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Philosophers have interpreted history in many different ways. The point, however, is to change it.

As history as we learn it in school is the story of great men and great wars determining the outcome. Rarely if ever is the centuries old battle of the classes between the rulers and the workers referred to. Yet from the ancient Greeks on, we know that where there is exploitation, workers unite to resist it. When they specialize in the shipping industry, new technology and jurisdiction over the new computer technology, but they’re not likely to get that kind of money until we’ve made the changes we have been talking about and what the Longshore Commission holds in September for the second straight year. And since the industry as a whole has done little to coordinate and prepare for the future, and the ILWU has been proposing solutions, talking about long-term infrastructure needs and short-term fixes to get by in the meantime. But the ship owners and terminal operators who make up our employer group, the PMA, have ignored our proposals. This has to change if the industry both the union and the employers depend on is going to survive and grow, if our port communities are going to be healthy and sustainable and if the American economy is to thrive.

Since last February the leadership of South- ern California longshore Local 13 has been requesting PMA bring in 20,000 new workers and sign up 5,000 new workers. But it took until August, when the peak season crunch was upon us, for the employers to concede the wisdom of the union and begin promoting, hiring and training labor. The reason is that it takes months to train that many people and get them working effectively on the ground. By then the peak season will be over.

Another bad management decision also contributes to the so-called “labor shortage.” As the railroads reduced the number of container ships backed up at the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach, turning around twice as long as usual and congesting the docks exacerbating pollution and safety problems. The reason for the delay, say terminal operators, is the labor dispute. Since last February 1188 Franklin St., San Francisco, CA 94109-6898. The Dispatcher welcomes letters, photos, and other submissions to the above address. © ILWU, 2004.

We need to start utilizing the infrastructure we have to its fullest capacity, and that means running the terminals 24/7.

By James Spinosa
ILWU International President

The shipping industry on the West Coast is in a crisis, with dozens of ships backed up at the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach, turn-around times twice as long as usual and congestion at the docks exacerbating pollution and safety problems. Diverting ships to other West Coast ports has not relieved the problem in Southern California, but only spread it to those other docks. The entire cargo transportation system is overwhelmed, the current infrastructure of the operation pushed past its capabilities. It’s not as if this wasn’t foreseen or isn’t the obvious result of policy decisions. Industry analysts have for the last decade been forecasting annual double-digit percentage growth in the number of container ships, with only 5-11 and the Pacific Maritime Association’s lockout in 2002 providing temporary speed bumps. The free trade agreements U.S. government officials have been promoting have had the predicted effects—manufacturing jobs have been sent to Asia in search of cheap labor and since little is made here any more, all those goods must be shipped in. China’s monster economy continues to export at an accelerating rate and Wal-Mart’s Asian-made Christmas goods could by themselves overwhelm just about any port. And since the industry as a whole has done little to coordinate and prepare for the future, and the ILWU has been proposing solutions, talking about long-term infrastructure needs and short-term fixes to get by in the meantime. But the ship owners and terminal operators who make up our employer group, the PMA, have ignored or resisted our proposals. This has to change if the industry both the union and the employers depend on is going to survive and grow, if our port communities are going to be healthy and sustainable and if the American economy is to thrive.

Clearly there has been a large underinvestment in the transport infrastructure needs that need to be addressed. The railroads need more locomotives, rail cars, track and skilled workers. Trucking needs more trucks and drivers. Equipment operators to run top picks, side picks and strads. The terminals need expanded highways and rigs that burn cleaner fuels. The railroads need to be addressed. The railroads need more locomotives, rail cars, track and skilled workers. Trucking needs more trucks and drivers. Equipment operators to run top picks, side picks and strads. The terminals need expanded highways and rigs that burn cleaner fuels. Stevedore companies need off-dock terminals and staging areas to relieve congestion and cargo-handling equipment that burns cleaner fuels.

The ships bring in huge volumes of goods that must come from the industry, but much of which must come from government. But we’re not likely to get that kind of money until we’ve made the changes we have been talking about and what the Longshore Commission holds in September for the second straight year. And since the industry as a whole has done little to coordinate and prepare for the future, and the ILWU has been proposing solutions, talking about long-term infrastructure needs and short-term fixes to get by in the meantime. But the ship owners and terminal operators who make up our employer group, the PMA, have ignored or resisted our proposals. This has to change if the industry both the union and the employers depend on is going to survive and grow, if our port communities are going to be healthy and sustainable and if the American economy is to thrive.

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Workers at Marine Spill Response Corp. (MSRC) in Long Beach fear their effectiveness and their safety on the job have been compromised since MSRC took over local oil spill response activities. The company recently rejected its first contract offer from the IBU.

“State law requires dedicated, local responders,” Gilham said. “Contractors won’t necessarily be familiar with the Harbor and with the specific equipment we use.”

For more information about the California Office of the Council on Interfaith Work (OCIW), call 773-728-8400 or visit nicwj.org.

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### Putting faith to work for justice

**Berkely, CA**—“My sister-in-law was diagnosed with liver cancer and given a year to live,” UFWC 870 members and workers at the Peninsula Pacific Foods’ Temple Beth-El in the tranquil Berkeley hills. Sun lit the stained glass windows of the temple, Rev. Dr. Marvis V. Williams and Dr. Steven Pitts of the National Interfaith Committee for Worker Justice (NICWJ). Williams and Pitts were members of the group that went to Shabtab services the Friday before Labor Day as part of the annual “Labor in the Pulpits” program coordinated by the National Interfaith Committee for Worker Justice (NICWJ).

Despite the dilemma, she was able to get chemo and is now cancer-free. It calls this staff shuffle “a stronger labor movement leads to more unions,” Pitts said, “but community economic justice questions,” she said.

The workers say they need three hotel workers and dozens of local struggles. They have campaigned for living wage laws in many cities, for fair treatment for poultry workers and for workers at USF Dugen trucking terminals and at CINTAS—the nation’s largest industrial laundry—said Bobo. They have improved the quality of their decks and protective guard rails, reported Joe Elder said. “The decks are super-smooth and not slip protected,” Elder said. “If there were no oil things during a spill, you’d be done. When there’s no guard rail with an oil spill, you could be ground up if you fell off the stern.” Though MSRC has set up a safety committee, she said, “it calls this staff shuffle ‘a stronger labor movement leads to more unions.’” Pitts said, “but community economic justice questions,” she said.

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ILWU Canada locals assist each other

Local 21 gives “union books” new meaning

ILWU Canada locals have shown great solidarity with one another, helping a struggling local to try to retain its work and then taking many of its members into their locals when much of that work was lost.

In 1971 Local 518 Testers and Samplers was given a charter by the ILWU Canadian Area. Besides testers the local also represents marine surveyors and lab technicians. From 1971 to 1989 they were very successful in capturing work from all the small sampling operations around the waterfront and were able to greatly expand their jurisdiction. But beginning in 1990 the two main employers started finding ways to go around Local 518 and do the work with non-union employees. This came to a head in 1998 when a company with ties to one of the large employers won the sampling contract for all the sulphur shipped out of the west coast of Canada. This was the beginning of the bad times for the members of Local 518.

