Moving Our Traditions to the 21st century
see President’s Report—page 2

In celebration of Black History Month

Over the long history of the working class, grim necessities have forced people of different races and ethnicities to forget prejudice and work together to fight the common enemy. The ILWU has an especially proud history of leadership in this battle, going all the way back to the founding of the union.

But dockers and maritime workers have battled for racial equality even longer—in fact, their struggle predates the founding of the United States itself.

On March 5, 1770, an African American seaman named Crispus Attucks led a party of dockers and sailors from Boston harbor to the British customs house, protesting British occupation and opposing British troops and sailors stealing longshore jobs.

The guard troops stood in ranks and opened fire. When the smoke cleared, five men were dead or dying. That was the Boston Massacre, and the leader of the workers was an escaped slave. He was the first to die in what would become the American Revolution.

But the official historians have ignored African American workers as they have so often been marginalized, vilified and denied credit for their many contributions to American life. The labor movement itself was often responsible for segregated unions and unfair hiring halls. But the labor movement is also responsible for fighting racism, and no one can deny the role of the ILWU in this righteous battle. Harry Bridges went to African American churches during the 1934 strike with a simple message—if Blacks supported the union, the union would demand they be hired on the docks. He kept his word.

This issue of The Dispatcher honors the heroes of everyday life who contributed to their union. Some of their pictures are shown, most are not. Most workers contribute by working every day, producing the goods and services that create the wealth of nations. They feed their families and stick up for their sisters and brothers, all for one and one for all.

—Tom Price
Moving our traditions into the 21st Century

By Robert McEllrath
ILWU International President

Today we are preparing to fight old battles in a new way. We are going to be more aggressive about moving the Union forward in a progressive direction. To do this takes all of the local officers, the international, and the support of the rank and file.

This means that putting out our message about the programs and principles of the ILWU is of the utmost importance. This requires public relations and education, and has to be done in a positive manner. What we need now is productive, proactive, constructive output, such as radio and television ads showing the positive side of the ILWU. For example, International Vice President Wesley Furtado and Local 142 collaborated to make television spots on the local station to profile the ILWU, showing its contributions to the community. Longshore Local 10 put together spot ads on radio during broadcasts of Raiders and 49’ers football games that describe exactly what longshore workers do for their local economy.

Good job!

The time to undertake these kinds of outreach campaigns is now. At the upcoming Longshore Caucus in April, I will propose that we budget $1,000,000 for a public relations campaign to get out our message through 2008. We cannot wait until 2008 to do this. This campaign will not just benefit Longshore for next year’s negotiations, it will build awareness and understanding of all sectors of our Union and the thousands of our members who will be under the gun in bargaining.

Next, we will help train local officers in a series of educational programs. As of this writing, local secretary-treasurers and trustees are being trained in union administration in San Francisco.

Next up will be the Longshore Division’s Contract Administration Workshop. These workshops will train our local officers in grievance handling and arbitration procedures. Our Longshore ranks are growing rapidly and we need to be aggressive in teaching and supporting upcoming local leaders and new members.

Next, in September, we will hold another of our highly successful Leadership Education and Development (LEAD) programs, focusing on “What it will take in 2008.” This means learning the nuts and bolts of internal preparation and member participation in support of the union’s positions at both the bargaining table and in the political arena in this next critical chapter in the life of the ILWU.

In the Longshore Division, again on the idea of strength through unity, we will bring together the Clerks’ Technology and the Longshore Technology committees for a roundtable discussion about the implementation of new technology in our industry. We will also be visiting the new Maersk facility in Virginia to observe the automated container handling equipment.

As we get closer to Longshore bargaining we will also conduct media training for local officers, so that those who have the authority to speak for the ILWU at the local level will have the necessary communications tools and will know how to use them.

We will also set our sights on raising a million dollars for our Political Action Fund to increase our successes in 2008 beyond the extraordinary outcomes we helped achieve last fall.

