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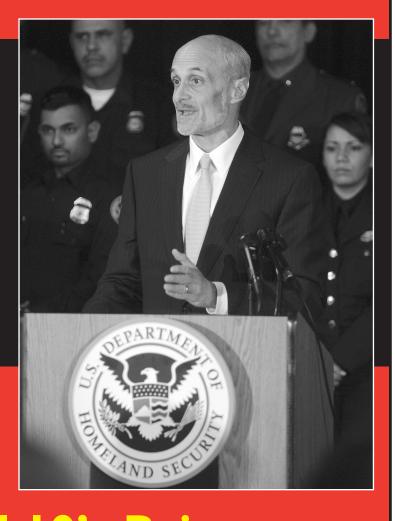


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OTHER VOICES



I confess— I rob banks

Thave a confession. I am a thief. I steal and, you know what, I'm not going to stop. I steal from banks because that's where the money is.

I am not robbing the innocent. Banks steal from their customers, namely you. They call it making an honest profit. But banks use your wealth against you. Banks take the wealth from working families and they don't lend that money back into the communities from where it came. That is called redlining. I call it robbery.

What do banks do with your wealth? Banks pull resources out of American industries where we work and open new modern plants in poor countries. Banks prefer countries where there are puppet military dictators who are willing to sell out their own people to American multinational corporations financed with your hard-earned money. They send your wealth overseas to these corporations that rob the resources of other working people, people like you.

Here in America banks are consolidating their power. Bank of America, which was started in San Francisco by Italian immigrants as an answer to anti-immigrant sentiments of the time, is now headquartered in North Carolina and has bought up large Eastern banks. Wells Fargo financed the union-busting law firm in a Pittsburg, California steel strike. San Francisco-based Bank of the West finances Threemile Canyon Farms for \$101 million where the owner refuses to hire woman saying, "I don't want women at the farm—they are only good for the bed." That's the way banks and their finance partners talk about your mother, wife and daughter. The United Farm Workers union has a case against Threemile Canyon Farms for sex discrimination

Banks tell their investors to "look for the union label and run the other way." Don't invest in companies with unions, don't invest in countries with democracy, but open up a bank on every corner to suck up the wealth of working families to send offshore. So you see, banks are stealing from you.

When banks and savings and loans failed in the 1980s, who picked up the tab? You did. They did not fund their insurance agency sufficiently to cover their billions in loses due to their criminal lending practices. This bank failure turned out to be the biggest "transfer of wealth" (robbery) of the middle class to bail out the banking class in the history of the United States. Banks made out like bandits. As Woody Guthrie noted in his famous song about the notorious bank robber Pretty Boy Floyd "some rob you with a six gun, some with a fountain pen."

For these and many other reasons I rob banks of their most essential assets—their customers. In the last five years I admit to playing my part in tak-

LASH

This is how it was cold wet muscles tense moving fast pulling the metal rods down that bind the towers of stacked steel boxes to the ship's deck Watching your feet in the narrow aisles One eye up for falling rods Jumping to the slam of the crane's rack scooping cargo to shore Hardhat long gone Gloves sagging from rain rivers of sweat and grease thick as butter on the rusty threads of binders that won't budge The soft pads of your palms bruising as you finally turn loose, spin and drop the worn turnbuckles where they lay like dead bodies in an open grave

--Kevin Castle, 56876, ILWU Local 19

EYE OF THE STORM

by Zeek Green ILWU Local 23

So Miniace wants to make a name for himself. He seems to want another "Union Busting" trophy on his shelf.

He's brought in the big guns, and has an itch to get the ILWU's head mounted on his wall.

But I want him impaled with a ten-foot hook and hanged from the flagpole at my Union Hall.

Does he know who and what we are? Does he want a repeat of 1934?

Does he think we'll just roll over and give up any part of what our founders fought and died for?

This is gonna be an all out war, looks like the battle begins in the year 2002.

It's time to fight for our Union, so let's ask ourselves: "What would Harry do?"

Looks like this whole thing's pretty well planned out, the SSA wants to restructure the PMA with its hawk CEO Hemmingway poised to attack.

Let's not forget it's the same company that got a no-bid contract to work in Iraq.

He knows that Bush and the Republicans have his back, so they wanna see how far they can force us. We've always had a rocky marriage, but now the employers are trying to divorce us.

So Miniace joined forces with the shippers to help with the mission,

Got around the law by calling themselves the West Coast Waterfront Coalition.

The W.C.W.C is feeding the media piles of propaganda and fiction,

saying that we're against technology, when we really just want union jurisdiction.

They're trying to use modern day McCarthyism to bury us, and it is pitifully hilarious

How the media has people thinking that longshoremen are economic terrorists.

We never stopped the flow of cargo. It's the employers that closed the gates.

It's the employers that shut off trade through all three West Coast states.

They told the nation that we were to blame for the economy losing a billion dollars a day,

Then it was two billion a day. There was no fake figure they were not willing to say.

And all the Americans workers want someone to blame for them feeling the pinch.

Christmas was being stolen from America, it's not the union, but the PMA that's the Grinch.

We know that if we lose, then all workers of the world will

So our officials stepped up to the plate and earned every penny of those union dues.

We lobbied in D.C., flew globally, held rallies and shouted "Bush Butt-Out!"

But the crooked employers and shippers and the government consorted to keep us shut out.

The gates were chained, and we did not have the keys to the locks.

There were rumors that the National Guard would be coming in to work the docks.

No work equals no money equals pulling kids out of college and losing houses.

And all we want is a good contract and a raise for retirees and surviving spouses.

But they don't want the workers controlling the terminals and rail yards.

But the tide really turned when Miniace showed up with two armed guards.

The momentum is changing, the game pieces are rearranging, and it is starting to look up

Hoffa and Trumka are coming in like the Cavalry, giving us the "Homie Hook-Up."

That ten-day lock-out taught our union a lot.

We should be proud of how we stuck together and how hard we fought.

They'll be coming at us again in 2008, Using terrorism and national security, there's no time to wait.

We'd better start preparing and be ready to perform.

