respect freedom of association and the right to bargain collectively. Grupo M got a \$23 million loan from the World Bank to build its factory in Haiti. The terms of the loan require the company to live up to a similar code. In addition to union rights, protestors demanded rehiring of laid-off workers, the return of machinery moved out of the plant and an end to company violence. The workers' union has made similar demands.

Dolan held up a puppet of Grupo M's manager, Fernando Capellan, and asked Levi Strauss to send out someone to tell Fernando to live up to the code. Then Michael Kobori, Director of Levi's Global Code of Conduct Dept., came outside to speak to the demonstrators. Kobori said Levi Strauss told the owners of Grupo M to follow the code, and it was only a matter of time before they expected their subcontractor to comply.

"The Labor Council calls on Levi Strauss to adhere to its code and fix the problem—reinstate the fired workers and bargain in good faith with the union," San Francisco Labor Council Secretary-Treasurer Walter Johnson said to Kobori and the crowd.

"On June 4 soldiers of the Dominican Republic army crossed the nearby border and entered the Grupo M compound in Haiti," said U.C. Berkeley student Kirstin Jackson of United Students Against Sweatshops. "The 15 soldiers entered with the



"Okay, the final step says to dismantle the whole thing and ship the jobs overseas."

knowledge of the company security force and pointed their guns at 100 workers. Workers were ordered to leave the plant. Soldiers hit one man in the head with a rifle butt and a pregnant woman was thrown to the ground.

"Not only do the workers exist with this threat of violence daily, workers live with horrible labor conditions. They work 55-hour weeks and make \$12 a week. That's two dollars a day."

—Tom Price

KERRY TO GALLO: BARGAIN WITH UFW

Standing up for another embattled group of workers, Democratic presidential nominee John F. Kerry told Gallo Wineries to bargain in good faith with the

United Farm Workers, which represents Gallo workers in Sonoma, Calif.

Gallo's 400 wine grape workers have been toiling without a contract since last Nov. 1. Another bargaining session was scheduled for Aug. 31.

Faced with continued company stonewalling in the latest talks, the UFW launched a nationwide Internet campaign against Gallo. It generated 30,000 letters and e-mails to demanding the firm bargain seriously, UFW President Arturo Rodriguez said.

The key issues are wages and benefits for Gallo workers hired through labor contractors, as opposed to those who directly work for the firm.

UFW's three-year, now-expired contract gave the directly hired workers higher wages, health benefits, seniority rights, a grievance and arbitration procedure, eight paid holidays a year and paid vacations. The contractor-hired workers got only the raise and grievance and arbitration procedures.

The Internet petition signers promised to boycott Gallo unless it bargains in good faith. The Internet request also prompted Kerry's signed letter. UFW has endorsed Kerry.

"I support collective bargaining agreements that provide fair wages, good health and pension benefits and conditions that improve the lives of working families," the Massachusetts senator wrote Gallo Vice President Matt Gallo.

After praising Gallo Wineries for contracts with unions "in its other winemaking operations," Kerry said: "I urge you to move quickly to settle this dispute."

Reaching agreement with UFW would give Gallo a positive image which "depends upon a good relationship with your workers that reflects standards of fairness," Kerry said. He also said reaching a pact would help Gallo economically.

"The wine industry should be united to compete effectively in the world market, and to achieve that unity it is critical that Gallo Wine Company value the contributions of its workers and ensure they have a voice on the job," Kerry concluded.

UFW's old Gallo contract took five years to reach and was won despite an illegal, company-sponsored decertification campaign.

—Press Associates, Inc.

Pension plans in the corporate crosshairs

By Jack Rasmus

Recently United Airlines announced it will abandon the pension plans for its 120,000 employees and retirees, provoking an announcement by U.S. Airways of plans to withhold pension payments, threats by ATA Airlines and Delta Airlines to follow suit, and sharply increasing the likelihood of a chain reaction of pension plan failures in the airlines and other industries.

United Airlines' action directly followed a decision by Congress earlier this summer not to provide another loan to the company at the taxpayers' expense. And it dramatically raises the possibility that the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation (PBGC), a federal corporation that insures pensions, will itself be forced into bankruptcy should it have to assume the nearly \$8.3 billion liability of United's unfunded pension obligations (plus additional \$10-\$20 billion of other airlines' liabilities).

The PBGC was created by the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA), the main federal legislation regulating pensions. It currently pays retirement benefits for members of around 3,300 pension plans that have ended. Though the Secretaries of Labor, Commerce and Treasury comprise its Board of Directors, it is not funded by the federal government. Instead, it gets funds from insurance premiums paid by around 31,000 participating pension plans, from investments and from the terminated plans.

As a consequence of the Bush administration's decision this year to allow companies with unfunded pension plans to forego \$80 billion in payments currently due and required by law to bring their plans into balance, the PBGC now faces total unfunded pension liabilities of more than \$278 billion. Should the PBGC itself fail under the imminent, large scale abandonment of group pension plans by United and other corporations, it will certainly create tremendous political pressure on Congress to bail it out. This would mean yet another huge windfall for corporations at the expense of the American worker and taxpayer.

Less certain, but no less ominous, will be the impact of such a pension crisis and string of failures on the already faltering U.S. economic recovery, on a federal budget deficit currently hovering around \$500 billion before bailout and on a job market in decline once again.

But the current pension crisis is not the result of short-term negligence by one company or even one industry. It is a crisis that has been brewing for some time, one the Bush administration and many U.S. corporations have been working quietly to bring about.

THE 401(k) PLAN RIP-OFF

American workers have access to four kinds of pensions. First there is the public Social Security system every worker and employer contributes to with payroll taxes. Then there are two types of group pension plans: defined-benefit plans and defined-contribution plans. And finally there are individualized savings accounts where employees pay into a 401(k), an IRA or a similar personal pension plan. Social Security and defined-benefit pensions provide a guaranteed level of benefits upon retirement, while defined-contribution and individual savings account plans do not. The payments made to defined-contribution or individual savings plans get invested in stocks or bonds. These plans play Wall Street roulette with retirement funds.