The global economic pressures we are facing, that have been putting pressure on our workers in Hawaii and warehouse workers everywhere, also requires us to take our historic principle of international solidarity to new heights. We will not only be talking the mutual aid and support, and walking the walk when called upon, but we will be taking new steps and exploring new directions as necessary. We have stepped up our participation in the International Transport Workers’ Federation (ITF), and we have been meeting and communicating with longshore workers in Mexico to discuss issues of mutual concern—including more formal ties between our organizations.

Anyone who reads the maritime industry press or business pages of the newspaper knows of the potential development of the Pacific ports in Mexico as an alternative to Los Angeles and Long Beach for inbound goods from Asia. I decided it was time to go down to Mexico and meet with our counterparts in the Mexican dockworkers’ union. On Dec. 4, 2006 I led a delegation to the largest Mexican container port, Manzanillo, in the State of Colima. I was joined by Leal Sundet from the Coast Committee, Ray Familiathe, Director of International Affairs, and Peter Olney, Director of Organizing. Ben Davis from the AFL-CIO Solidarity Center joined our delegation in Manzanillo. We held a daylong meeting with Cecilio “Lepe” Bautista, General Secretary of the Union of Estibadores Del Mar Pacifico (Pacific Ocean Dockworkers Union).

We discovered that we have strong mutual interests and share similar problems with common employers. SSA has a major presence in Manzanillo and we visited their terminal operations. We pledged to invite a delegation from the Mexican dockworkers to visit our ports and our members in the near future. Ties with Mexican dockworkers need to be deepened and developed.

We will continue to work with the International Dockworkers Council and take concrete measures as needed, such as our recent decision to fund the new IDC office in Brazil. We will do what it takes to follow up on our commitments. We will be an active partner in each and every organization and coalition in which we have a seat at the table. We will, in other words, walk the walk.

My focus with this new administration is quickly and effectively implementing the programs and policies established by the 2006 ILWU Convention and Longshore Caucus, and as decided by the rank and file delegates to those meetings—and by the thousands of rank and file members who cast their ballots in our election over the summer.

We may be talking about a New Direction, but what we are really talking about is going in the same proud and progressive direction taken by the ILWU for over 70 years—but going about it a new way, with some new tools.

An Injury to One is an Injury to All!
Bush plan fails to address health care crisis

By Kyle Weimann

A merica’s health care system is a morass we find ourselves in now. As the ILWU has repeatedly advocated, it is not the direction we ought to rush out and buy health insurance in as the individual market, regardless of income, to pay payroll taxes on that amount. The encourage employers to provide a comprehensive benefit package rather than paying the amount as additional wages. By keeping people in large employer-sponsored health plans, risk is spread among people and premiums can be kept (comparatively) lower. The overhead costs associated with the individual insurance market are significantly higher (30% of every premium dollar versus approximately 10% in the group market).

This year, Bush proposed capping the amount of health benefits that are tax exempt at $7,500 for an individual and $15,000 for a family. His plan would tax any costs above that level would be taxed at the marginal income tax rate for the individual, and businesses would have to pay payroll taxes on that amount. It would then provide a standard tax deduction of equal amounts for people who purchase health insurance outside the individual market, regardless of the cost of the coverage. His theory is that by getting the tax deduction, those without insurance will be able to rush out and buy health insurance of their choice.

Unfortunately for Mr. Bush, his plan is almost entirely nonsensical. Starting with the obvious, a tax deduction is only useful for people who pay taxes. A full 55% of the uninsured do not pay any federal income tax, and 27% of families with incomes under $10,000 in the U.S. pay neither payroll nor income tax. A tax deduction will not provide any benefit to this group.

Second, there is no coverage requirement. A person with chronic illness and very high ongoing health expenses simply cannot buy worthwhile coverage. A corollary of this problem is that there are no requirements for the insurance itself. Corralling people into high deductible plans paired with health savings accounts with no comprehensive coverage and enormous out of pocket expenses will do little to help the average family.

Perhaps most importantly, this proposal would punish employers who have done the right thing by providing comprehensive plans for their employees and retirees. Many of these employees are union members who have spent decades negotiating these packages. The cost per person will be significantly higher for companies with older, long-term employees who have spent their entire working life in harsh conditions in the warehouse, on the factory floor, or on the waterfront.