The waters may seem calm now, that's why they call it the "Eye of the Storm."

ing thousands of customers from banks and making them members and owners of their own financial institution. Now they control their own profits and those profits are kept in their community. They are invested in your homes, cars and education loans and earn a much higher rate of return. There are no risky loans to foreign dictators or union-busting firms or multinational corporations closing your plant and moving it to some dictatorship, putting you on welfare and making your fellow workers pay for it while the bank hides from the tax man on some tax-free island.

So what is this member-owned financial institution that now thousands of your fellow workers have discovered? Simple. It's your Credit Union. Join it and you can be the getaway driver in my continuing bank robbery.

Now if you don't mind banks making a profit off your sweat, then don't come down and join your credit union. If, on the other hand, you're tired of being mistreated and abused, then the credit union is for you. Let the credit union show you how you can make a profit off your own money for a change.

To join your local ILWU credit union, just ask at your local union or go online to www.creditunion. coop/cu_locator. There are nine ILWU credit unions up and down the Pacific Coast, so it's easy to find the one for you. Whether you're up in Hoquiam, Wash. or down in San Pedro, Calif., come home to your family, the family of the ILWU Credit Unions.

—Lewis Wright ILWU Local 63 retired

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May 2006

Almond workers win one but the law still lags

By Marcy Rein

SACRAMENTO—The Capitol hearing room got so quiet it seemed like everyone was holding their breath. Some 60 people had gathered for a forum on the Employee Free Choice Act hosted by U.S. Rep. George Miller (D-Martinez) and joined by Rep. Doris Matsui (D-Sacramento). Ivo Camilo from Blue Diamond Growers was describing what happened to him exactly a year before, while he and his co-workers were organizing to join ILWU warehouse Local 17.

"In March 2005, we went public with our demand to gain a voice and respect on the job," Camilo said. "A month later I was fired.

"Management accused me of 'will-fully contaminating the almonds' and on April 20th at 2 p.m. two supervisors escorted me out of the building. I was suspended pending investigation. I was asked to surrender my badge. I thanked the company for the 35 years that I had worked with them, and left the property," Camilo said.

For a minute he couldn't go on. He swallowed hard. He pushed up his glasses and wiped tears out of the corners of his eyes, then continued. "After losing my job I felt angry and betrayed," he said. "I also learned that I would do it all over again. I would join the organizing committee and speak with my co-workers about the need for health coverage, better wages and better conditions at work."

Four days after the hearing, Camilo and fellow organizing committee member Mike Flores were getting congratulatory hugs from co-workers as they stood outside the plant in the 6 a.m. chill, ready for their first day back at work.

The National Labor Relations Board found Blue Diamond broke labor law when it fired Camilo and Flores. In a March 17 ruling, NLRB Administrative Law Judge Jay R. Pollack ordered the company to rehire them. Judge Pollack also found Blue Diamond guilty of illegally disciplining Alma Orozco, illegally interrogating workers about their union sympathies and illegally threatening them with plant closure and loss of pensions and other benefits.

Blue Diamond insisted it had done nothing wrong. It vowed to appeal the order. The NLRB was also seeking a court order against the company. Blue Diamond said it would fight that too.



ILWU International Vice President Robert McEllrath (at podium) introduces some of the Blue Diamond workers, who were being honored at the U.C. Berkeley Labor Center's gala April 27. The Labor Center dedicated this year's fundraising event to "rank-and-file working people who have put in extra effort, courage and vision to make this a better society for everyone." Eugene Esparza (far left) accepted the award on behalf of his co-workers, with (left to right) Petra Esparza, Randy Reyes, Laura Reyes, Danny Hessel and Gloria Hessel accompanying him. "Blue Diamond campaigned hard against the union," Esparza said. "The NLRB decision has helped bring back two employees with a total of 55 years at the company...I would like to thank ILWU Local 17 and everyone who has helped with our struggle. We still have a long way to go but we're very grateful for your support." The Labor Center, which carries out research and education projects to help workers and their organizing efforts, honored the Blue Diamond workers "for their courage and perseverance in standing up for the freedom of association in the face of illegal and unethical employer intimidation."

But then the company blinked. It let the April 14 deadline for appeals go by.

"The union is glad to see that Blue Diamond recognizes they're not above labor law," Local 17 Secretary-Treasurer Jack Wyatt, Sr. said. "Local 17 will remain vigilant to see the company respects the rights of its workers."

Inside the plant, the company only announced the decision not to appeal in two departments, committee member Cesario Aguirre said.

"The supervisor in manufacturing just said it would be a waste of time and money to appeal. This says to me everything is still business as usual," Aguirre said.

Despite the ruling, the company has continued to harass union supporters. The ILWU filed more unfair

labor practice charges March 20 on behalf of Aguirre and fellow committee member Leo Esparza. BDG wrote up Aguirre for putting aside his safety glasses for a moment to examine a sinkhole he was drilling. They fired Esparza for pulling a broken weedwhacker out of the trash and taking it home without a "property pass." In the past Esparza had scavenged many items from the garbage without being disciplined. Once he even tied an old desk to the top of his car and drove right past security with it.

The weaknesses in labor law mean the damage to people's lives and their rights still lingers. Camilo was out of work for a full year, Flores for 10 months.

"Getting the decision from the NLRB has helped the vibe in the plant, but people are still scared," committee member Randy Reyes said at the forum.

The Employee Free Choice Act (EFCA) discussed at the forum aims to make the organizing process fairer by stiffening the penalties for employers who break the law. Rep. Miller introduced EFCA (H.R. 1696/S. 842) in April 2005 with 212 co-sponsors, including Rep. Matsui.

Under EFCA, employers found guilty of illegally firing workers during a drive would have to rehire those workers and pay them triple back pay. Employers could be fined up to \$20,000 per violation committed to thwart organizing, and the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) would have to seek court injunctions against employers if there was "reasonable cause to believe" their law-breaking would have a major impact on an organizing drive

So if EFCA were in place now, the NLRB could have gone to court just after Camilo and Flores got fired and asked for an order putting them back to work. The company could be facing as much as \$560,000 in fines for its illegal threats and firings. Instead it only has to pay out about \$60,000 in back wages plus interest.