Although all the Canadian locals and many retired members took part in numerous protests, and there were several meetings of the sulphur terminals, the contract for sulphur testing was passed on to a non-union company. Seven ILWU pensioners and most of Local 518’s members were arrested at various times for illegal picketing. Some of the union members were all found not guilty, but the 518 members were found guilty and fined. In solidarity fashion, the cost of the fines were covered by the members of ILWU Canada. Despite this brave fight the sulphur contract was lost.

On several occasions Local 518 took their protests to the Vancouver and Oregon chasing ships that had their cargo sampled by non-union testers when they were loaded in Canada. When Local 518 was looking for help, locals 4, 8 and 21 all came to their aid and refused to work ships that had been sampled non-union. Also, through the ILWU, Japanese longshore workers also showed great solidarity, refusing to discharge several vessels.

The situation grew worse in January 2000 when the international potash conglomerate, decided to move all potash sampling to the same non-union company. This non-union company has taken away almost two-thirds of the work formerly done by members of Local 518.

During this time Local 518 members were forced into a position that, if they did not take severe concessions, the unionized company that still employed them would lose what work it had to the non-union company. They gave away their short term disability benefits, pension, weekend premiums and four years of previously agreed to raises in order to hold onto the work they had.

Although ILWU Canada was not successful in turning back this challenge they were very helpful in coordinating the support of other locals of ILWU Canada. Local 517, a medium-sized local mainly comprised of port authority workers, was able to find employment for one 518 member. Longshore locals 500 and 502 were able to bring registering Local 518 members and allowing them to work in either of these locals, although initially there was some reluctance on the part of the employers to register members who had been convicted of illegally picketing. This originally began as seven members, but over time has grown now to 26 Local 518 members working full- or part-time in the longshore locals. This support helped Local 518 regain some of the concessions at a recent bargaining session.

In 2003 Local 502 decided it was time to do something about this “temporary” arrangement. They took the question of the 15 members working in their port to a referendum vote to make their solution permanent. For the past six or seven years Local 502 has been the beneficiary of gigantic growth in its work opportunity and the officers of the local recommended that these unemployed Local 518 members, who were the junior members in seniority in their own local, should be transferred to the D Board (casual board) in Local 502. These junior members who were displaced all had between 18 and 25 years service in the unionized sampling industry.

In early 2004 this question of transferred members was put to a referendum vote of Local 502 and passed. With the work increasing in Local 502 there has not been one day since the transfer was completed that they have not been able to work. They are now fully integrated into the workforce and most of them are currently receiving training to allow them to continue to maintain their lifestyles and their dignity.

In the meantime 10 other Local 518 members who were registered for longshore are still working part-time in the testing industry and are currently working part-time in Local 500. Due to this generosity Local 518 has still been able to carry on. This has allowed the local to continue to function, although with the loss of the 15 members to Local 502 there is some question as to whether this will be the situation for the future. Still, about 20 samplers who are not registered for longshore are employed in the sampling industry.

There are some rumors of sampling contracts returning to Local 518, but at this time they are only rumors. The remaining members are all still facing varying levels of underemployment, but without the help of Locals 500, 502, 517 and ILWU Canada it is doubtful that the local would have survived up to now. Meanwhile with all the difficulties faced by Local 518 members the non-union sampling company continues to thrive on the British Columbia waterfront.

—Dave Cochrane, outgoing President of Local 518 and one of the new 502 D Board members

—Mark Gordanenko, Local 500
New Zealand dockers strike against casuallization

by Tom Price

Dockworkers in New Zealand already had enough of casuallization, with some union members on the picket board for a decade or more. They brought the issue to the hovering threat that employers had raised in recent negotiations over their contract expired and no move ment from the employers in negotiations they had enough. The 280 dockers in Auckland, that nation’s largest container port, voted Aug. 25 for a four-day walkout beginning Sept. 8.

“The Maritime Union will increase the pressure through industrial means on any employer who treats its workers as disposable commodities rather than as human beings,” said Maritime Union of New Zealand General Secretary Trevor Hanson. Casuallization is the largest remaining issue in negotiations.

Many dockers “lived at the end of a telephone,” according to MUNZ Local 13 Branch President Denis Carlisle. They would never get regular work because the company preferred to keep them divided and competing for jobs.

“The action we are taking is to help our members and all workers who are trapped in part-time and casual jobs,” Carlisle said.

Now the dockers are importing more horticulture and fishing workers, and even prison guards, from low-wage countries. Now the government is signing “free” trade deals with China and Thailand, countries with horrible labor rights records. The New Zealand merchant marine has descended into a mostly flag-of-convenience fleet, with low paid workers replacing New Zealand’s proud seafarers. Steamship companies often try to make the workers load the ship themselves, a violation of dockers’ rights. The dockers are concerned for their own jobs and that workers are deeply concerned about the exploitation of foreign workers who might be imported to take union jobs.

“Workers are under threat from a globalization of labor market where employers can move labor around as a commodity, without regard to the economic effects on local workers or the human rights of overseas workers,” the MUNZ said in its Sept. 6 press release.

The MUNZ also has a reputation of defending long-shoremen on flag-of-convenience ships.

“Our members work on a daily basis with ships and crew from Third World countries who are exploited, silenced and endangered on these ships of shame, and we will fight any attempt to introduce Third World conditions or casualized sweatshop labor into New Zealand,” Hanson said.

Worldwide support was quick in coming. The International Transport Workers’ Federation put out the word on the strike, and support came from across Europe, Korea, Japan and the U.S.

“Transport workers around the world have shown that globalization has more than a corporate face—it has a human face as well,” ILWU International President Jim Spinosa said in his Sept. 9 letter of support.

“Let the employers know that the ILWU stands ready to support our sisters and brothers in New Zealand.”

By Sept. 10 the strike had shut down most of Auckland, with 280 dockers on the line. Australian wharfies from the Maritime Union of Australia arrived at Auckland that day and the event turned into a sort of party the New Zealanders call a “Mardi Gras.”

The streets around the terminals were blocked as MUA Sydney Branch Secretary Robert Coombs and Victoria Deputy Branch Secretary David Schleibs arrived at one. The other was dressed in the Maori costume of New Zealand’s native peoples, did a ceremonial warrior’s dance challenging Coombs’ peaceful intentions. Coombs made a gesture showing he and his mates were peaceful, and they were welcomed into the picket line with open arms.

While there Coombs took the opportunity to tell New Zealand National Television that his Australian members, who work for the same companies that operate the docks in New Zealand, have vowed whatever support was necessary for a successful resolution to the dispute.

The union met with employers and government mediator Colleen Hicks last that day, Carlisle reported the employers had moved a little, with new contract offers.

The strike continued until its planned end on Sept. 12. Workers met the following day and voted to give negotiators authorization for a seven day strike if further negotiations produced no better results.