This is not the direction we ought to be heading.

UNIVERSAL COVERAGE

As the ILWU has repeatedly advocated, the only fair and cost-effective approach to health care is comprehensive, universal, single-payer coverage. By forcing people to fund for themselves in acquiring and financing their health care, everyone must bear the risk of catastrophic disease or disability alone. Administrative and advertising expenses suck billions of dollars out of the health care system, raising premiums and reducing coverage.

Democratic lawmakers are also openly advocating for universal coverage as the only fair and economic solution to the crisis. As the ILWU has repeatedly advocated, it is not the direction we ought to rush out and buy health insurance in the individual market, regardless of income, to pay payroll taxes on that amount. The encourage employers to provide a comprehensive benefit package rather than paying the amount as additional wages. By keeping people in large employer-sponsored health plans, risk is spread among people and premiums can be kept (comparatively) lower. The overhead costs associated with the individual insurance market are significantly higher (30% of every premium dollar versus approximately 10% in the group market).

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This is not the direction we ought to be heading.
The ILWU celebrates Black History Month

Cleophas Williams, Local 10 leader and Oakland community activist since WWII, served several terms as president.

Leon Harris, shown here in his Local 6 office during his tenure as secretary-treasurer, was later elected ILWU International Secretary-Treasurer 1991-1994.

William “Bill” Chester was the first African American elected to ILWU International Office. Prior to that election as Vice President in 1969, he served for over a decade as ILWU Northern California Regional Director and, previously, as an officer of Local 10. Chester brought the ILWU’s tradition of anti-discrimination center stage as a member of many civil rights organizations and coalitions, including the National Negro Labor Council in the 1950s.

Andrew Nelson, far left, President of ILWU Local 207 in New Orleans, leads a march of workers for recognition in 1947. Nelson was part of a generation of African American ILWU who challenged racism and police violence in the Gulf states and the Midwest during the union’s historic organizing drives there—and who paid a heavy price for it. Nelson was indicted and convicted of allegedly falsifying information on his non-Communist affidavit under the Taft-Hartley Act, and died while his case was on appeal in 1956. “We are the most oppressed people, more than any other people in the world,” he said to friends before his death, “not because of any sin we have committed, but because of monopoly ca...
The ILWU celebrates Black History Month

Alpha Lee Hunter, Local 6 stalwart, steward, executive board member and lifelong activist for social justice in the San Francisco Bay Area shown here addressing a San Francisco rally in 1960s.

Legendary performer and human rights activist Paul Robeson (center), made an honorary member of the ILWU in 1943, shown here in 1946 being welcomed by Joe Johnson (at the time a member of the Marine Cooks and Stewards—later to become a member of Local 10 and a profound and passionate voice for social justice) on the right, and Revels Cayton, a 1934 strike veteran from the MCS who joined the ILWU in the late 1930s and was long active in San Francisco politics and progressive causes. Robeson was arriving in San Francisco to speak and perform in support of the 1946 joint maritime strike.

Ernest Clark, (above), standing in white shirt, helped organize and lead the cotton compress workers (below) in Fresno and Bakersfield—one of several industries organized by the ILWU in which the workforce was predominantly African American. "He gave his whole life," said Leroy King, who worked with Clark in the valley for many years," to make sure that this group of workers, who were subject to the worst kind of exploitation and racism, got a better deal by getting organized."

Curtis McClain, left, and Leroy King, right (shown here flanking Local 6 President Keith Eickman) of Bay Area warehouse emerged from rank and file leadership in Local 6 to serve as officers of Local 6 and then at the International: McClain as International Secretary-Treasurer 1977-1991, and King as Northern California Regional Director. Both men became key players in San Francisco and East Bay electoral and legislative politics for decades.

American Minorities and the Case of Harry Bridges

"Therefore you, who have the greater opportunities to witness the living classes of workers and our labor movement everywhere, are the first to realize that the battle that was fought by the San Francisco longshoremen in 1946 and 1947 was the first step toward the mass revolutionary工業 revolution in the United States."