Corporations and financial institutions prefer individualized plans because they can rip off high fees and raise administrative costs, lower the



benefit amount at will, borrow from the accounts when they want, pressure workers to buy the company's own stock, manipulate the plan's funds to make the company appear more profitable than it is, and have workers assume all the risks if the company or stock and bond markets fall.

Administrative fees for managing a 401(k) alone can amount to a huge sum and significantly impact a worker's retirement. For example, the typical fee to run a 401(k) averages two to four percent of the worker's contribution. If a worker had \$100,000 in a 401(k), earning eight percent over 30 years, every one percent reduction in the two to four percent fee charged would mean an extra \$215,000 in the worker's account upon retirement.

Employees at Enron Corporation, who lost more than \$2 billion when that company went bankrupt in 2002, were in a typical 401(k) plan. Enron management pulled its own money out when they knew the company was going under, while they "froze" the accounts for their employees. They weren't allowed to withdraw anything until the plan was essentially bankrupt.

But it's not just Enron workers who have been victims of 401(k) plans. Between 2000 and 2002 workers who had their money in 401(k) plans saw their retirement savings shrink on average by 20-40 percent in only two years.

Individual retirement plans based on 401(k)s and similar programs are largely the product of the last 20 years. A series of laws was passed under Reagan in 1982 and 1987 that gave a big boost to 401(k)s. At the same time under Reagan, a corporate offensive was launched to break up and dismantle defined-benefit pension plans.

The result has been a major shift from union and group pension plans to individual retirement accounts. Very few households had 401(k) retirement plans in 1983. By 1995 this had risen to 23 percent. Today more than 62 percent have such plans despite the various risks associated with them. In contrast, in 1981 more than 37 percent of all American workers were covered under some kind of group pension plan. Today the number is less than 20 percent.

GROUP PENSION PLANS IN THE CROSS-HAIRS

George Bush, U.S. Federal Reserve Chair Alan Greenspan and other con-

servatives recently declared that privatizing and breaking up Social Security will be high on the Bush agenda in a second term. Social Security alone will generate \$1.1 trillion in surplus between now and 2018. Wall Street, the banks and corporations want this huge sum transferred into 401(k) plans so it will be available to make offshore investments, to stimulate stock market sales and to fund other business ventures.

But the target is not just Social Security. Group pension plans—especially union-negotiated defined benefit plans with total funds of \$350 billion on hand—are also in the Bush-corporate crosshairs.

For more than two decades, from Reagan through Bush, corporations have been terminating and undermining group pension plans. Between 1974 and 2003, more than 160,000 defined benefit plans have gone under in the U.S. Some 65,000 failed between 1975 and 1985. Most went down during the Reagan era of 1981-85, casualties of the "runaway shops," corporate restructuring and "rust-belt" of the time.

From 1986 to 2002 another 95,000 plans failed, as unionized manufacturing jobs continued to disappear due to government "free trade" policies and corporate outsourcing and offshoring. This trend was exacerbated as corporations in newer services and technology industries increasingly opted for 401(k) plans. Courts and legislatures throughout the 1990s made 401(k)s more attractive with tax breaks and other advantages—as they simultaneously continued to tighten the screws on traditional group pension plans.

According to the PBGC, there were 112,000 defined-benefit pension plans in 1983. Today there are only around 31,000 such plans.

CURRENT CRISIS IN GROUP PENSION PLANS

Most American workers covered by plans that went broke over the last 20 years lost much of their accrued pensions. They were forced to cash out, receiving only a small part of what they contributed to the plan, or had to migrate to 401(k)s or other plans with far fewer benefits.

Yet the current crisis in group pension plans is far from over. Some 45 million workers and retirees are at risk, a million who are getting their pension benefits from the PBGC as well as 44 million in plans insured by

PBGC. Today \$1.5 trillion worth of pension benefits insured by the PBGC are exposed because the PBGC itself is about to go broke.

The corporate-government strategy of the last 20 years has succeeded in eliminating so many defined-benefit plans that too few may exist today to keep the PBGC afloat. As the number of pension plans participating in the PBGC shrinks, the costs get higher for those plans remaining. But they can opt out of the PBGC and increasing numbers have. Nearly 80 percent of all defined-benefit pension plans participated in the PBGC in 1980. By 2000 only 53 percent participated and many more have dropped out since.

As participation in the PBGC evaporates, the corporation will itself become insolvent at some point. By 2004 the deficit in the PBGC fund was more than \$10 billion and rising at a rate of more than \$1.5 billion each month.

But this is just a ripple. A pension tsunami is taking shape and currently heading toward the retirement coastline. In an emergency report issued June 2004, the PBGC estimated that the more than 1,050 companies with pension plans under-funded by \$50 million or more had a total under-funded liability of \$278.6 billion at the end of 2003. This compares to only \$18.4 billion as recently as 1999, and it doesn't even include companies with under-funded liabilities of less than \$50 million. The total under-funding for all pensions covered by the PBGC came to about \$400 billion as of the end of 2003.

The Bush response to this growing crisis has been to give corporations with troubled pension plans a "contribution holiday." In April 2004, it let them change the way they calculate their fund obligations for the next two years. This "paper-fix" move will save these corporations \$80 billion that they would otherwise have had to put into their pension plans.

THE BUSH-CORPORATE PLAN FOR TRANSFORMING SOCIAL SECURITY & GROUP PENSIONS

Bush plans to talk up a phony crisis in Social Security and make workers believe the false charge that its fund will run out of money to pay for future retirees' benefits by the end of the next decade. Should Bush get a second term, the next step will be to pass legislation early in 2005 allowing workers to invest their payroll tax deductions, now going into the Social Security fund, into private personal savings accounts like 401(k)s and IRAs—all of which will be controlled by corporations and banks.