EFCA would also make it easier for workers to get representation. Card-check recognition would replace NLRB elections a way of see-

ing whether a majority of workers want to join a union. Under a "card check" agreement, the employer has to recognize the union if a majority of workers in a shop sign cards or petitions saying they want representation. Current law allows card check but doesn't require it. Most employers refuse card check. They prefer the more drawn-out election procedure, which gives them time to campaign against the union.

Workers from Cingular Wireless joined those from Blue Diamond at the Sacramento forum. Rosa Samaniego and Cherie Heinze talked about their experiences organizing under the neutrality card-check agreement between Cingular and the Communications Workers of America. The 800 workers in Cingular's Sacramento call center and more than 100 in local Cingular retail stores joined CWA in October after a majority signed cards confirming that they wanted CWA to represent them.

"Prior to the neutrality agreement, we couldn't go into the stores," Cherie Heinze said. "After the agreement, we had access and could even sit in the break room to answer questions and give information.

"Organizing a union with neutrality in place allows workers to get information and enables them to be able to truly make a free choice on the question of union representation," she said.

This sounded good to the Blue Diamond workers, who have already been working hard for a year and a half.

"We want what they have," committee member Ann Hurlbut told Reps. Miller and Matsui. Working closely with the International Organizing Dept. and Local 17, the committee is aiming to get a neutrality agreement from the huge almond cooperative, as a first step towards representation and a contract.

After Camilo and Flores walked back into the plant April 24, lead organizer Agustin Ramirez took a moment to reflect. "This was huge for the workers," Ramirez said. "It was a huge step, but a huge step on what could be a very long road."



Blue Diamond Growers Organizing Committee member Ivo Camilo gets a hug from a co-worker as he returns to his job on April 24 after a year's absence. The NLRB ruled that Blue Diamond illegally fired him because he supported the union. The company had to rehire him and give him back pay with interest.

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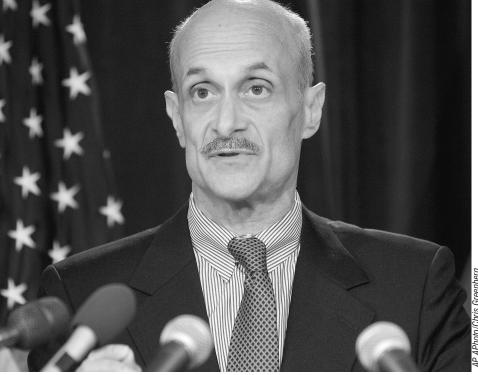
Government will screen longshore for terrorists

ichael Chertoff, Secretary of the Dept. of Homeland Security (DHS), held a news conference Tuesday, April 25 to announce the Bush administration's latest plan to secure the nation's ports—check the names of port workers against the FBI's Terrorist Watch list.

"This initial round of background checks, which is beginning with today's legal notice, will cover an estimated 400,000 port workers and will focus first on the employees and longshoremen who have daily access to the security areas of port facilities," Chertoff told the media. "In other words, we're going to focus on those who could potentially be the greatest risk to our security."

It was an odd accusation considering ILWU officers have been meeting with Coast Guard and Transportation Security Administration officials, the DHS agencies responsible for port security, for a couple of years. In fact, the union's top officers had met with them just a month before and had agreed to cooperate with the name match program. The union was only concerned that there be an appeals process since the list, used to screen airline passengers, is notorious for false matches.

"Being pulled out of line and missing a flight because of a false match is inconvenient, but losing your job, your healthcare and your pension



Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff told the world that checking longshore workers would "focus on those who could potentially be the greatest risk to our security."

because of a mistake is unacceptable," ILWU International President James Spinosa said. "We have to balance the need for security with civil rights."

The timing of Chertoff's announcement and the target of his program

were transparent. The House subcommittee on port security was scheduled to discuss a Democratic proposal the next day to inspect all containers for radiation. The Democrats had been pounding the Republicans for not

having funded and implemented a port security program more than four years after 9-11. This announcement was meant to show the White House was really doing something.

But typical of the Bush administration and Republican approach, Chertoff was putting the security risk onus on American workers instead of where the real source of danger lies—in the millions of uninspected containers that enter U.S. ports every year from all over the world. Even though current Coast Guard regulations require inspection of container seals and so-called "empty" containers, this is rarely if ever done at West Coast ports because it would cut into the productivity and profitability of the terminal operating companies. And the Coast Guard has shown little interest in enforcing those regulations. Doing background checks on longshore workers is so much easier.

"Productivity isn't hurt by inspecting workers, only by inspecting containers," Spinosa said.

Chertoff is requiring unions and employers supply the government with a spread sheet listing each port worker's name, date of birth and Social Security number and, where applicable, immigration status. The ILWU does not keep records of its members' Social Security numbers. That information resides with the employer group, the Pacific Maritime Assn. (PMA), which issues the workers' paychecks.

At the press conference Chertoff also said that this list matching was just a first preliminary check of longshore workers. He said that by the end of the year the government will begin criminal background checks on all longshore workers to further see if they pose a security risk to the nation. All longshore workers will be required to pass the background checks before being issued a Transportation Workers Identification Card (TWIC), the new national ID card that will be needed to gain access to port terminals. The TWIC card will carry biometric information, digital data of probably a fingerprint to positively identify the card holder.

The ILWU has raised several concerns about the TWIC. First, the union wants to limit the data encoded on the card to that which is absolutely necessary to identify the workers and limit who has access to that information. So far, the government has given no such assurances and has claimed what information is encoded on the card must remain secret for security reasons.

Second, ever since the issue of longshore worker background checks was raised in September 2001, the ILWU has insisted that legitimate anti-terrorist concerns not be used against workers and their unions. The list of disqualifying offenses must have some real correlation to matters that would make someone a national security risk.

"If someone has been convicted of a crime, done their time and paid their debt to society and now has a good job and is a productive member of society, he shouldn't be punished a second time. That's unconstitutional," Spinosa said. "The fastest way to turn someone into a criminal is to take away their opportunity to earn a living with dignity."