“The members are very determined at this stage, they feel strongly about the issue of casuallization and want to hold the line for permanent, secure jobs,” Carlisle said.

Dutch workers protest government austerity plan

by Tom Price

Rotterdam dockers closed the world’s largest port for a second time in two weeks Oct. 2 as they joined thousands of other Dutch workers in a national strike against government austerity plans. Those rail workers who were not striking provided free track and road services under an agreement reached with railway companies and as many as 250,000 workers and citizens gathered at the entrances to the docks in New Zealand.

At issue in both demos are provisioning workers, and even prison guards, for the disabled and lengthening the workweek without raising the retirement age to 66, raising taxes on the rich or corporate profits, and as many as 250,000 workers and waiting for the 24-hour strike to be over. Nearly 60,000 participated in Amsterdam that day, according to Agence France Presse. About 20,000 others demonstrated in The Hague and followed by a return to the streets and in a dress rehearsal for the massive Oct. 2 rally.

Dockers pulled many side demonstrations in between the two big ones. Workers in the food and metal industries joined workers in public transport, retail trades, civil services and even the military all over the country for noon rallies Sept. 27. Trackers pulled off the roads in protest at noon two days later in efforts coordinated by CB radio and cell phone.

Amsterdam was packed with a quarter million demonstrators Oct. 2. As many as 60,000 on 30,000 on the line, made it to the museum plaza. Those who did hear unionists demand the government make it to the museum plaza. Those who did hear unionists demand the government make public the government’s plan. They made it to the museum plaza. Those who did hear unionists demand the government make public the government’s plan.

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Dutch dockers head for ILO

When The Netherlands’ government unilaterally announced Jan. 26 it would no longer abide by a crucial ILO convention protecting dockers’ rights, the dockers union went to court. On Oct. 4 the Netherlands’ high court ruled the govern ment should implement the convention through parliamentary action.

International Labor Organization Convention 137 protects dockers from casuallization by requiring a list of registered dock workers be kept by the government and that workers be hired from it. It also gives hiring preference to dockers laid off due to automation. The ILO, an agency of the UN, is made up of labor, business and government representatives. It sets standards called conventions that countries ratify to protect worker rights.

Dutch Dockers’ Deiekek on the convention in 1976, but never passed leg islation to implement it, relying instead on the employers to keep a list and use it.

The employers decided in 2000 to scrap the registration list. Rather than pass legislation to enforce the list, the government chose to scrap the convention altogether. The government claimed it was following “open market” principles that would open dock jobs to just about anyone, without protection for existing workers’ job rights.

The dockers’ union, NVF Bondgenoten, part of the largest union in The Netherlands’ FNW federation, protested loudly and gathered international support.

“If we lose in The Netherlands then the Belgians and Germans also lose,” NVF Bondgenoten Coordinator Niek Stam told The Dispatcher at the time. “If they can cheaper labor in Rotterdam, that will affect them because the ship owners will say their ports must lower prices or lose cargo to Rotterdam. If they can do it to the largest port in the world, they can do it anywhere.”

Recognizing this danger, dockers around the world vowed support. The court’s ruling the government was obligated under the convention to pass a law implementing its provisions. The union will ask their friends in parliament to propose legislation.

—Tom Price
A part of its ongoing member education program, the ILWU Longshore Division developed the new “Longshore History and Traditions” seminar designed to mine the past to prepare for the future. Held Sept. 26-30 in Palm Springs, Calif., the seminar spanned the West Coast longshore story from before the union’s beginning in 1914 through the 2002 contract campaign and up to this moment.

Retired ILWU veterans, well-known political writers and critics, labor history professors and ILWU officials all made presentations. Some 150 members from all the longshore locals on the West Coast, Hawaii and even British Columbia attended, the majority of them younger union activists. They absorbed speeches, PowerPoint presentations and videos, and took home piles of documents for further review and study. And in the ILWU tradition the attendees took every opportunity to hit the mic with questions and opinions.

International Vice President Bob McEllrath opened the Sunday afternoon welcoming session. Then Pacific Coast Pensioners Association President Arne Auvinen, one of several ILWU veterans making presentations who embody the union’s history, explained the origins of the pensioners group. The union negotiated its first pension with the employers through the Pacific Maritime Association in the 1951 contract and the first pension checks were cut in July 1952. At first the pensioners gathered as a social club to keep in touch with old pals and then they started working on “seniors’ issues.” In 1953 the union gave them voice, no vote in union affairs and the PCPA was officially formed in 1956.

The seminar began in earnest Monday morning with an historical overview of the early years of maritime labor and the first organizing attempts on the West Coast by San Francisco State University labor professor Robert Cherny. He described how the first West Coast ports developed and how the working conditions were first organized for through the stevedores and riggers. Strikes were lost in all four major ports in the few years following WWII, leading to work conditions so appalling that in the 1920s longshore work was second only to mining as the most dangerous industry in the country. The desperation of the Great Depression and the election of Franklin Roosevelt as president in 1932 led to the passage of the National Industrial Recovery Act that for the first time in U.S. history codified workers’ legal rights to organize. This gave rise to maritime workers on the West Coast striking and winning union recognition. Longshore workers won a union-controlled hiring hall, a coastwise contract, wage increases and a six-hour day and 30-hour week.

Cherny’s talk was followed by San Ruskic, the actor/playwright who impersonates ILWU founding leader Harry Bridges. He described a segment of his play, “San Francisco: the song of the ILWU,” the history of the 1934 organizing and strike, bringing a personal perspective to the bigger historical overview.

Then International President Jim Spinosa stepped up to put the history and the week’s presentations into perspective. We need to take back our history so we can understand where we have come from, he said. We can’t rest on the 1934 victory, there are many tough battles ahead, like what the union went through in 2002.

“The game plan of this union is to never get caught off-guard,” Spinosa said. “We must be looking to the future, for the survival of this union and the labor movement.”

Next up was Bill Fletcher, formerly special assistant to AFL-CIO President John Sweeney (during which time he led the AFL-CIO’s national campaign in support of the Charleston Five), and now president of TransAfrica Forum, which undertakes educational projects in support of workers rights around the world, particularly in South Africa. Fletcher addressed the issue of labor unity, what it has been and has not been in recent American history. The AFL in the 1950s was a federation of craft unions that refused to organize the new mass production industries. Harry Bridges and other labor leaders started the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) not just to organize the unorganized in these industries, but to create a mass social movement. CIO unions not only raised workers’ living standards, but increased civil liberties, broke down racial and gender barriers and opposed fascism and militarism. Union membership increased dramatically in the 1930s and early 1940s until the anti-communist laws in the late 1940s and early 1950s reduced unions’ strength, numbers and relevance.

Fletcher laid out some basic strategies to redeem “labor unity” in the 21st century. Labor must stop acting like a private club and organize all workers. International trade is essentially a globalized economy. Labor must stand against all injustice and build its ranks on the basis of equality and fairness.