The same legislation will then provide a carrot and stick. The carrot will offer workers tax credits for their payroll tax deductions they transfer to privately run 401(k) plans. The stick will raise retirement levels and lower Social Security benefits (because there now will really be less money in the Social Security fund). This will make workers wait longer to retire and reduce benefits, creating a strong incentive for workers to consider diverting their payroll tax deductions from Social Security into the tax credit-enabled 401(k)s. While there is no real crisis in Social Security funding today, the Bush plan is to create one.

A real crisis already exists for group pension plans, and Bush's plan for them resembles his Social Security scheme. First, the current crisis in defined benefit pension plans will be allowed to worsen. Indeed, the Bush administration has been passing rules for the past two years designed to speed their decline, including one that prohibits unions from negotiating changes to their plans if they are in

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GETTING ORGANIZED

LANDFILL WORKERS SCORE STRIKING WIN

LIVERMORE, CA—All they wanted was union recognition. They struck July 16 to get it. Their boss locked them out for two anxious hours. But the workers at Republic Services' Vasco Road Landfill held on.

"Every hour we're out here is food out of our kids' mouths," said Gigi Velles, the office worker at the landfill. "We want to work. We just want what's fair, nothing more and nothing less."

Three weeks earlier, the workers asked management to recognize ILWU warehouse Local 6 as their bargaining representative. Fifteen out of 16 workers signed a petition demanding that the company respect their decision. Florida-based Republic Services, which employs 13,000 people at landfills and other waste management sites nationwide, declined to respond.

Most other landfill workers in the area work under contracts with Local 6 or the Teamsters. All do better than the Vasco Road crews.

"We need a union because we need better wages and medical care to support our families," said Antonio Flores, a heavy equipment operator. Local 6 members at Altamont Landfill, just five miles away, earn \$6.28 per hour more in medical and pension benefits alone. Heavy equipment operators in Local 6 make \$24.30 per hour. Without a contract to standardize pay, some HEOs at Vasco Road make as little as \$18.62 per hour and others as much as \$24.39.

Pressure from Republic's customers backed up the workers' direct action for recognition. The cities of Berkeley, Livermore and Pleasanton all contract with Republic to take their non-recyclable garbage. Trash from Berkeley accounts for about one-fourth of the material dumped at the Vasco Road site. Berkeley Mayor Tom Bates wrote to the company supporting the workers and offering to help verify signatures in a card-check recognition process.

"Berkeley is a major customer of the landfill and we certainly hope to see a prompt and fair resolution of the issue," Bates said. Still the company didn't respond.

By 9 a.m. July 16, trucks coming into the landfill met a line of pickets. Local 6 members from the East Bay hiring hall marched with the Vasco Road workers, many still in orange safety vests and coveralls. All but one of the bargaining unit members on the job that day joined in.

"Local 6 on strike! *Huelga!* *Huelga!*" they yelled. "Turn it around, brother," they urged the truck drivers. Many union drivers did just that, including the SEIU members who drive the City of Berkeley trucks. After an hour they pulled the picket. They reported back to work, only to be told to go home. Some glum, some defiant, everyone sweating in the hot morning, they headed back to the road and threw up the line again.

Local 6 Secretary-Treasurer Fred Pecker had a serious chat with management. By noon, Republic agreed to open communications with the union. Managers came down to the line and asked each person politely if they were ready to go back to work.

Two-and-a-half weeks later, the company signed a recognition agreement.

"We felt real good about it," said Frank Stanich, a fueler and preventive maintenance technician. "Everyone was glad it came as quick as it did."

The workers have selected a bargaining team and begun developing proposals. A preliminary meeting with management took place Aug. 24.

—Marcy Rein



Several trucks turned around on twisting, treacherous Vasco Road rather than cross the line of landfill workers on strike to get ILWU Local 6 recognized.

PARTNERSHIP OPENS DOOR FOR KAISER SECURITY

"We have a voice now," said veteran security officer and Kaiser shop steward Tommy Rudd. "Before the union, we didn't."

Rudd and other members of the security staff at Portland-area Kaiser medical facilities ratified a first contract with ILWU security officers Local 28 July 15, not quite two months after they voted to join the union.

Before their vote, the officers stood out as the last non-union group at Kaiser in Portland. Their co-workers, from RNs to housekeepers, all belonged to unions that participated in the health-care giant's "Labor Management Partnership." With the partnership in place, the officers' drive unrolled without the union-bashing, lying and stalling by management that usually scar elections and negotiations.

Kaiser forged the partnership with five international unions and 26 locals in 1997, after a series of bitter contract fights and strikes. The partnership commits the company to neutrality in organizing campaigns and creates labor-management committees at all levels of operation. In return, the unions agreed to help market Kaiser services.

The possibility of more input on the job appealed to the Portland Kaiser security officers. For years their raises have lagged behind those given to union workers. They've watched management heap on new tasks, contract out their work and shuffle their shifts.

"Because we're not union, everything piles on us, and they're not getting input from people doing the work," organizing committee member Debi Barbour said during the drive.

For example, the security dispatcher became a "facilities dispatcher," handling calls for housekeeping, biomedical engineering and landscaping as well as security. Officers in the field depend on the dispatcher for information and felt this overload put them at risk.

"People have quit because they feel they can't do the job the way they need to," said Barbour, who is now chief steward.

Security personnel handle a wide range of situations at the hospital and clinics. They deal with gunshot victims and distraught family members in the emergency room, investigate thefts and escort patients and staff to their cars in the evening. They do suicide watch in the psych ward and even keep an eye on co-workers who fear abusive spouses or partners may pursue them at work.