Again, as a result of the ILWU lobbying efforts, the current TWIC background checks include an appeals process. Any member unjustly accused and screened off the waterfront will have an opportunity to present a defense in front of an Administrative Law Judge.

Further news on the TWIC card and its affects on ILWU members will be published in The Dispatcher and posted on the union's website at www. ilwu.org.

TECH COMMITTEE VIEWS THE FUTURE



Steve Stallone

Port design consultant John Vickerman gave a presentation about the latest trends, technologies and theories on making ports more efficient and productive to a gathering of the ILWU's joint longshore and clerks' technology committee April 13 in Long Beach, Calif.

Vickerman, a recognized pioneer in the field, pointed out that today's marine terminals are under pressure to reduce costs and increase the speed of moving cargo, while dealing with the extra burdens of new security measures and environmental demands. At the same time, cargo volumes are increasing faster than infrastructure can be built to handle it.

"What we know today will be different tomorrow, so we have to be flexible," Vickerman said. "If we fail to plan, we are planning to fail."

Vickerman is promoting a strategy he calls "agile ports." He said it is a way of organizing and integrating vessel and rail information systems to reduce the time containers sit on docks, increasing terminal capacity without building any new infrastructure.

Vickerman noted that in 2003 the ILWU joined with his

company, TranSystems Corporation, the U.S. Departments of Defense and Transportation, the Port of Tacoma and its Hyundai and Washington United Terminals in a pilot demonstration project to test if his ideas would really work on the ground. The result was a doubling of terminal capacity. Pleased with the outcome, the U.S. government wants to try an expanded demonstration project later this year in Tacoma, and Vickerman again asked for the ILWU's participation.

"The people who use the technology should be part of planning it," he said.

The day before the joint technology committee toured the Maersk terminal in the Port of Los Angeles where they checked out the latest technologies and methods of operation. ILWU International President Jim Spinosa was pleased with meetings and the discussions the committee had on how these technologies will affect longshore and clerk work and jurisdiction.

"We're staying on top of the current and future technological changes in the industry as we prepare for the 2008 negotiations," Spinosa said.

—Steve Stallone

—Steve Stallone

The DISPATCHER

Canadian hog workers save jobs, company

by Tom Price

Then the last little piggy went to market at Worldwide Pork in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan in May 2005, it looked like the company would shut down forever.

But most of the 270 members of the Retail, Wholesale, Department Store Union, ILWU Canada didn't give up. They would demonstrate, lobby, invest their own money and hold on to save their jobs.

The company had gone bankrupt last year, leaving its workers jobless and owing them money. A bankruptcy judge froze its assets, but gave the workers time to try to resuscitate the business. Their effort would go down

The workers, who slaughter hogs and process and package the pork, had maintained standards high enough to have earned the company permits to sell to Japan, the world's toughest food market. But those permits would expire April 28, 2006 if the workers couldn't raise the funds to continue running the operation.

Union members had a deep investment in the plant and their community. Most had worked there a long time, some for as many as 30 years. So they formed a Labor-Sponsored Venture Capital fund, a financial organization founded under provincial law that allows investors tax credits for a portion of their investment. The 20year old law is designed to set up an investment fund sponsored by labor unions that can bail out companies like Worldwide. It also gives workers ownership rights. The workers put in their own money and attracted other investors. They felt they had a stake worth protecting.

"We would lose our back pay if the company went into receivership, so we said, 'Why don't we start a new company?'" RWDSU Local 455 Chief Steward Greg Tanner said. "So 106 people ploughed their notice [severance] pay in. It was our last chance."

Still, it wasn't enough, so the workers took to the streets to apply political pressure. They demonstrated April 25 in front of the local offices of

Glenn Hagel and Debra Higgins, New Democratic Party members of the provincial legislature. The workers explained that investors didn't want to come in without provincial help, yet the province wouldn't commit without private investors.

"Over the 30 years we've injected lots into the economy, we've never had our hands out," Tanner said. All they were asking for is some of their tax money back.

The worker-supported NDP provincial government of Premier Lorne Calvert finally broke that nasty cycle. At the last minute, on April 27, the Province came up with a \$1.5 million investment to put the restructuring plan over the top. The workers voted unanimously to accept the deal April 28 and 29. The union had held

"We're a pretty tight bunch. We were locked out five years ago in a labor dispute where they wanted millions in concessions, we gave them the first million and that wasn't enough," Tanner said. "We lasted out that and that welded the unit."

The company will still have to come up with customers since it hasn't been functioning for a year, but the workers plan to expand and expect that by the end of the first year they will have majority worker ownership of the company. The workers have plans for expansion and capturing more of the processing work, including refrigerated packaging.

"If we get into the fresh chill like we should have ten years ago, do more value-added processing in the plant with the product we have, the advantage right away is that no one else is in on your product," Tanner

It was a long, difficult year for the workers, but they are hoping it will pay off in the near future.

"We have families where both husband and wife worked at the plant. They had employment insurance, but by now it's run out," Brian Haughey, staff representative for the 6,000-member RWDSU, said. "I give them a lot of credit for hanging on and not giving up."

ILWU JOINS IMMIGRANT RIGHTS MARCH



ILWU Northern California Locals 10, 34 and 6 and the Local 10 Drill Team joined the 50,000 strong march in San Francisco May 1 in support of immigrants' rights. The parade took the historic route up Market Street from the Harry Bridges Plaza up to Civic Center.

Similar marches were held throughout Northern California, in San Jose, San Rafael, Santa Rosa and Sacramento. A million immigrant rights supporters marched in Los Angeles and hundreds of thousands more marched in other mass demonstrations held in New York, Chicago and many other cities throughout the country.

Billed as a "Day without Immigrants," a general strike of immigrant workers to highlight the important role they play in the U.S. economy, the demonstrations were in response to the anti-immigration bill passed by the House of Representatives, the Border and Immigration Enforcement Act of 2005. That proposed law would further criminalize undocumented immigrants looking for work, driving them further underground into the black market for labor where they could be more easily exploited by employers. Fear of deportation would keep them from union organizing and speaking out against unsafe working conditions and wage and hour law violations.