Then Chuck Mack, Teamsters Western Region Vice President and head of his union’s port truckers organizing campaign, noted the long history of the Teamsters and the ILWU working together and said it was to both unions’ advantage to organize the port truckers. If the truckers are not part of the labor movement, they could end up undermining the unions’ wages and conditions. The drivers want a union. But the management’s argument is that they are defined as independent contractors and this needs to be overcome.

“We’ve convinced we can win with the union we have...” Mack said.

As the year 2002 passed and the ILWU’s democratic process versus the idealized American version, concluding that the ILWU model works best when the rank and file participate.

“The union will make us strong, but it’s up to the rank and file to make the union strong,” she said.

Bill Ward, president of the San Francisco Bay Area Pensioners and a Coast Committeeman for more than 20 years under Harry Bridges and Jimmy Herman, emphasized the importance of rank-and-file participation for success. As difficult and hazardous as the 2002 negotiations were, 2008 negotiations will be harder.

“You all have a job to do, “ Ward told the members. “If you have the discipline of the rank and file and the ranks design your programs at the Caucus and the International Convention, you will win.”

Moved by the day’s discussions, Bill Fletcher tossed his prepared remarks on “Social Justice Unionism” and spoke passionately and bluntly about the situation and files now face.

“The framework of trade unionism we’ve been working under is dead,” Fletcher said. “Capital has no interest in labor as a partner any more—it wants to annihilate us.”

Capital is being reshaped in the era of globalization. The Group of 8, the eight industrialized nations that meet to decide the fate of the world’s economy (Fletcher called them the Gang of 8), currently have two factions that could be seen in the build up to the Iraq War. Germany and France, the multi-lateralists, wanted the U.S. to check in with the gang before moving forward. Bush’s action will act alone. Both sides want to dominate the world. Kerry is with the multi-lateralists, what Fletcher called the “velvet-covered steel bat” group, but at least workers have some space in his scenario. Too often union leaders in the U.S. don’t speak out against American imperialist foreign policies, Fletcher said, and the procedures within its organization and with its affiliations with other union federations and how the rank and file have participated in the union’s democratic process over time. Levi presented a comparative study she did of the effectiveness of the ILWU’s democratic process versus the idealized American version, concluding that the ILWU model works best when the rank and file participate.

“The union will make us strong, but it’s up to the rank and file to make the union strong,” she said.

Professors Margaret Levi and David Olson, of the Harry Bridges Center for Labor Studies at the University of Washington, Seattle, made a presentation on union democracy. Olson gave an in-depth review of how the ILWU has dealt with democratic

Story by Steve Stallone
Photos by Frank Wilt

Bay Area PCPA President and former Coast Committeeman Bill Ward.

Longshore History and Traditions

International Vice President Bob McEllrath

Longshore Local 13 President and Education Committee member Dave Ariam.

Organizing Director Peter Oliney.
International Secretary-Treasurer Willie Adams and Arianna Huffington.

Employers Association, resisted. The 1948 strike was won and settled with the new employer group, the PMA, in December, but the clerks didn’t get their first coastwise agreement signed until March 1949. Welfare benefits were applied coastwise, but wages and conditions were set on a local level. In 1958 job descriptions and work opportunity rules were negotiated coastwise and in 1965 Local 34 started the first transfer of longshore workers to clerks. The one-door policy—clerks registration would only come from longshore locals—was established in the 1980s. This close association of longshore workers and clerks is beneficial, Perisho observed, especially now when clerks need the muscle of longshore in the enforcement of clerks’ rights under the 2002 contract provision covering the introduction of new technology.

The unique experience of Hawaii longshore workers was presented in a video on the state’s 1949 longshore strike that was produced by the University of Hawaii’s Center for Labor Education and Research with the cooperation of ILWU Hawaii Local 142. Hawaii longshore workers were making nearly 25 percent less than their West Coast counterparts while doing the same work for the same employers. They demanded something a little short of equal pay. Still, the employers refused and refused arbitration. As the strike dragged on, the employers hired scabs to work the ships and the governor signed the Dock Seizure Act allowing the state to take over and operate the docks. The union was rebuffed and slandered. But the workers held out as the union organized soup kitchens and hunting and fishing committees to feed the workers. After 157 days Bridges negotiated a contract with wage increases and the strike was settled.

International Vice President, Hawaii Wesley Furtado said that longshore is the only part of Local 142 that negotiates a statewide contract. Oahu Business Agent Tyron Tahara acknowledged that the West Coast still sets the guidelines for Hawaii longshore bargaining.

Frank Kennedy, Secretary of the Vancouver, British Columbia Portionals Association and long-time ILWU Canada Secretary-Treasurer, spoke of the Canadian longshore experience. The first attempts to build longshore unions in the early 1900s had little success and the post-WWI strikes were broken, leading to company unions running the docks through the 1920s and early 1930s. In 1934 longshore workers started their own local, and in 1936 they signed a five-year contract with employers. In 1937 the ILWU chartered its first locals in Canada and they grew in the early 1940s. In 1959 the ILWU Canadian Area was established and set out to get all its locals under the same contract and organize all waterfront workers. Since then the Canadian longshore locals have had more and more government interference in their contract bargaining, but have continued to make progress.

Harvey Schwartz, labor historian, curator of the ILWU’s Oral History Project and author of “The March Inland,” the definitive book on the ILWU warehouse origins, told the story of how the new West Coast longshore union turned to organizing warehouse workers. They immediately started organizing waterfront warehouses, but soon found the only way to protect the wages and conditions they had won was to spread them to warehouses further inland. When longshore workers went out on strike in 1936-37, the unionized warehouse workers went out as well to make sure they weren’t forced to handle diverted cargo. And when the Bay Area warehouse workers settled a month before longshore did, the warehouse local voted to give money to help those still out.

By organizing warehouse, the longshore workers took strategic action to protect their flanks and build union density—the percentage of the industry that was unionized. With union density declining in the U.S. and especially in the rapidly changing cargo-handling industry, the ILWU needs a similar strategy today. Organizing Director Peter Olney said in his presentation: “We have reached a point where we will have to organize or die,” Olney said. The organizing will need to be done at points along the cargo-handling chain where the ILWU can build leverage, and it...
ILWU election endorsements Nov. 2, 2004

President of the United States: ......... John Kerry
Vice President of the United States: ......... John Edwards

Oregon endorsements
United States Senator: ......... Ron Wyden
Representative in Congress
1st District: ......... David Wu
3rd District: ......... Earl Blumenauer
4th District: ......... Peter DeFazio
9th District: ......... Darkene Hoepler

Statewide Candidates
Secretary of State: ......... Bill Bradbury
State Treasurer: ......... Ted Ferlo
Attorney General: ......... Hardy Myers