Andrew Nelson, far left, President of ILWU Local 207 in New Orleans, leads a march of workers for recognition in 1947. Nelson was part of a generation of African American activists in the ILWU who challenged racism and police violence in the Gulf states and the Midwest 1940-1956 during the union's historic organizing drives there—and who paid a heavy price for their dedication. Nelson was indicted and convicted of allegedly falsifying information on his non-Communist affidavit under the Taft-Hartley Act, and died while his case was on appeal in 1956. "We are the most oppressed people, more than any other people in the world," he said to friends before his death, "not because of any sin we have committed, but because of monopoly capitalism."
Two ILWU pickets take a break during the 1948 longshore strike along the embarcadero in San Francisco, calling to mind the famous pledge to racial justice made by Harry Bridges after the 1934 strike—"If there were only two longshoremen left on the waterfront, one would be black and the other white."

**Book Review:**

*Nearly forgotten labor and civil rights legal cases remain in new booklets*

Ginger claims this is the first book with citations to web pages and to fine old books found in libraries, and to briefs in the famous archival collection of Meiklejohn Civil Liberties Institute.

"This book is an inspiring journey through the leading civil rights and civil liberties cases of our age," according to Prof. Marjorie Cohn, President of the National Lawyers Guild.

Cited from the 1970s describe how White Panthers defeated war warrant-less wiretaps in 1972. Recent case describe how Inspector General Reports led to 9/11 victims suing for bad information from the EPA on the "safety" of working at Ground Zero.

This is a short, sharp book for activists, students, teachers, and anyone concerned about human rights and peace law.

"It is exciting to hear students start asking their grandparents what they did during the McCarthy period when singer/guitarist Pete Seeger "took the First Amendment," Ginger says.
Bob Williams passes, he played a leading role in 1987 Crowley strike
by Tom Price

When Crowley Maritime opened negotiations with the ILWU in February 1987, the union found the employer had one thing in mind—total victory. Crowley had proposed concessions that would have reduced wages and benefits by as much as 60 percent for the 800 IBU members in Seattle, Portland, Alaska, Hawaii and San Francisco.

Of course, the IBU went on strike. Bob Williams was the IBU’s San Francisco Regional Chair and he would be in the thick of the fight. The IBU was the defending union, he said.

“He was a principled leader of the strike,” longshore Local 10 member Jack Heyman said. “If it weren’t for him, we would not have been able to organize militant actions like we did in Redwood City.”

Williams led the picketing of the scab barges that drove the scabs off the docks. The company had also brought in non-ILWU crane operators to unload the barges and workers shut the port down for five and a half hours March 20, 1987.

The strike dragged on for nine months and ended with the IBU retaining jurisdiction and beating back many of the concessions.

Williams was born March 9, 1927 and grew up in New Britain, Conn. He left home early, and after high school and the navy, he ended up in California, where he worked many kinds of jobs.

“One of his favorite jobs was working for PG&E, putting in the original wiring in mountain passes in the Sierra Nevada,” his ex-wife Cap. Enid Williams said. “He went to work on horseback and camped out, he was 19 at the time. He said that was the best job he ever had, so he was pretty much ruined for anything else after that.”

Marcus skippers ferry boats in San Francisco Bay under the Maritime Engineers Beneficial Assn. contract.

“He was very concerned with fairness in dispatching and he helped rewrite the shipping rules to what they are today,” Marcus said. “The shipping rules determine how people get dispatched to jobs, how they rotate so everybody has a chance to get a job. It was one of the things he was most proud of.”

SoCal pensioners honor their own

By Al Perillo

Southern California Pensioners President

The Southern California Pensioners held their annual holiday banquet Oct. 29 to honor two living past club presidents, George Kuvakas and Lou Loveridge, for their decades of loyal service to the ILWU Longshore Division. Both men have been involved in many ILWU Conventions, Caucuses and contract negotiations and are among the reasons that pensioners today enjoy so many benefits.