Still, Kaiser was downsizing the security workforce and filling in the gaps with contractors.

"They were using contractors more and our people less," said Jerry Hardman, also a shop steward. "Every year there was the fear we'd be wholesale contracted out."

Hardman and the other organizing committee members first met with ILWU International Organizer Vanessa Veselka in February. After a few months of quiet base-building, they got 50 of their 57 co-workers signed on to a recognition petition and authorization cards in just two-and-a-half days. As they prepared a delegation to management, the other unions in the partnership—SEIU, the Oregon Federation of Nurses and Health Professionals and the Oregon Nurses Association—contacted hospital higher-ups on their behalf.

Management wouldn't go with card-check recognition, but agreed to stay neutral and have the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service run an election. On May 17, the officers voted 46 to 5 to join Local 28, which also represents the watchmen at the Port of Portland.

Negotiations began less than a week later, using an "interest-based bargaining" process. In this type of negotiations, the two sides start with issues they agree on, get those off the table, then move to the harder items.

"Everybody treated everybody else in a very professional manner," Rudd said.

They emerged with a deal that gave them 13 percent wage increases over three years and 20 percent hikes in pension. Kaiser agreed to bring subcontracted work back into the unit and to bring uniform-cleaning in-house, which will save about \$100 per month for full-time officers.

The security officers voted to join the partnership coalition, so they now enjoy the strong job security protections in the national partnership agreement. They also sit on committees to hire new people for their department, make the schedules and plan for a new clinic.

"We will be able to raise security issues ahead of time, have some say on safety and let other employees know more of what we do," Barbour said. "We're very excited about that."

—Marcy Rein

CONTRACTING SCAMS TAKE HITS

Two recent decisions by state and federal agencies slapped courier companies that "converted" their employees to independent contractors. Since the ILWU began organizing with bike

messengers and drivers five years ago, several companies have used this scheme to cut costs and undercut unionizing efforts.

Employers no longer have to pay workers' comp and disability for contractors and the law bars them from organizing. Contractors have to pay more taxes and lose the protection of wage and hour laws. They aren't even guaranteed a minimum wage.

King Courier reclassified its workers as "independent contractors" in September 2002. King's bicycle messengers began organizing to protest the conversion. The company responded by firing four active union supporters.

Three of the four challenged the conversion in filings at the California Division of Labor Standards Enforcement, with help from the ILWU. They claimed they were employees and not contractors and the company owed them money for missed meal periods and breaks as well as unpaid equipment reimbursements and overtime. The state upheld their claim.

In June 22, 2004 ruling, state hearing officer Thomas Nagle found King owed the plaintiffs between \$10,000 and \$12,000 each and held the company, the two owners and the National Independent Contractor Association (NICA) all liable.

King, like many messenger companies, turned to NICA to help with their contractor "conversion." NICA runs a payroll service, offers health insurance and workers' comp, and advises employers on how to run their scam without running afoul of the law.

King appealed, so the case will go San Francisco County Superior Court.

"This ruling was a good step, but there's a lot of work to be done," said Aaron LaLonde, one of the plaintiffs. "Workers all over are still having their benefits taken away by cheap employers who make them ICs, and that's a definite move backwards on workers' rights."

First Legal Support Services illegally converted its employees to contractors to sidestep an ILWU organizing drive in November 2000. The company also threatened, harassed and fired people for supporting the union, bribed them to renounce it and threatened to close if it prevailed.

The ILWU filed unfair labor practice charges, which the Board upheld. The administrative law judge denounced the contractor conversions but recommended only mild remedies. He ordered the company to make workers whole for any losses they suffered and post a notice promising not to break the law again.

The union and the Board's General Counsel appealed to the Board in Washington, D.C. They argued the union had majority support in 2000 and the company's crimes were so serious it should be ordered to bargain a contract.

Two years later, a three-member NLRB panel returned a party-line decision. The two Republican appointees turned down the bargaining order on narrow technical grounds. The one Democrat argued strongly for it.

The AFL-CIO Executive Council cited this case in its stinging rebuke to the Bush-era Board.

"The Bush Board's decision in *First Legal Support Services LLC* on June 30, 2004, telegraphs to employers that they have little to lose when they violate workers' rights," said Council members in an Aug. 11 statement.

Over the nearly four years since First Legal flouted the law to stop the union, the original organizing committee members have all resigned or been fired. One committed suicide.

—Marcy Rein

IEB prepares for November election

The ILWU International Executive Board, meeting in San Francisco Aug. 26 and 27, reviewed the union's finances, considered the new organizing strategies and finalized plans for the union's work on the November elections.

International Secretary-Treasurer Willie Adams and the Trustees revised the union's budget to reflect additional administrative costs that were not known at the time the International Convention adopted the 2004 budget. The increases will mostly be covered by the per capita of an expanding membership, especially the registration of new longshore workers.

The union's National Organizing Committee, overseen by International Vice President, Mainland Bob McEllrath and International Vice President, Hawaii Wesley Furtado, has hired back former Organizing Director Peter Olney to run the program again. Olney outlined his department's new strategic approach to organizing.

The program will build on and amplify the power in the ILWU's current jurisdictions, selecting targets where the union has leverage and where it will build further leverage. The International Officers will form an Organizing Committee composed of IEB members and local leaders from all areas and divisions to get



San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom (left) receives an ILWU hook pin from International Secretary-Treasurer Willie Adams (center) and International President Jim Spinosa (right). Newsom stopped by the IEB meeting to thank the union for its work and support in the effort to defeat George W. Bush. "Keep the faith in this fight," he urged the board members.

their input and support for the program. The activities will be coordinated, going after coastwise targets whenever possible, and in a disciplined and accountable fashion.

"We want to go after numbers that make sense in a program you understand and can ask questions about," Olney told the board.