Legislative Candidates
State Representative, District 1: ......... Bruce Crowe
State Representative, District 3: ......... Alan Bates
State Representative, District 4: ......... Floyd Prozanski
State Representative, District 6: ......... Mike Nearman
State Representative, District 12: ......... Hank Franzoni
State Representative, District 14: ......... Ryan Deckert
State Representative, District 21: ......... Kate Brown
State Representative, District 22: ......... Avel Gordly
State Representative, District 27: ......... Ben Westlund
State Representative, District 28: ......... Ross Carroll
State Representative, District 30: ......... Darlene Hooley
State Representative, District 31: ......... Linda G. Birdsong
State Representative, District 32: ......... Chris Naylor
State Representative, District 35: ......... Cathy動物
State Representative, District 36: ......... Mary Nolan
State Representative, District 37: ......... Jim Norton
State Representative, District 38: ......... Greg MacPherson
State Representative, District 40: ......... Doug Fleener
State Representative, District 41: ......... Earl C. Rayburn
State Representative, District 42: ......... Diane Rosenbaum
State Representative, District 43: ......... Chip Shields
State Representative, District 44: ......... Carol Johnson
State Representative, District 45: ......... Jackie Dingfelder
State Representative, District 46: ......... Steve March
State Representative, District 48: ......... Jeffery Ray
State Representative, District 49: ......... Mike Schaffer
State Representative, District 50: ......... Jim Buck
State Senator, District 46: ......... Anna G. Eshoo
State Senator, District 51: ......... Judy Stiegel
State Senator, District 54: ......... Bob Jonas
State Senator, District 59: ......... Sam Farr

Statewide Ballot Measures
Measure #34—Timber Production/Conservation ......... OPPOSE
Measure #35—Limits Healthcare Negligence Damages ......... OPPOSE
Measure #37—Pay for Reduced Property Values ......... OPPOSE
Measure #38—Abolishes SAFI ......... OPPOSE

California endorsements
United States Senator Barbara Boxer (D)
United States Representatives in Congress (district Candidate)
1 ......... Mike Thompson (D)
2 ......... Mike Honda (D)
3 ......... Gabe Castillo (D)
4 ......... Bill Kirby (D)
5 ......... T. R. McColgin (D)
6 ......... Lynn Woolsey (D)
7 ......... George Miller (D)
8 ......... Gail Harris (D)
9 ......... Barbara Lee (D)
10 ......... Ellen O. Tausscher (D)
11 ......... George Terry (D)
12 ......... Tom Lantos (D)
13 ......... Fortney "Pete" Stark (D)
14 ......... Mike Honda (D)
15 ......... Zoe Lofgren (D)
16 ......... Dennis A. Cardoza (D)
17 ......... Frank Pallone (D)
18 ......... Paul Koutetz (D)
19 ......... Dario Frommer (D)
20 ......... Carol Liu (D)
21 ......... Lois Capps (D)
22 ......... diret Wagger (D)
23 ......... Tim Wuilough (D)
24 ......... Cynthia M. Matthews (D)
25 ......... Maxine Waters (D)
26 ......... Jane Harman (D)
27 ......... Grace Flores Napolitano (D)
28 ......... Linda T. Sanchez (D)
29 ......... Adam B. Schiff (D)
30 ......... Henry A. Waxman (D)
31 ......... Hilda L. Solis (D)
32 ......... Eileen E. Velasquez (D)
33 ......... Lucille Roybal-Allard (D)
34 ......... Maxine Waters (D)
35 ......... James Hahn (D)
36 ......... Johanna Miller-McDonald (D)
37 ......... Mike Honda (D)
38 ......... John W. Thomas (D)
39 ......... Loretta Sanchez (D)
40 ......... Mike Byrnon (D)
41 ......... Franccine P. Busby (D)
42 ......... Bob Filner (D)
43 ......... A. S. Lowery (D)
44 ......... Marjorie Musser Mikkel (D)
45 ......... Richard Daugherty (D)
46 ......... Retae Siebert (D)
47 ......... John T. Hallman (D)
48 ......... Janice Hahn (D)
49 ......... Richard D. Templeton (D)
50 ......... Mike Honda (D)
51 ......... Karl Male (D)
52 ......... Janet McLachlan (D)
53 ......... Ross W. Johnson (D)
54 ......... Mervyn M. Dymally (D)
55 ......... Fabian Nunez (D)
56 ......... Fran Pavley (D)
57 ......... Scott Brown (D)
58 ......... Mike Honda (D)
59 ......... Peter Buckley (D)
60 ......... David Silva (D)
61 ......... Jerry Brown (D)
62 ......... Frank Ashcraft (D)
63 ......... Barry Brink (D)
64 ......... Robert Malosh (D)
65 ......... Rich Resnick (D)
66 ......... Non Endorsement
67 ......... Non Endorsement
68 ......... Non Endorsement
69 ......... Non Endorsement
70 ......... Non Endorsement
71 ......... Non Endorsement
72 ......... Non Endorsement
73 ......... Non Endorsement
74 ......... Non Endorsement
75 ......... Non Endorsement
76 ......... Non Endorsement
77 ......... Non Endorsement
78 ......... Non Endorsement
79 ......... Non Endorsement
80 ......... Non Endorsement

Bailiff Proposition Recommendations
1A Protection of Local Gov't Revenues ......... No Recommendation
59 Access to Government Information ......... YES
60 Primary Elections (No Open Primaries) ......... YES
61 Surplus Property Sales ......... NO
62 Prop. 13 (Property Assessments) ......... YES
63 Mental Health Services Expansion and Funding ......... YES
64 Limitations on enforcement of unfair Business Competition Laws ......... YES
65 Local Government and State Mandates ......... NO
66 Limitations on "Three Strikes" Law ......... YES
67 Telephone Surcharge for Emergency and Medical Services ......... NO
68 Tribal Gaming Compacts (Racetrack & Card Clubs Measure) ......... NO
69 Collection of DNA Samples for State DNA Database ......... NO
70 Tribal Gaming Compacts (Aqueduct Gambling Measure) ......... NO
71 State Cell Research and Funding Recommendation ......... NO
72 Refendum Petition to Overturn Amendments to Health Care Coverage Requirements (Health Insurance Act of 2003) ......... YES

Solano County recommendations
Vaccination Program ......... Charles Dinmicke/Steve Williams
Rio Vista City Council ......... S. Bullock/Janice Vicker
Suisun City Council ......... Samuel Deringer/Mike Saya
Dixon City Council ......... Mike Smith/Jill Orell

Napa County recommendations
American Canyon City Council ......... Guad Coffee/Joan Bennett

Sacramento-Yolo Counties
Sacramento City Board of Supervisors ......... Roberta MacGlashan
Sacramento City Council ......... Bill Christoffel / Mark Montemayor

Contra Costa County
Antioch ......... Don Fruster
City Council ......... Reegio Moore/Brian Kalinowski

Sacramento-Yolo Counties
Concord ......... William Shin/Harmon West
El Cerrito ......... Lelia Moore/Jan Bridge/William Jones
Hercules ......... Ed Ballico/Ros Valstad/Charlene Raines
Martinez ......... Carolyn Robinson
City Council ......... Mark Ross/Jean Kennedy
Pittsburg ......... Lou Rostas
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Pleasant Hill
City Council ......................... John Haneack/Sue Angell