The ILWU, whose founding president was an Australian immigrant, has always supported the rights immigrant workers no matter their national origin or race. ILWU International President James Spinosa recently wrote a letter to U.S. Senators considering a version of the Border and Immigration Enforcement Act outlining what he called "a comprehensive and realistic" approach to immigration reform. He called for the current population of undocumented workers-who, he noted, pay taxes and make positive contributions to their communities-to have a path to legalization and documentation. A guest worker program like the one currently proposed only creates second-class residents, likely to face marginalization and workplace harassment. Spinosa added that workplace standards must be enforced so unscrupulous employers don't have an incentive to exploit immigrant workers.

Why the Pacific Coast Pensioners Association?

By Arne Auvinen PCPA President

n a monumental negotiations breakthrough, the first ILWU pension checks were passed out to retiring ILWU longshoremen, clerks and foremen in July 1952 at special meetings held up and down the Coast.

Soon after retiring, these pension ers began to organize into clubs in the various areas of the West Coast. In the beginning a main purpose of the pension clubs was to provide a place and an opportunity for ILWU retirees and their wives to visit and keep alive satisfying work and fraternal relationships going back many years. Before long most pension clubs began to face up to and take action on senior and labor problems and issues of direct concern to their clubs and the locals from which they retired. They found out they needed their pension clubs to represent them in maintaining and improving their living standards under the contract and Social Security. Realizing that strength was in their numbers, in 1968 ILWU pensioners took the next logical step, forming the Pacific Coast Pensioners Assn.

The original driving force in organizing the PCPA was Leo Miller, Local 63, Wilmington Marine Clerks. He received help from Locals 13 and

24 in raising money and encouragement. The criteria for a coastwise organizing meeting were: 1) find a location half the distance between Bellingham, Wash. and San Diego, Calif.; 2) stay away from the seaports; 3) have parking for RVs and hotel accommodations.

After investigating various sites from Red Bluff, Calif. to Medfore, Ore., Miller recommended Anderson, Calif. The call was sent to all pension groups to hold an organizing convention Sept. 16, 17 and 18, 1968. The delegates assembled at the organizing convention and came without compensation, instruction or constitution, but with enthusiasm and the will to do something, not only for themselves, but for all pensioners.

Miller favored a loose organization, with just a coordinator and an Executive Board. The northern delegates wanted to elect a President, Vice President, Secretary and Executive Board, with a constitution to be written and presented to the 1969 con-

They resolved their differences and Bill Lawrence, Local 13, was elected President; Mike Sickinger, Local 8, Treasurer; Rosco Craycraft, Local 19, Secretary of the Executive Board and Brother Leo Miller to serve as coordinator until the 1969 convention.

a fraternal organization of ILWU pensioners that would give them unity, direction and purpose. Through their association they would have a voice to speak for them at both the union and the national level. They believed that a fraternal adjunct to the ILWU would be of considerable value.

The pensioners and wives who gathered at the first convention were all veterans of the 1934 strike. They had been together through the struggles of the 30s and 40s and knew there was no such thing as a free lunch. They understood that in order to maintain their benefits they had to support the ILWU as they did when they were working.

In the beginning most pensioners and their spouses believed in the PCPA, but attitudes changed in pensioners retiring after the 1960s. When they retired, they failed to participate or even join the PCPA. The ILWU still needs the support of all pensioners, spouses and widows. Out of 8,700 eligible retirees, only 2,700 are members of the PCPA. Our union and the labor movement as a whole are at a crossroads, and both need the support of all the ILWU pensioners.

Prosperity breeds greed, apathy and complacency. Workers and pensioners become self-serving during the good times. There is no one among

The purpose of all this was to have us working or retired who should forget that what we have today is here because someone fought on our behalf long before we were part of the union movement. We "old timers," pensioners or whatever we want to be called, should not sit back and collect our pensions and Social Security and ignore what has happened with the airline and automobile companies, where pensions and retiree health care have been slashed or eliminated altogether, and think we are immune. Only by joining in the struggle can we be sure what we enjoy today is

We should not just think of ourselves, but of future generations of workers, including our children and grandchildren. We should remember the past and constantly remind the active workers how it was.

Many years ago IWW leader Big Bill Haywood said, "You can put two bits in a working man's pocket and do anything you want with him. If you try to take any part of it away, he becomes a fighting SOB."

We have to be prepared for the worst, so join the struggle now. Join the PCPA.

If there is no Pension Club where you live, contact Barbara Lewis, Secretary-Treasurer, PCPA / 5212 N. Houghton St. / Portland, OR 97209 and become a Member at Large.

6 • The DISPATCHER

Coloring Book Review:

Along the Shore

Reviewed by Fred Glass

o watch Bill Morgan in his elementary school classroom in San Francisco is to see a master teacher in his element. That element would be children—laughing, fighting, sounding out words and sentences, being bored, eager to learn.

Morgan, 60, a member of United Educators of San Francisco, AFT Local 61, has been teaching for 32 years. Most of his students are kids of color, and many are Spanish speaking. They bring to his classroom their enthusiasms, their worries and a wide range of experiences drawn from different ethnic backgrounds and immigrant cultures. Morgan, fluent in Spanish, is aware of the need to address the origins and various identities of his students.

"It's important to acknowledge their cultures," he said. "It's part of who they are, and we're not a onesize-fits-all society today, if we ever were."

The readings he assigns include books on Chicano icon Cesar Chavez, on a little girl who lived in Hiroshima when the U.S. dropped an atom bomb on the city at the end of World War II and Native American legends from Nicaragua.

"But it's equally essential," Morgan said, "to give them a way to understand their underlying common interests, what unites them all, as well as what distinguishes them from one another."

As a result, his students also read, crayons in hand, *Along the Shore*, a 24-page coloring book that Morgan wrote, published by the California Federation of Teachers' Labor in the Schools Committee. Members of that committee, including Morgan, have produced a number of booklets, videotapes, and other materials that bring the world of work and the labor movement into the K-12 classroom.