The board backed up its action of last April endorsing Sen. John Kerry for President by unanimously passing a Statement of Policy explaining the union's support for Kerry (see statement below).

Local 63 Secretary Peter Peyton laid out the union's plans for the November election. The ILWU, in

coordination with the AFL-CIO, will be sending about 50 members to swing states to help with Kerry's campaigns there, as well as concentrating member activity in Oregon and Washington (see story page 5).

Longshore Local 10 and Northern California area IEB member Lawrence Thibeaux presented a resolution asking the board to endorse the Million Worker March, a non-partisan demonstration with pro-worker demands scheduled for Oct. 17 in Washington, D.C. One of the action's initiators, Local 10 Executive Board member Clarence Thomas, argued the case for the union's support. The march would support neither Kerry or Bush, Thomas said, since its wide-ranging demands of universal health care, workers' rights and ending the Iraq war would still be needed no matter which one won the election.

Various board members opposed the motion, arguing that while they supported the positions of the march, organizing for an October event would divert energy and resources from what the International Convention decided was the union's number one priority—defeating Bush. The board decisively turned down the proposal, and a companion one to donate \$150,000 to organizing the march, on a voice vote.

Statement of Policy: ILWU endorses Kerry for president

Not since the days of Senator Joe McCarthy have U.S. workers faced a foe so intent on destroying and dismantling the American labor movement as the administration of President George W. Bush. Every event, no matter how tragic or perverse, from Sept. 11th to the Iraq war, is used as an excuse to harass and intimidate working people not only in this country, but around the world.

From his tax cuts for the rich, free trade policies, and international excursions alienating many former friends, Bush has destroyed in a few years what took decades to build. His wars harming innocent civilians over-

seas and his no-bid contracts for his corporate friends are virtually bankrupting the nation. He has taken the U.S. from the largest budget surplus in history to its largest deficit in history, and then used that as an excuse to shred the social safety net for working people.

Bush's policies have done more damage to the working people and environment of this country and the world in three years than any other administration ever dreamed of. The big question is, "Can the American labor movement, (and society in general) survive another four years of his policies of war, repression and depres-

sion?" The choice we face this November is clear: civilization or barbarism. John Kerry or George W. Bush?

Understanding this, the democratically elected delegates to the ILWU's 32nd International Convention voted last year in San Francisco to make Bush's defeat the union's number one priority.

The ILWU, in conjunction with the AFL-CIO and the entire American labor movement, recognizes that at this time we must unite to endorse and support Democratic Senator John Kerry for President of the United States. Kerry's policies may not totally coincide with those of the ILWU or the labor movement, but the alternative is simply too destructive to imagine.

Kerry's 90 percent AFL-CIO voting record in his 18-year career and his support for workers' rights to organize and card-check recognition in organizing drives is clear. He opposes the Bush plan to eliminate overtime pay, he supports ergonomic safeguards on the job, and has co-sponsored legislation to outlaw striker replacement and index the minimum wage to inflation and extend and improve unemployment benefits.

Unlike Bush, Kerry doesn't support the outsourcing of American jobs, and is proposing to eliminate tax breaks that encourage corporations to move them overseas. Instead, he proposes utilizing tax policy to encourage the creation of American jobs, especially in manufacturing.

One of the most significant of all policies facing organized labor and collective bargaining in general is preserving existing levels of health care benefits negotiated over many years. The ILWU's International

Convention committed support for a national single-payer health care program, and mandated the union to back other measures necessary to improve health care coverage for everyone. John Kerry has committed to making health care affordable for the vast majority of Americans, far better than anything the Bush Administration has proposed. Kerry's opposition of the Bush's proposal to privatize Medicare and push seniors into HMOs, as well as his support to expand prescription drug benefits without reducing coverage for those who have it in their union contracts is critical.

John Kerry supports expanded funding for public education, including higher pay for teachers. He opposes the concept of vouchers that are nothing more than a band-aid aiding only a small segment of society.

While Kerry supports free trade agreements, he at least says he'll require strong labor and environmental standards in all future negotiations, another huge difference from the Bush Administration.

The labor movement has incorporated a tendency to quickly and easily trade off its endorsements, money and volunteers without getting sufficient guarantees for its positions in return. If Kerry is elected president, the ILWU commits to holding him accountable for all promises to labor and to push much further, especially in issues surrounding health care, outsourcing, port security and free trade (especially in the upcoming CAFTA agreement).

The ILWU International Executive Board hereby goes on record fully endorsing the candidacy of John Kerry for President of the United States.

PENSION ASSAULT . . . continued from page 8

financial trouble. And there are the new arbitrary rules concerning "cash-balance plans."

Cash-balance plans represent an offensive recently launched by the largest corporations with defined benefit plans. Corporations are using cash-balance plans to do an end-run around union-negotiated defined-benefit plans and convert them into defined contribution plans. More than 40 of the 100 largest corporations with defined-benefit plans have gone this route in recent years.

In cash-balance plans, an employer credits a worker's account with two set amounts each year, one based on salary and one based on an interest rate pegged to the Treasury bill rate or some other index. Cash-balance plans can pay out as a lump sum or a monthly annuity after retirement. Workers (and managers) are given the option to cash out their benefits before retirement, though they almost always take a loss when they do so. Once they cash out they can invest in 401(k)s offered by the company.

Cashing out weakens the plan by shrinking the total pot of money available and so puts those who don't cash out at growing risk. This provides an incentive for those initially reluctant to cash out to do so. The result is a snowball effect that hastens the demise of the plan—just what management wanted from the outset since it allows them to save on pension contributions and eliminates liabilities.