Pinole
City Council ......................... Maria Alegria/Pete Murray

Richmond
City Council ............................ Eddick Osborne/John Marquez/Andreas Soto/Tony Thurmond

San Pablo
City Council ............................ Sharon Brown/Joe Gomes/Leonard McNeil

Special Districts
BART District #3 ....................... Bob Franklin
AC Transit At Large District .......... Chris Peebles
AC Transit District #3 ............... Tom Wilson
CCC Sanitary ......................... Marco Menenesi

Initiatives and Bond Measures
Measure BB Parcel Tax for AC Transit ............................ YES
Measure J to Renew 1/4-cent Transit Expansion Tax ......... YES

Alameda County
BART District #3 ........................... Robert Franklin
AC Transit District #2 ................. Christine Zook
District #4 ............................... Dennis Hayashi
At Large ............................... Chris Peeples

Regional Ballot Measures
AA .............................. YES
BB ................................ NO
CC ................................ YES
FF ................................ YES

Berkeley
Fund Essential Services: J. K.L .............................. YES
City Council District #2 ............ Joe Moorman
City Council Dist. #3 (estal) ...... Maudele Shriver/MAX Anderson
City Council District #5 ............... Laurie Capitelli
City Council District #6 ............... Betty Odls

Castro Valley Sanitary District
City Council .............................. Tim McGowan/Dennis Wascpl

Emeryville
Measure T ............................... NO
Measure U ............................... NO

Alameda
City Council ......................... Marilyn Exzy Ashcraft

Pleasanton
Mayor ...................................... Jennifer Hosterman

San Leandro
City Council ........................ Surlene Grant/Tony Santos/Joyce Starscisk

Fremont
Mayor ...................................... Bob Wasserman
City Council ......................... Bob Wiecekowki

San Francisco City & County
Board of Supervisors
District 1 ............................... Jake McGoldrick
District 2 ............................... Michelle Alatorre
District 3 ............................... Aaron Peskin
District 5 ............................... Dr. Anita Grean/
District 7 ............................... Tom Ammiano/Dr. Rene Saucedo
District 10 Vote for three in this order:  Tom Ammiano/Dr. Rene Saucedo

School Board
Vote for four: Eric Mar/Marc Sanchez/John Wynn/Norman Yee

BART Board
District 5 ............................... Lynnette Sweet
District 8 ............................... Tom Radulovich

Community College Board
Vote for four: Natalie Berg/Milton Marks III/Rodol Rodin/Julio Ramos

Propositions
Prop A Affordable Housing ................. YES
Prop B Historical Preservation Bonds ................. YES
Prop C Health Service System ................. YES
Prop D Changes to City Charter ................. YES
Prop E Police & Fire Survivor Benefit ................. NO
Prop F Non-citizen Voting School Board Election ......... YES
Prop G Health Plans for City Residents ................. YES
Prop H Candidacy for Countywide Positions ................. YES
Prop I Economic Analysis of Legislation ................. NO
Prop J Sales Tax Increase ................... YES
Prop K Business Tax ................... YES

Prop L Use of Hotel Tax to Preserve Movie Theaters ............... NO
Prop M Withdraw US Military Personal from Iraq ............... YES
Prop O Use of Sales Tax Funds ................. YES
Prop P BART D.0. Bond ................... YES

Santa Clara County
Measure C Bonding Authorization ............. NO

City of San Jose
Measure S Library and Reading Protection Measure ........... YES

San Mateo County
Pacific
City Council ....................... Pete De Jaarmt/Cal Hinton
Daily City
City Council ....................... Denise Kelly/Sal Torres
Menlo Park
City Council ....................... Kelly Fergusson/Mike Lambert
East Palo Alto
City Council ............................ Ruben Aribica

San Joaquin-Calaveras Counties
Calaveras County
District #2 Board of Supervisors ..................... Steve Winkly
San Joaquin County
District #1 Board of Supervisors ..................... Steve Gutierrez

Stockton
Lincoln Unified School Board ................... David Gould

Humboldt-Del Norte Counties
Supervisor, Del Norte County .................... Martha McClure
Supervisor, Del Norte County .................... Leslie Nunemeyer
Arcata City Council ....................... Rob Abeman
Arcata City Council ....................... Harmony Groves
Arcata City Council ....................... Michael Mitchell
Eureka City Council ....................... Chris Kerrigan
Humboldt Bay Municipal Water District ............................. NO

Sonoma/Marin Counties
Marin Co. Measure A Transportation Tax ......... YES
Judge, Marin Co. .......................... Faye O’Dap
Supervisor, Marin Co. District #3 ........ Charles McGlashan
Petalmula Measure X High School Parcel Tax ......... YES
Petalmula City Council/Pam Turfus ............................. YES
Sebastopol Measure W ...................... YES
Sebastopol Measure T, Sales Tax ................ YES
Sebastopol City Council ................... Sam Pierce/Craig Litwin
Sonoma Measure M, Transit Sales Tax ................ YES
Santa Rosa Measure O ..................... YES
Santa Rosa City Council ................... Caroline Banciolo/Don Taylor/Veronica Jacob
Santa Rosa Jr. College Board of Trustees ........ Marsa Vas Duck
Healdsburg City Council .................... Mike Maguire
Mendocino Supervisor District #1 ........ Joe Louis Wildman
Mendocino Supervisor District #2 ........ Richard Shoemaker

Washington State endorses
Senate .............................. Patty Murray
House of Representatives .................. YES
2nd Dist. .............................. Jay Inlsee
3rd Dist. .............................. Dick Larsen
4th Dist. .............................. Bill Bryant
5th Dist. .............................. Sandy Matheson
6th Dist. .............................. Dan Rembi
7th Dist. .............................. Norm Dicks
8th Dist. .............................. Jim McDermott
9th Dist. .............................. Dave Ross
10th Dist. .............................. Adam Smith

STATEWIDE
Governor .............................. Gary Locke/Robert Haaland/Ross Mirkarimi
Attorney General ......................... Deborah Sevick
Insurance Comm. ......................... Brian Sonntag
K-12 Education ......................... Mike Kreidler
Land Comm. ............................ Mike Cooper
Lt. Governor ............................ Brad Owen
Sec. of State ......................... Laura Ruuderman
State Treasurer .......................... Mike Murphy
Sup of Public Instruction .................. NO
Superintendent of Public Instruction ............................. NO

STATE LEGISLATURE
1st District – House 1: ................ Bob Sump
House 2: .............................. Mark Erics
Senate ..................................... Rosemary McCullough
2nd – House 2: ....................... Tom Campbell
Senate ..................................... Marilyn Rasmussen