Kuvakas became a registered member of the union in 1944. He served as longshore Local 13 President, Business Agent and Dispatcher. He chaired the Longshore Caucus held in Hawaii in 1961. Harry Bridges sent him to chair Canadian negotiations in 1963 and he was elected to all committees and executive boards of Local 13. He transferred to walking boss Local 94 in 1963. There he was elected to the Executive board, Labor Relations Committee and served as Vice President. He retired in 1980 and became active in the Southern California Pensioners group, was elected President in 2001 and held that post until 2006. He was honored as Man of the Year by the Harry Bridges Institute in 2002.

Lou Loveridge received his union book in 1948. He and his brothers Joe, Chick and Fuzzy were all strong, active union men. He served as Local 13 President several times, and was elected many times to all committees, including Conventions and Caucuses and Executive Boards. He retired in 1988 and now enjoys time with his family and gardening. He is involved with the Southern California Pensioners group, has been President and is currently on the Executive Board. Loveridge was honored by the Harry Bridges Institute as Man of the Year in 1999.

Longshore Retired, Deceased and Survivors

RECENT RETIREEs:

Local 4—Kelso Korte, Lance Lynch; Local 7—Howard Morgan, Fredrick L. Williams; Local 8—Joseph Raffaele, Robert Parsons, Jerome Polk; Local 10—Willie Greer, Tom A. Smith, Paul Anderson, Joseph M. Diaz Jr., Philip Garcia, Keith Cleaver, William Deming, Leslie Orug; Local 12—Larry J. Jackson, Faris Good; Local 13—Marijon Ancich, John L. Hunt, Raul Madrid, William Blutt, David Torres, George Y. Torres, Norman McSweeney, Martha D. Diaz; Local 14—Richard Cordero; Local 19—Leonard McDonald, William Arthur, Robert Van Curen, Tommie Morrison; Local 23—Rodger Skiffington, Beverly Berger; Local 24—Allen Lytle, John Flink, Dennis Ketola; Local 26—Mary J. Fox; Local 27—George Rampe; Local 28—Manuel J. Pacheco, Richard E. Cruz; Local 32—David Rogers; Local 34—Frank J. Perez, Basik Palmer, Frank J. Flores, John Carell, Robert Battle Jr., Gloria Carrosco; Local 40—William Gordon Jr., Donald Holtzman; Local 52—Henry Ijsselmijn Jr.; Local 53—Maurice Strong; Local 54—Clifford Boeth, Lester Ferreira Sr.; Local 63—Gregory P. Peralta, Simon Del Real, George Drudge, Carol Reed, Marjorie Katnich Sr., Richard Brusick, Robert Powers, Patrick Stamper, Anthony Yanko, Michael Kovacevich, Mickey Del Real, Lewis Sher; Local 91—Frank M. Rios; Local 92—Jack Grohs Jr.; Local 94—Philipp Bergstrom; Local 97—David Boeck, Joe Ross Jr., Daniel Ekendahl.

DECEASED:

Local 4—Darrell Morgan (Grace), Robert Kadaw; Local 8—Ernest Gendron (June), Harry Hersey (Eileen), Thomas Mahoney, Richard Wiche; Local 10—Joe Souza (Mary), Rogers Wright (Johnnie), Henry Phillips (Celestine), Bobby Norwood (David and Angel) Richard Richardson (Angela), Robert Patricio, Thomas Green; Local 13—Pynne Fields, Phillip Armstrong; Local 13—Mike Mavur (Lorraine), Harold “Curly” Harris (Daphne), Edward Ruiz (Geraldine), Carina Pachard (Anastasia), Hugo Rosas (Bina), Tommie Myer (Doris), Joseph Gonzales (Karda), Oliver Laine, Robert Elliott; Local 19—James Allingham (William), Ted Glass (Catherine), Joseph Cardinale, James Rees, Eric Strand; Local 21—Henry Loron (Gloria); Local 24—John Schoening (Lillian); Local 27—Rolf Tharaldsen (Karen); Local 29—Carlos Fernandez; Local 34—Marshall Walker (Pauline), James Blue; Local 34—John Hope (Ann), Eugene Breitenbach (Irene); Local 47—Ronald Hincheiffe (Dora); Local 50—Dave M. Johnson; Local 92—Michael St. Ouge (Sally); Local 94—Bobby Ford (Mary); Local 98—Lawrence Mostrom. (Survivors in parenthesis.)