If all these schemes continue, an even larger number of defined-benefit plans will become financially unstable and have to be taken over by the PBGC. And as the PBGC's losses accumulate, and stable plans continue to opt out, it will be unable to survive without a massive government bailout. When this point is reached, the Bush administration will recommend legislation similar to that planned for Social Security—legislation that will allow, or even require, companies and workers in defined benefit plans to transfer their contributions and/or their remaining accrued funds into 401(k) and similar individual retirement accounts.

The Republicans and conservatives in Washington are intent on using the crisis to provide more handouts and subsidies for their corporate friends at the expense of the public. And they will attempt to use the crisis as an excuse for a radical restructuring of the pension system in America.

Jack Rasmus
National Writers Union,
UAW 1981, AFL-CIO

This article is an excerpt from Jack Rasmus's forthcoming book, THE WAR AT HOME: The Corporate Offensive in America From Reagan to Bush, which is available for pre-ordering from his website: <http://www.kyklosproductions.com>, along with offerings of other plays, books, music and video.

POLITICAL ACTION FUND

The ILWU Political Action Fund has a goal of raising more than \$500,000 for the union's work on the November 2004 elections and for contributions to pro-worker candidates' campaigns. The International officers and the Coast Committee are asking all members to donate \$50 each to the fund. All contributions are voluntary, are not part of your union dues or a condition of union membership. You can give more or less than the officers suggest—all contributions are valued—and there are no reprisals for giving less or not participating in the union's political activities. Contributions not tax deductible.

To satisfy federal election laws, please include with your check your name, address, occupation and employer. The ILWU International wants you to list your local number and registration number to track participation rates. Retirees are not eligible to donate to the ILWU PAF. Checks should be payable to: ILWU-PAF.

Donations should be sent to: ILWU-PAF, 1188 Franklin St., 4th Floor, S.F., CA 94109

Bloody Thursday remembered along the Coast

SAN FRANCISCO—Nearly 200 people gathered at longshore Local 10’s hall to remember the first Bloody Thursday, exactly 70 years before on July 5, 1934. This year the membership also honored two ILWU pioneers, Bill Chester and former Coast Arbitrator Sam Kagel.

As the ILWU Drill Team stood at crisp attention, Local 10 past President Joe Mosely read the proclamation rededicating the hiring hall in honor of Chester, who served his union during five decades and was the first Black International officer. Later on, Local 10 President Henry Graham read the proclamation making Kagel an honorary member of the local.

Benjamin Johnson, son of Local 10 stalwart Joe Johnson and a Local 10 B-registrant, spoke from the steps of the hall, with silhouettes of the fallen workers drawn on the sidewalk below.

“I’m proud to stand where my father stood for so many years honoring Bloody Thursday,” Johnson said. “He always believed the union showed that character, not color, was the criteria for respectability.”

—Tom Price

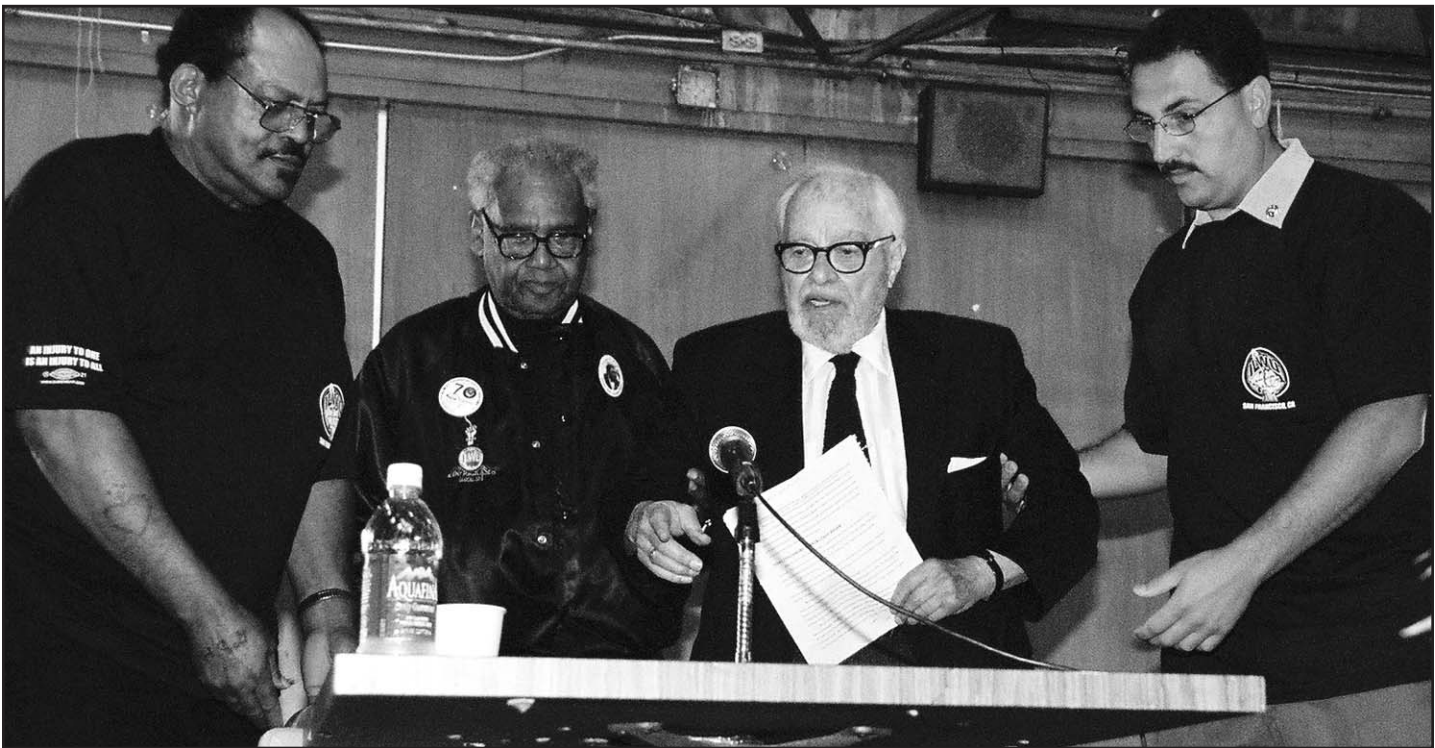
SAN PEDRO—Peck Park in San Pedro brimmed with ILWU families for the remembrance of Bloody Thursday July 5. As many as 3,000 turned out, according to the event chair, longshore Local 13’s Dave Serrato.