House 1: .............................. Alex Wood
House 2: .............................. Tim Ommsry
Senate ..................................... Lisa Brown
House 1: .............................. James Peck
House 2: .............................. Ed Foote
Senate ..................................... Tim Hattenburg
House 1: .............................. Brian Kuhl
House 2: .............................. Doug Dobbs
Senate ..................................... Laurie Dolan
House 1: .............................. Jack Miller
House 2: .............................. Bill Hinkle
Senate ..................................... Shirley Hawkins
House 1: .............................. Jerad Koup
House 2: .............................. John David
Senate ..................................... Eileen Maciol
House 1: .............................. Gail Rowland
House 2: .............................. Nancy Canyon
Senate ..................................... Mark Norton
House 1: .............................. Mary Margaret Haugen
Senate ..................................... Zack Hugdins
House 1: .............................. Bob Hagese
Senate ..................................... Tony Zimmn
House 1: .............................. Dale Hubbard
House 2: .............................. Cassie Gipson
Senate ..................................... Bill Grant
Senate ..................................... Mike Hewitt
House 1: .............................. Jose Ferrre
House 2: .............................. Paul Waadvigg
Senate ..................................... Pam Brokum
House 2: .............................. Brian Becher
Senate ..................................... David Seabrook
House 2: .............................. Phil Rockefell
Senate ..................................... Kevin Van DeWege
House 2: .............................. Ron Morris
House 2: .............................. Louanne Morrell
Senate ..................................... Jim Kastama
House 2: .............................. Patricia Lantz
House 2: .............................. Debbie Regala
Senate ..................................... Deborah Sra
House 1: .............................. Tami Green
House 2: .............................. Steve Conway
Senate ..................................... Steve Kirby
House 1: .............................. Mark Miloscia
House 2: .............................. Joseph Henry
Senate ..................................... Marary Chase
House 2: .............................. Dave Upthegrove
Senate ..................................... Eileen Cody
House 1: .............................. Ruth Dickerson
House 2: .............................. Kathy Haig
House 2: .............................. Bill Eckmeyer
Senate ..................................... Sharon Tomiko-Santo
House 1: .............................. Eric Pettigrew
House 2: .............................. John McCoy
Senate ..................................... Michael Sells
House 2: .............................. Jean Berkeley
Senate ..................................... Larry Springer
House 2: .............................. Pedro Gonzalez
Senate ..................................... Suzanne Olson
House 2: .............................. Clare Cohn
Senate ..................................... Jill Gilchester
House 2: .............................. Brian Weisstein
Senate ..................................... Robyn Bailey
House 1: .............................. Kellin Linnville
House 2: .............................. Ed Murray
Senate ..................................... John Chopp
House 1: .............................. Hans Dunshue
House 2: .............................. John Loverick
House 1: .............................. Larry Springer
House 2: .............................. Jim McIntire
Senate ..................................... Kyle Lowry
House 2: .............................. Geoff Simpson
Senate ..................................... Pat Sullivan
House 1: .............................. Rick Hunter
House 2: .............................. Debi Goldin
Senate ..................................... Bill Fromhold
House 2: .............................. Jim Moore
Senate .............................. Craig Pridemore

* limited endorsement
** conditional endorsement
Review the past, build the future

Continued from page 10

will have to have local elected officers and rank-and-file, he said.

Wednesday morning started with a discussion of the longshore contract. Edward Jefferson of Long Beach and Clark of Local 4 compared the Mechanization & Modernization (M&M) Agreement to the 2002 contract. Jefferson said union politics was revolutionary in 1960 as the changes in cargo handling brought about increases in safety and equipment. The M&M contract negotiated how the new work would be done. In 2002 the contract ended a year earlier than anticipated and documentation handling brought about by computer technology.

Local 13 President and Education Committee member Dave Ariano then discussed the evolution of the contract and how you could tell the history of the Longshore Division through the changes in the contract. He walked the participants through the early years of job actions on the docks in 1933-1948; through the 1948 strike and Taft-Hartley injunction and the new arbitration system that still exists; the big work stoppages brought by the intimidation of the M&M and the M&M Agreement of 1960; to the introduction of the System of the Work and the Coast Marine Safety Code. It has been and continues to be changed to reflect the changing conditions on the docks.

Coast Arbitrator John Kagel, son of the original Coast Arbitrator, Sam Kagel, who also worked in 1948-1952, impressed upon the participants the importance and value of the longshore contract.

Terry Ah Quon McElrath followed up the opening remarks with his usual disclaimer. "The law is not what you read," Remar said. "In the U.S. it is adopted, created, molded and interpreted by the courts in context.

Remar explained how workers had no legal rights to bargain collectively until the National Labor Relations Act was passed in 1935. This paved the way for the explosion of union organizing in the post-war period and the defeat of fascism in Europe and Asia, the 1947 Republican Congress brought the first major change in that tradition with the passage of the Taft-Hartley Act that restricted many of the rights and protections that had been built up with the anti-communism of the time. Militant unions were targeted and the labor movement weakened.

The harassment continues as witnessed by Bush’s intervention into the Illinois ILWU longshore picket lines in 2001 and the passage of the Patriot Act of 2001 requiring background checks on certain transportation workers and the new Maritime Transportation Security Act setting out draconian restrictions on activities in ports that "impair[ed] with the national security.

ILWU Legislative Director Linda McLaughlin gave a PowerPoint presentation on how the union’s

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Washington, D.C. lobbying office functions and a quick summary of the issues affecting longshore and his staff have been working on.

Local 63 Secretary and member of the Coast Legislative Action Committee Peter Peyton presented the Longshore Division’s campaign strategy for the November 2004 elections. Other members of the Legislative Action Committee, Lawrence Thi- boux (Local 10) and Max Veikich (Local 52), explained the work they have been doing in Washington, D.C. and where the union needs to go in the immediate future with its lobbying work.

Athena McElrath followed up the next morning with lessons from the ILWU’s political work in Hawaii, always following the adage of rewarding your friends and punishing your enemies. Union organizers registered workers to vote at the plantation camps, elected their own representatives and then pushed through legislation with the help of the aliens passage bill legalizing union organizing for agricultural workers, raising the minimum wage for the institution of temporary employment agencies, disability and prepaid health care.

"We have to have the politicians know what we want or we’ll get stuck with Democrats who act like Republicans," she said.

"You have the best and if you don’t keep that way, it’s your fault, no one else’s," he concluded.

That afternoon gadfly political commentator and former California gubernatorial candidate Arianna Huffington dropped by to encourage union activists to organize and work to support John Kerry as an alternative, she said. Democrats a spine transplant” and zingers like “We have to give the Democrats a spine transplant” and George W. Bush has not led us to war except the end of fear itself.” She ended her remarks with his usual disclaimer.

"I call ‘flexibility’ the ‘F-word,’” said Ralph Turnbull, a professor at the University of Cardiff who specializes in longshore labor relations, addressed the trends in international port and longshore unions. Longshore work in the early 20th century was casework, with high turnover, low pay and dangerous conditions. Unionization and government regulation help stabilize the industry, and new international unions entered into “productivity bargaining” like the ILWU did with the M&M agreement, making deals for higher wages, benefits and pensions, and as for training on the new machines and getting various income protection plans.