Along the Shore features images of longshore workers, their working environment and the various tasks they perform. Coloring books sponsored by unions and depicting the work of their members have been, if not common, at least not unknown over the years. A glance through the Labor in the Schools Committee's files reveals coloring books under-

written by unions of letter carriers, autoworkers, carpenters and other workers. Where *Along the Shore* differs from most of its predecessors is in its direct description of the workers' union and what it does.

Says one page, "A group of workers who agree to help one another to make their jobs better is called a union." Another caption, accompanying an image of a meeting, says "At union meetings, the workers discuss ways to make their work better and safer." In the background we see the ILWU banner and slogan, "An injury to one is an injury to all."

"Virtually all of my students will grow up to be workers," Morgan said. "Their parents are all workers. Yet there's very little that our education system does to promote an awareness of work and the problems kids will face once they're working. And there's even less to acquaint students with the main conflict resolution tools they possess as workers: their union and collective bargaining."

Morgan sometimes moonlights on weekends and evenings at San Francisco's Moscone Center setting up conventions. As a dual member of Sign and Display Local 510 and UESF, he has a broad perspective on the need for unions in any industry.

"Most lessons focus on the individual," Morgan added. "I try to help my students see that all workers have common interests, and those common interests are better served when we're organized."

Along the Shore is the result of a collaboration between the CFT Labor in the Schools Committee and the ILWU clerks Local 63 Education Chair Patricia Aguirre. The Diane Middleton Foundation and Sign and Display Local 510 contributed additional financial support for the booklet's graphic design and printing.

Along the Shore costs \$3 each, or \$2 with every order of ten or more. The Spanish translation is by Sylvia Ramirez (specify whether you want English, Spanish, or copies of each). Order through cft2donnas@aol. com, or call 510-832-8812. For more information about other materials produced by the CFT Labor in the Schools Committee, go to http://www.cft.org/about/comm/labor/index.html.

Along the Store ILWU Coloring Book

Video review "Meeting Face to Face: The Iraq-U.S. Labor Solidarity Tour"

ach day as the news from Iraq gets worse, the mainstream media present the same pundits who defended the invasion. Today they say they may have made mistakes then, but now we have no choice but to stay the course.

But we rarely hear from the Iraqi people. Here at last is a documentary about workers in Iraq, their concerns and their views.

U.S. Labor Against the War led a union fact-finding mission to Iraq and then invited representatives of all three Iraqi labor federations to speak before forums of union members, labor leaders and politicians in the United States last summer.

"We face a hostile position from America: privatization, efforts to import foreign workers despite massive unemployment, and a ban on bargaining for public employees," Iraqi unionist Adnan Al Saffar told New York City unionists June 17.

Their message was that the U.S. occupation is a major obstacle to peace. U.S. troops need to leave Iraq so Iraqis can learn to solve their own problems.

One of the most stirring sequenc-

es in the film shows Iraqi unionists cheering as the 2005 AFL-CIO Convention passed the historic resolution calling for the speedy withdrawal of U.S. troops from Iraq.

Three years into the occupation, Saddam Hussein's law prohibiting collective bargaining by public employees is still in force. But unionization has grown rapidly and now over 300,000 Iraqi workers are in unions. They are unanimously opposed to U.S. and World Bank plans to privatize Iraq's oil and other major public industries.

"Meeting Face to Face: The Iraq-U.S. Labor Solidarity Tour" is a 27-minute DVD (\$9.95 or \$14.95 for the VHS) which includes a 12-minute condensed version perfect for presentation at union and other meetings. It was produced by Jonathan Levin and Michael Zweig of the Center for the Study of Working Class Life. For more information, go to www.meetingfacetoface.org. USLAW (www.uslaboragainstwar.org) promotes projects to help Iraqi unionists, including the peace demonstration in New York City on Saturday, April 29.

— Ken Nash

Smolin-Melin Scholarships

ATTENTION: LOCAL 10 MEMBERS

Trustees of the Smolin-Melin Scholarship Fund are prepared to accept applications for scholarships for the academic year 2006-2007. Now is the time to indicate your interest. **June 30, 2006 is the application deadline.**

Victor Smolin and Carlton Melin were long time members of Local 10. They left a sum of money to establish the scholarship fund. They specified that scholarships were to be available to children of Class A Local 10 members to further their "collegiate" education. Trustees of the Fund interpret "members" to mean active members in good standing at the time of disbursement of scholarship funds, deceased members and retired members. The Trustees interpret "collegiate" to apply only to **full-time** study (at least 12 units per semester or quarter) at either a four-year college or an academic junior college.

Based always on available assets, the Fund historically has awarded scholarships in a range from \$1000 to \$2500 for full-time students at four-year colleges or universities, and from \$750 to \$1750 for full-time students at two-year colleges.

Trustees are Richard Zuckerman, counsel for ILWU and for Local 10, David Erkkila, a retired member of Local 10 and a friend of Victor Smolin, and Eugene Vrana, Associate Director of Education and Librarian for ILWU.

If you have a son or daughter who is applying to enter college next fall, or is already a college student who is planning to continue, and the above requirements are met, you might want to apply for one of these scholarships.

To request an application, simply call Mathilda Mendonca, at (415) 771-6400. She will then send you the application form with the necessary explanatory material.

25th Annual Western Regional

Summer Institute for Union Women

July 7-11, 2006 • Honolulu, Hawai'i

The Hawai'i planning committee is excited to invite our *kama'aina* (local) union sisters and our sisters from the mainland U.S. and Canada to Honolulu, Hawai'i for the 25th Annual Summer Institute for Union Women. Hawai'i has a rich labor history and the second highest percentage of unionized workers in the U.S. Please join us for five intensive and challenging days of education, skill building, union solidarity, and fun.