It was the 70th anniversary, Serrato said, but still a family event with rides, clowns, old time car shows, music and a few speeches. Guests included LA Mayor Hahn and his sister Janice Hahn, City Council member for the harbor area.

“Ruth Brown volunteered, and the Local 13 ID casual longshore workers worked hard for the event,” Serrato said. “But Bloody Thursday isn’t about the food, it’s not about the bands—it’s about the men who died and the old timers who built this union. I believe this is the strongest union in the world, and it’s up to us to hold it together, because it looks like times are coming back to 1934.”

—Tom Price

PORTLAND—The Columbia River area’s annual Bloody Thursday picnic, sponsored by longshore Local 8, drew record numbers this year. Close to 500 members, friends and relations from Locals 8, 5, 21, 40, 92 and the Pensioners’ Club came down to historic Oaks Amusement Park in Southeast Portland. Built by the



Former Coast Arbitrator Sam Kagel (second from right) is made an honorary member of longshore Local 10 at the Bay Area’s Bloody Thursday commemoration. He is flanked by Local 10 President Henry Graham (left) Bay Area Pensioners President Joe Mosley (second from left) and Local 10 Secretary-Treasurer John Castanho.

Columbia River, the park features a roller-skating rink built in 1912 as well as an assortment of rides.

Picnickers took time out from the fun and the spread of hot dogs, chili, watermelon, corn-on-the-cob and ice cream for a short ceremony. The area locals traditionally honor the memory of the Bloody Thursday martyrs by floating a wreath of flowers down the river.

State Rep. Frank Shields (D-Portland) offered an invocation before the wreath-tossing. Oregon AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Brad Witt spoke briefly, as did Columbia River Pensioners’ Chair Evertt Roberts and two veterans of the ’34 strike, Russell Espedel and Marvin Ricks. Roberts noted some similarities between conditions today and those in the years leading up to the Big Strike.

“The party in charge now is using almost the same rhetoric Hoover did, and he didn’t produce anything,” Roberts said. “Lots of people are making a lot of money, lots are making very little and some aren’t making any.”

—MER

SEATTLE—ILWU locals in the Seattle region remembered Bloody Thursday with a family outing at Vasa Park on the shores of Lake Sammamish. Nearly 400 members, friends, families and retirees attended.

Pensioner Del Castle, who edits the

Rusty Hook newsletter, spoke on the history of Bloody Thursday. Joe Wenzl spoke on how important it was to win the next presidential election. Leona Cunningham raffled off an ILWU quilt she made and donated the proceeds to the Plateau Outreach charity.

Then the families had a picnic while jazz, bluegrass and country bands played. The park provides facilities for children and launch sites for boats.

“We had one of the greatest turnouts in years,” longshore Local 19 Recording Secretary Curt Cunningham said. “We had a lot of volunteers and we all pulled together so no one had to do all the work. That’s because of the solidarity among us.”

—Tom Price

STOCKTON—Longshore Local 54 married the annual commemoration of Bloody Thursday with a small-town summer dream, marking the day with a picnic at the Stockton Ports baseball game.

The Ports, Class A affiliate of the Texas Rangers, play for the California League in old Oak Park, where the lush lawns and spreading trees evoke a movie set.

The local reserved the park’s barbeque area and bought tickets for 400 people. Local members chowed down on tri-tip and hot dogs, baked beans

and potato salad with family and friends before the game.

“We want our families involved in our union life more, and we want to be part of the community,” Local 54 Secretary-Treasurer Gene Davenport said. “We haven’t been too community-oriented before, and we want people to know we’re here and we want good things for the community.”

“July 5 has been an important day in the history of the longshoremen since 1934,” the ballpark announcer noted in the sixth inning, but the home team hit the field before he could explain why.

The blistering day faded to pleasant warmth as the cotton-candy sunset came on. Davenport raffled off more than 100 items, from Bloody Thursday T-shirts to balls and hats and bobble-head dolls. Sitting in the barbeque area put you close enough to hear the “thunk” of the ball hitting gloves as the players tossed it around the diamond.

The Ports blew a five-run lead in the seventh when the Visalia Oaks hammered them with an eight-run inning. But the home team battled back, scoring two in the eighth and clinching in the bottom of the ninth. Stockton won 11-10 after three hours and 43 minutes of play.

—Marcy Rein

Longshore retired, deceased and survivors

RECENT RETIREES:

Local 4—Anthony Hertz, Edward Quick; **Local 8**—Theodore Perez **Local 10**—James Neal, Lawrence Prince, James P. McKenna, Gary Rueb, Frank Cooper, Addison Hicks Jr.; **Local 13**—Ray A. Peyton, Donald Spainhower, James E. Wheeler, Alex Naranjo Jr., Frank E. Sanchez, Kendall Tucker, William Moore, Raul S. Ruiz, Ronie Hernandez, Gilbert Guerra, Alvin Patow, Rigoberto B. Martinez, Vince Kordich, Jose M. Madrid, Antonio Gentile, Robet Gjetley, Thad Malone Jr.; **Local 19**—Jerry Hoover, Adelbert Mills, Charles Keppner, Samuel Puailihau Jr, Gary E. Johnson, Delbert Bates; **Local 21**—Clyde Wilcox; **Local 23**—Walter Rendell III, Frank Caliguri, David Bartholomew, Harvey Wilson; **Local 25**—Fred Norg; **Local 34**—Howard Simpson, James Wenster, Robert Bombarde; **Local 40**—Richard Campbell, Robert King; **Local 50**—August Mason; **Local 51**—Dennis Whitney; **Local 52**—Edward Tillman, John M. Caso, Joseph P. Sullivan; **Local 63**—David J. Crockett, Michael Downs, Claude Harrison, Frank Estes, Frank J. Franko, J. D. Wade, Franklin McMahon, Shirley Brief; **Local 91**—Shirlie Hornes; **Local 92**—Gary Duback, Russell Fowler; **Local 94**—Daniel Potts, William Strube, Antonio Morales, Gene Hilbert, Charles Huggins,