Now world ports are going through a deregulation restructuring that is consolidating the industry, with five companies moving 40 percent of international cargo. These companies want to eliminate unions, casual work, with shape-ups, low pay and dangerous conditions. Unionization and government regulation have helped stabilize the industry, and new international unions entered into “productivity bargaining” like the ILWU did with the M&M agreement, making deals for higher wages, benefits and pensions, and as for training on the new machines and getting various income protection plans.

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Brother Jerry Martin killed in car wreck

Jerry Martin (right) played a key part in the effort to organize bike messengers and drivers in San Francisco. Here he joins UltraEx workers on a picket line during their campaign for a first contract with warehouse Local 6.

Jerry Martin

ILWU International Representative Jerry Martin died suddenly in a car wreck Sept. 15. He was 57.

When Martin was born, his family lived in a one-room house his dad helped build on Grace Street in Fresno. A half-century later, Grace Street still has not been paved. Chickens flap next to the small houses and trailers squatting under the flat San Joaquin Valley sky.

“Jerry never forgot where he came from,” said ILWU International Organizing Director Peter Olney. “He was a multi-faceted man whose achievements became all the more amazing when you looked at his roots.”

Martin’s dad, a heavy-equipment operator, walked out on the family when Jerry was about 10. His mom had already been in and out of the hospital for years with nervous breakdowns. They lived with his grandmother in Fresno’s tight-knit Portuguese neighborhood, A Cidade. When she could, his mom worked as a maid in local motels and later in fruit packing houses. Martin got a paper route when he was just a kid and never quit working after that. He worked all the way through high school and went out for track too, acing sprints and hurdles. He graduated from Roosevelt High in 1965.

A music teacher gave Martin a plastic flute to play towards the end of fourth grade. He showed enough chops to be chosen for more lessons—and so began 40 years of making music. He played trumpet, French horn and guitar, majoring in music at Fresno City College and then at Fresno State. After college he moved to San Francisco and then to Maui, looking for a better place than the wild and crazy City by the Bay to raise his young daughter. Starting in 1978 he played first chair French horn in the newly formed Maui Symphony. In 1986, the Symphony chose him as its music director and conductor.

“He was an amazing French horn player who could’ve made it in its major orchestra,” said Lisa Owen, who was the Maui Symphony’s principal tuba player. “He hadn’t had a lot of conducting experience, but he learned on the job,” she said. “He did that all through his life.”

Martin also drew high-powered musicians to come play with symphony, which then was a community orchestra with no auditions required. “People would be coming to Honolulu and he would get them to come over here too,” Owen said. “He was so charismatic he just talked them into it.”

When Owen played with Martin in other ensembles as well, including the Original Sandwich Isles Swing Band and the Valley Isles Brass Quintet, and the two toured Maui with the “Artists in the Schools” program, demonstrating brass instruments to children of all ages.

Even gifted music directors can’t always make a living from their art, so Martin worked first as an auto-body rust-proofer and then as a hotel maintenance painter. In 1981 he landed a gig with the El Dorado Resort, which was organized by ILWU Local 142. Soon his co-workers elected him shop steward, then unit chair. The local tapped him to do some organizing on lost-time, then brought him on staff in 1991 when new hotels were popping up all over Hawaii. Martin helped organize the Maui Prince, the Ritz-Carlton, the Grand Wailea and other properties before moving back to the mainland in 1997.

“When he was formulating a union as a 20-year-old, that was one of my favorite things to watch him do,” said Owen, who was unit chair at the Westin Maui when Martin worked for the El Dorado.

“He’d take it very hard when he lost, because he worked so hard.”

While most people would buy food for a meeting, Martin would cook up a big pot of Portuguese bean soup or some other dish. “He wanted people to have the experience of good food and get into the motion of the discussion,” Owen said.

“Now no matter who he was talking to—what nationality, what race, what religion—he could relate to them and explain what unionism is,” said Local 142 Maui Division Director Willie Kennison.

Hawai'i’s mix of cultures made this flexibility essential, Kennison said, but it also helped Martin in his job as an International organizer. He worked on drives with all kinds of workers and all divisions of the union up and down the Coast—hicle messengers and telefundraisers, warehouse workers and barge operators, office clericals and workers at an inter-modal yard.

Many people Martin helped organized came to the memorial the union held for him Sept. 22, as did several dozen ILWU officers and rank-and-file, co-workers and friends. Barbara Gunther, a driver who worked with Martin on several San Francisco messenger campaigns before she moved away, drove all night from Eugene, Oregon to be there.

“He drove all over for us,” Gunther said. “He always had our backs.”

Longshore Local 4 President Brad Clark and Vice President Cager Clabaugh flew down from Vancouver, Wash., to pay their respects to the man who’d rescued their effort to organize auto detailers four and a half years ago.

“Jerry would be in the hall every morning, making signs, talking with people, working out what had to happen next,” Clabaugh said. “He showed up, and he made a huge difference in the lives of those 65 workers.”

Others at the memorial echoed that point. People who worked with Martin knew him as careful with details and rock-solid reliable. You could count on him to take care of business, whether that was schlepping sound equipment or leafleting at 5 a.m. in the rain or negotiating with a recalcitrant employer.

“Here he was an organizer, but he looked like one of us, acted like one of us, felt like one of us,” warehouse Local 17 Secretary-Treasurer Jack Wyatt said. “He’d do whatever, and he had that warmth about him, that quality. He’d bring things out of you that you that didn’t know you had in you.”

On house calls, talking to potential new members, Martin could win over the most skeptical by just telling his own story in his typical low-key manner.

“People believed him because they knew he’d been there,” attorney Bill Clabaugh said. If you worked with Martin you also knew his quirky side—how he showed up for work at 5 a.m. when he couldn’t sleep, used feng shui to help calm his sky-high blood-pressure. He wasn’t one to brag on himself, though. Until you knew him for a while, you wouldn’t know he’d conducted a symphony. Maybe you’d find out he’d been a hurdler, stared down an armed robber at an gas station or remodeled the bathroom in the house in Benicia that was his pride and joy. You were more likely to hear about his wife and daughter, Jan and Jennifer, who lit his life, or get a dryly funny story—or have him ask you how you were doing, or what you thought about whatever he was working on at the time.

“Despite having many more years of experience than me, he always treated my ideas with great enthusiasm,” former ILWU Columbia River Organizer Vanessa Veselka wrote. “He was one of the hardest-working and humblest men I’ve known.”

Martin’s San Francisco memorial ended with everyone in the room on their feet, singing all six verses of “Solidarity Forever.”

“He’d do whatever, and he made a better world for all of us,” Jan Martin wrote later in a letter she sent to the ILWU. “If you ever hear a voice over your shoulder, telling you to keep on keeping on when you don’t believe it’s possible, know that Jerry Martin is still on your side.”

—Marcy Rein

Martin’s family has requested that contributions in his memory go to America Coming Together, a group that is mobilizing to send canvassers to swing states to defeat Bush. You can send checks to ACT at 1120 Connecticut Ave., NW, Suite 1120, Washington, D.C., 20036, or visit them on line at www.actvictory.org.

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