DECEASED SURVIVORS:

Local 8—Margaret Thomas; Local 10—Christine Mrla, Santa Amantano, Versie Lee Digs; Local 12—Vivian Krieschel, Juanita Pinkerman, Carmen Simpson; Local 13—Lynn Thayer, Lois Nunnelee, Clara Mathlin, Mable Pate, Leuzia Mathews, Doris Blassingill, Carrie Maki-Smith, Naomi Nelsen, Clara Mantle, Mary L. Williamson, Helen Muldown; Local 19—Esther Englund; Local 23—Vioa Lund; Local 29—Lela Huft, Celestine Amonar; Local 34—Emma Sangementito, Claribel Murphy, Marion Peters, Sophia Strickland, Virginia Kelly; Local 53—Beatrice Ferris; Local 75—Jacqueline Fedyna, Loreta Erb; Local 91—Frankie Houston; Local 92—Gertrude Hangland; Local 94—Helen Rodin, Alma Sanderson.
Books and videos about the ILWU are available from the union’s library at discounted prices!

**BOOKS:**
Harry Bridges: The Rise and Fall of Radical Labor in the United States By Charles Larrowe: A limited number of copies of this out-of-print and useful biography are now available through the book sale by special arrangement with Bolerium Books in San Francisco, which specializes in rare publications and documents about radical and labor history. $18.00

The ILWU Story: Unrolls the history of the union from its origins to the present, complete with recollections from the men and women who built the union, in their own words, and dozens of rare photos of the union in action. $5.00

The Big Strike By Mike Quin: the classic partisan account of the 1934 strike. $16.50

The March Inland: Origins of the ILWU Warehouse Division 1934-1938 By Harvey Schwartz: new edition of the only comprehensive account of the union’s organizing campaign in the northern California warehouse and distribution industry. $19.00

NOTE: TWO IMPORTANT BOOKS ARE NO LONGER AVAILABLE TO THE ILWU LIBRARY AT A SIGNIFICANT DISCOUNT, BUT MAY BE PURCHASED FROM BOOKSTORES, INCLUDING THE ILWU LOCAL 5 WEBSITE (powellsunion.com)

**VIDEOS:**

We Are the ILWU A 30-minute color video introducing the principles and traditions of the ILWU. Features active and retired members talking about what the union meant in their lives and what it needs to survive and thrive, along with film clips, historical photos and an original musical score. DVD or VHS version: $15.00

Life on the Beam: A Memorial to Harry Bridges A 17-minute DVD of the original video production by California Working Group, Inc., memorializes Harry Bridges through still photographs, recorded interviews, and reminiscences. Originally produced for the 1990 memorial service in San Francisco. DVD: $5.00

NOTE: “Life on the Beam” is now available in DVD format through the book sale at this greatly reduced price by special arrangement with the Working Group, and includes a bonus feature on the building of the Golden Gate Bridge.

**BOOKS:**

A Terrible Anger: The 1934 Waterfront and General Strike in San Francisco By David Selvin: perhaps the most comprehensive single narrative about the San Francisco events of 1934. $16.50

The Big Strike @ $16.50 ea. = $_____

The March Inland @ $19 ea. = $_____

The Big Strike @ $16.50 ea. = $_____

The Union Makes Us Strong @ $20 ea. = $_____

The March Inland @ $19 ea. = $_____

A Terrible Anger @ $16.50 ea. = $_____

We Are the ILWU DVD @ $15 ea. = $_____

We Are the ILWU VHS @ $15 ea. = $_____

A Life on the Beam DVD @ $15 ea. = $_____

Total Enclosed $_____

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Make check or money order (U.S. Funds) payable to “ILWU” and send to

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Prices include shipping and handling. Please allow at least four weeks for delivery.

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