Lloyd Gadlin, Mario Albano; **Local 98**—William Jurasin, Blaine Woodward.

DECEASED:

Local 4—Fugman William; **Local 8**—Orville Rose (June), John Sukurski (Deloris), Henry Lunde (Margaret), Michael Fisch (Agnes), Harold Rogers, John Candioto (Julia), Frank Pryor (Dolores), Farrel Hanson (Annette), Brian Carver (Deborah), Norman Lowrey, Bernard Jefferies; **Local 10**—Purtle Cook (Myrtle), Joe Falcon (Albina), Joseph Sorentino (Marti), Andy Avaloz (Louise), Warren Cuthbert, Manuel de Sa (Elaine), Palmris Scardacci, Albert Fuller (Mattie), Willie Cross (Dorothy), Kenneth Mollart (Canzada), John Howard (John Jr.), Terry Nichols (Chelsea and Tyler), Charles Irwin, Willie McDonald; **Local 13**—Hoy Hoover (Esther); **Local 13**—Gary Mann (Aletha), Nick Fistanich (Mary), Izidor Brunac (Dorothy), Roger Nieto (Lucy), Lyle Putty (Annette), Herman Moreno (Jeanne), Francisco Z. Hernandez (Juanita), Frank Miller (Marion), Albert Brown (Janice), Harry Lynn (Ana), John Gilbert (Judy), Richard Mraz (Adriana), John Kanehl (Donna), Peter Tolich (Ruth), Harry Collins (Nancy), Robert C. Collins, Elmer Jones, Marijan Pesic (Rina), Saunoo Toavalu (Faatapepe); **Local 14**—Orlando Rossiter

(Judith); **Local 19**—Joe Waldean (Oline Margrete), Robert Griffin (Yolanda), Lester Dorris (Gloria), Steven Popovitch, George Skinner Sr. (Diana), Herbert Lenz (Irene); **Local 21**—James Herron, Gilbert Kimber (Evelyn), James Herron (Samuel), Archie Brown (Ora); **Local 23**—David Lane (Calleen), Phillip Lelli (Joann), Albert Foundation (Martina), Allen Tuller (Magdalena); **Local 27**—Clair Newell (Anna), Loren Cooke (Cherrie), Leroy Jagger (Helene); **Local 29**—John Wirick (Marguerite), Albert Urso (Bonnie); **Local 34**—Arthur Rosenbrock (Jeanette), Henry Cirincione (Mary), Francis Zmak (Sonja), Ralph Farbman, Donald Matsui (Ronnie), Stephen Ryan; **Local 52**—Carl Marsh (Emily); **Local 63**—Edward Kohal (Carmen), Paul Sweeney (Brianna), Edward Kohal (Carmen), Paul Aranda; **Local 75**—Jack Kefalas (Frances), Henry Reaves (Bessie); **Local 91**—Lawrence Young (Lucille); **Local 92**—Dick Cule (Julia), Norman Davis (Ruth); **Local 94**—Corwin Wilson (Dorothy); **Local 98**—Lee Adams (Gloria), Boyd Smith (Geraldine). (Survivors in parenthesis.)

DECEASED SURVIVORS

Local 4—Margaret Counts, Betty Savage; **Local 8**—Elizabeth Bergendahl, Elsie Trump, Mildred Lusk, Ellen Scott,

Doris Potter, Edna Sommerset; **Local 10**—Frances Cadei, Janice Plousha, Joyce Gardner, Naomi Kielar, Emily Olivieri, Waltraud Curtis, Freddie Stewart, Ruby Billiard, Georgina Hill, Luella Malone, Stella Huls, Maggie Davis, Doris Bordelon, Alice Bayliss, Anita Jenkins, Rose Granzella; **Local 12**—Marina Yount; **Local 13**—Ursula Midwin, Magdalena Thoensen, Manuela Ortega, Edith Harrison, Phyllis Hennessy, Sylvia Houlden, Pearl Pelt, Alta Dixon, Gene Hopkins, Lorine Reynolds, Esther Calderon; **Local 19**—Helen McAuliff, Charlotte O’Brien, Jennie Jorgensen, Phyllis Vitalich, Gloria Andersen, Geraldine Earle, Winnie Johnson; **Local 21**—Mary Wines, Loris Moon; **Local 23**—Ruth Booth; **Local 24**—Cecilia Rattie; **Local 27**—Mary Beausoleil; **Local 34**—Lucille Logsdon, Faye Scherz, Velma Yows, Gilberta Rodgers; **Local 40**—Dora Foster, Thelma Lind, Ellen Thornton, Jenevieve Harvey; **Local 46**—Lucy Majeno, Sophia Perez, Angelina Onopa; **Local 52**—Bernice Saul, Emma Grandy, Charlotta Galanti; **Local 54**—Juanita Hearty; **Local 63**—Lou Williams, Dorothy Aune, Eugenia Argento; **Local 91**—Sharon Crist; **Local 94**—Goldie Arbuckle, Matilda Flesia, Ardale Wieland, Ann Ellis.

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