The Summer Institute welcomes all union women to participate whether their union is independent, affiliated with the AFL-CIO or affiliated with another union organization. The Institute

celebrates the solidarity of union women and crosses the boundaries of age, race, occupation, and nation

There will be classes and activities for women at every level, from beginner to advanced. All classes are taught in a supportive environment to enable the shaing of ideas, strategies, information, and experiences. All instructors are energetic and highly respected labor educators from Hawai'i and across the U.S. and Canada who understand the importance of providing a hands on, dynamic educational experience.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Call Adrienne Valdez at (808) 454-4781 or e-mail avaldez@hawaii.edu

Visit <u>www.uhwo.hawaii.edu/clear</u>—click on <u>SIUW 2006</u>

May 2006 *The* DISPATCHER • 7

Local 10's Reino Erkkila passes

by Tom Price

neino Erkkila started on the docks in 1935, working on lumber schooners in the days when longshoremen discharged cargo with the strength of their backs. He would spend the next 40 years in the ILWU, finally retiring in 1975 with the fruits of his long labors.

As an ILWU officer and member and as a worker, Erkkila lived through nearly a century of workers' struggles, and whether he held a pen or a hook, he was a maker of history and its witness.

Born in Finland in 1912, Reino moved to the U.S. at a young age when Herman, his Finnish father, decided to emigrate back to Montana, where he had previously worked as a miner. Herman was a Wobbly, a member of the Industrial Workers of the World. The IWW was organizing the mines in Butte in those days.

"We talk about the 1934 strike here, but that was every year in Butte in the 'teens," Reino's son Dave said.

Wobblies were persecuted, beat up and murdered, but they taught workers the need to organize. Frank Little, member of the IWW General Executive Board, paid the price on Aug. 1, 1917.

"My grandfather Herman was on strike when the vigilantes murdered Frank Little," Dave said. "My father marched in Little's funeral with the

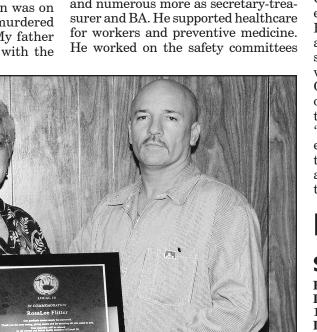
family. He was always proud that he was there."

Little was lynched for organizing, for speaking out against WWI and for opposing the capitalist system. The Wobblies faced horrible repression over the next few years, but their militancy would inspire many in the ILWU, including Herman Erkkila, who moved to San Francisco in the 1920s and worked on docks. Ex-wobblies like Herman were well known for sharing their experiences down in the hold with their fellow workers. Sometimes he was in the same work gang as Harry Bridges before the birth of the ILWU.

Reino graduated from San Francisco's Mission High in 1931 and hopped a train back to Montana in 1932. He came back and attended San Mateo Junior College before joining his father on the docks in 1935.

He met his wife Irene in the Finn Hall in San Francisco and they were married in 1938. He became a registered longshoreman a year later and son and daughter Dave and Lynn were born in 1942 and 1943. Reino's first elected job in Local 10 was as dispatcher in 1944.

Over most of the next 20 years Reino did stints as Local 10 president and numerous more as secretary-trea-



RosaLee Flitter received a plaque from longshore Local 10 in appreciation for her 39 years of work there from Local 10 President Dave Gonzales.

Local 10's RosaLee retir

osaLee Flitter left 39 years of memories to her friends and L Usuccessors at longshore Local 10 when she retired March 1. She started work at the ILWU-PMA Benefits Plan Office in 1967, fresh out of high school and 18 years old, and Harry Bridges was still president.

"I'm bi-lingual, and Harry's secretary came down to our basement office and asked someone to come upstairs and translate some Spanish for Harry," RosaLee said. "That was kind of scary, but as a result I developed a good relationship with the International, and I was very fortunate to work for him while he was president."

RosaLee accepted the job of administrative assistant at Local 10 in 1987. Because of term limits, officer turnover is high at Local 10. RosaLee was the ancestral memory of Local 10, and each new officer benefited from her deep knowledge.

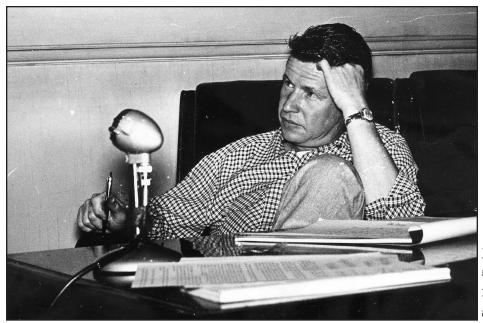
"I've gone through so many of

them, and when they come in, it's up to us to train them," she said. One of her jobs was to type the chronos, or daily reports. "But I learned from the best. 'Read the chronos,' they said when I first started. Back then we had typewriters, and we made three copies, the original, green paper, which was the chrono, and the file paper. The chronos were kept in a separate place, and their way of teaching us was to have us read the chronos. I read everything."

She will remain active in the pensioners' club and her son, Ricardo Barajas, is now a member of Local 10. Local 10's membership voted RosaLee Flitter an honorary member March 11.

"It's the membership really made it worthwhile for me. I always remembered the motto, 'You don't have the right to tear down what cost blood to build," RosaLee said.

—Tom Price



Reino Erkkila

in 1954 and on the union's political committees as a District Council delegate for most of 20 years.

In 1960 he was selected by the International Executive Board as one of 24 rank-and-file delegates who visited 21 nations to study labor conditions. Reino co-authored a detailed study on four countries in the Nov. 4, 1960 issue of *The Dispatcher*. The delegates compared wages and working conditions, and told of meeting rankand-file workers around the world, including workers in the Soviet Bloc.

Reino testified in 1961 for Archie Brown in his Kennedy-Landrum-Griffith Act trial. Brown had been elected to the Local 10 Executive Board and had also run for governor as a Communist. The act, co-sponsored by John F. Kennedy while he was a Senator, made it a crime for a Communist to get elected to union office. Bridges said the members had the right to elect whomever they "damned well pleased," but the government disagreed, saying in its brief that "...members did not have an absolute right to select whomever they chose; their right may be regulated by Congress in the interest of public order.'

Brown was convicted and given a six-month sentence. He won an appeal, but the government appealed to the Supreme Court. With the support of people like Reino and the defense of ILWU attorneys Richard Gladstein and Norman Leonard, Brown prevailed. Chief Justice Earl Warren, speaking for the court, declared the law a bill of attainder, an act that singles out a person or group for punishment without trial.

Meanwhile Reino continued serving the membership. He set up safety training for 400 new B registrants in 1963 and was later given an award for it. His last 10 years were spent in clerks' Local 34. He stayed active in the Finnish community and died April 5, 2006.

Reino leaves behind his son Dave, who was a longshoreman in Local 10 and 34 for 40 years between 1963 and 2003, and Dave's daughter Karin and son Richard. Reino's daughter Lynn Von Wiedenfield has two children, Steven and Wendy, and her daughter Christina.

Longshore retired, deceased and survivors

RECENT RETIREES:

Local 8—Michael D. Finnegan; Local 10—Tommie Sharp, Alfred E. Cruz Jr; Local 13—James Bartholomew, John Durmanich, Harold Peterson, Bruce Thaver, Raymond Gondringer, Peter Bakotich, Jason Pandora, James Dickerson, Anthony Brooks, Albert Cauchon, Clifford Ward: Local 19—Scott Teuber Sr., John Fisher; Local 21—Jerry Malone; Local 23—Linda Vaver; Local 27—Paul Eyl; Local 40—Arthur Easterly, Jerald Bitz, Joel Paso; Local 63—Joseph Teora, Monroe Dantzler, Jonathon Hugger; Local 94—Ronald O'Brien, Robert Barraza, Fred Bingham Jr.

DECEASED:

Local 4—Alfred Ehlke, Harold Siemer; Local 8—Ray Holland (Teresa), Jimmy B. Walker (Zachariah and Tobias), Russell Espedal, James Mayes; Local 10—J. D. Crane (Icylee), Charles Burchell Jr. (Carrie), Leroy Fowler (Otha), Joseph Howard (Edith), William McCormick (Betty) Albert Wilson Jr. (Ruth), Bennie Tate Jr., Frank A. Ortiz, Filimon Garcia, Charles Bursey, Odiest McGee; Local 13—Dennis Hooper Jr. (Linda), Marcos D. Nunez (Blanca), Harry Hogan (Dorothy), Jack Cramer (Joann), Larry Scott (Edna), Robert Rickard (Nohea), Donald Bales (Celia), Stephan Irving (Amanda), Donald Waterhouse (Jannice), David Watson (Josephine), David J. Maynez (Dolores), Krone Tremain (Kristi), Russell A. Smith. Frank A. Ortiz, Filimon Garcia; Local 18-Martin Ramirez (Jessica); Local 19—Henry Crew (Reid), Fred Hatch (Delmetta), James Robinson (Alyce); Local 23—Jay Burks (Dorothy), Fred Forgey, Charles Hoover, Richard Ryan; Local 24—Gary Rosi (Elizabeth); Local

27—Edward Fitzpatrick (Dolores); Local 29—Rudolph Celaya (Mary); Local 34— Ivan Johnson (Dolores), Edward Perry, Victor Baca Jr., James Lewis; Local 40—Gary Caudill (Jeanne); Local 52— Francis Fair: Local 54—Anthony Silva Jr. (Dolores), Donald Seegers (Loretta); Local 63—Eric Harold (Mary), John Burns (Lillian), James Kincy, Douglas J. Jackson, Fred Noriega; Local 75—Bobby Scott (Mantal); Local 91—Ray Clay; Local 92—Gust Wedin, James Bartolus; Local 94—Mitchell Mardesich, Moses Baker; Local 98—Dennis Shore (Helen). (Survivors in parenthesis.)

DECEASED SURVIVORS:

Local 4—Fav Olson; Local 8—Esther McKinney, Leona Snider, Joan Kramer, Phyllis Hellervik, Sally Anderson, Margaret Pfleeger: Local 10—Lisa Agnone, Angelina Perry, Conception Bernal, Maye Yasko, Luvenia Scott, Josephine Differding, Erna Bard, Zoleta Haves, Vergie Evans-Logan, Gwendolyn James, Loela Marshall, Marilee Cushing, Arlee Cooper, Mildred Brown; Local 12—Margaret Perkins; Local 13— Edna Thomas, Loraine McCullough, Carrie Gipson, Micaela Rosales, Erma Swaffar, Erma Jean Kellum, Bonita Cassick, Rosa Ramos, Doris Keawe, Frankie Weil, Saada Hodges, Josina Dukie, Agnes Heston; Local 19—Janet Woll, Vivian Behrens; Local 24—Dorothy Vekich, Charlotte Cole; Local 34—Jocie Lundberg; Local 47—Avis Watson, Amy Haag; Local **51**—Dorothy Coleman; **Local 54**—Helen Holman; Local 63—Mary Wall, Lillian Harold, Jean Potter; Local 75—Rosalina Alona; Local 91—Hazel Costa; Local 94—Delores Marincovich, Kathryn Brasted; Local 98—Pecola Alexander, Bernice Erickson.

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ILWU Book & Video Sale

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

BOOKS:

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

The Big Strike By Mike Quin: the classic partisan account of the 1934 strike. \$6.50

Workers on the Waterfront: Seamen, Longshoremen, and Unionism in the 1930sBy Bruce Nelson: the most complete history of the origins, meaning, and impact of the 1934 strike. **\$13.00**

The Union Makes Us Strong: Radical Unionism on the San Francisco Waterfront By David Wellman: the important new study of longshoring in the ILWU. **\$15.00** (paperback)

A Terrible Anger: The 1934 Waterfront and General Strike in San Francisco By David Selvin: the newest and best single narrative history about the San Francisco events of 1934. \$16.50

The March Inland: Origins of the ILWU Warehouse Division 1934-1938 By Harvey Schwartz: new edition of the only comprehensive account of the union's organizing campaign in the northern California warehouse and distribution industry. **\$9.00**

VIDEOS:

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Life on the Beam: A Memorial to Harry Bridges A 17-minute VHS video production by California Working Group, Inc., memorializes Harry Bridges through still photographs, recorded interviews, and reminiscences. Originally produced for the 1990 memorial service in San Francisco. **\$28.00**

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