



THE DISPATCHER

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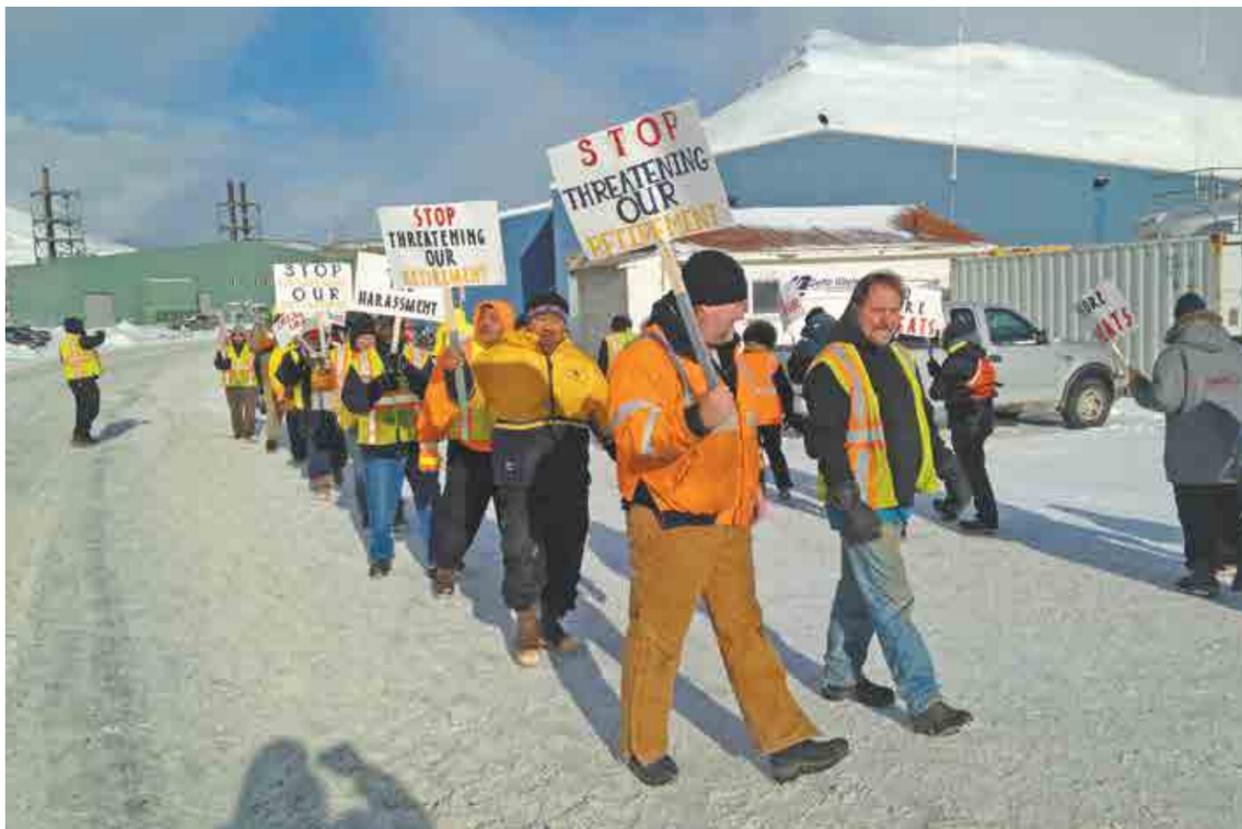


Photo by Doug Leggett

ILWU support for Delta Western workers: Delta Western employees walked off the job on February 16th to protest the company's violations of workers' rights and federal law- including discrimination and threats against workers for supporting their union, the Inlandboatmen's Union of the Pacific. They were joined on the picket line outside the Dutch Harbor facility by large numbers of supporters from the Alaskan Longshore Division, the Filipino-American community, and other Dutch Harbor residents.

Delta Western workers secure union victory in Dutch Harbor

Workers at the Delta Western Fuel Terminal, the largest in the remote Alaskan port of Dutch Harbor, voted to unionize in April through the ILWU's marine division, the Inlandboatmen's Union of the Pacific (IBU).

Fuel for the "Deadliest Catch"

Located on the rugged and isolated Aleutian Islands, Dutch Harbor is America's largest fishing port with a seafood fleet that's become famous – thanks to the Discovery Channel's "Deadliest Catch" show. Most of the fishing vessels depend on the Delta Western's fuel to run constantly during peak harvest seasons.

Celebrating the victory

"This is a huge victory for us," said Delta Western employee Leo Dacio. "We are really excited that

we stood up for our rights and our families as we built our strength to confront serious issues on the job together."

"While it's been a long time coming, I'm proud of my co-workers and me for using our power to win respect at work," said Robin Marquez, another Delta Western employee.

Dacio first contacted Dutch Harbor longshore Unit 223 leader Randall Baker and Alaska Longshore Division President Chuck Wendt about six months ago to discuss a possible organizing campaign. After some discussion, it became clear that workers organizing into the IBU would be the strongest approach.

Strategic benefits

Delta Western's parent company is Saltchuk Resources Inc., which also owns both Foss Maritime— one of the IBU's longest-standing and biggest signatory companies—and

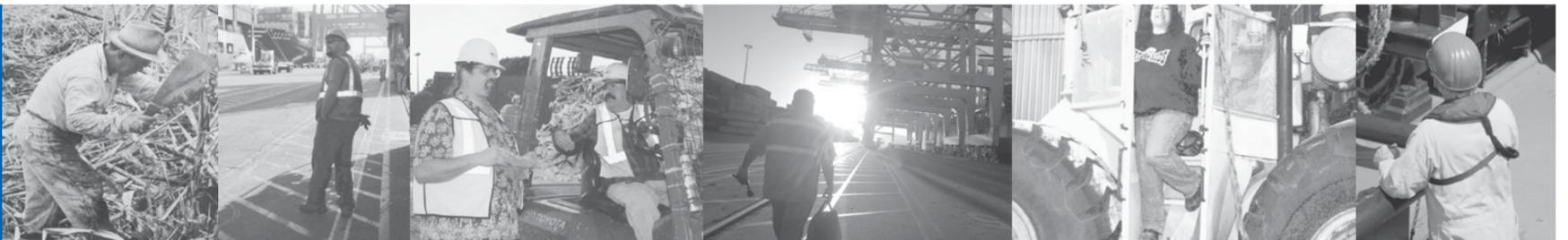
Cook Inlet Tug and Barge, another company where workers are currently organizing in Anchorage to form a union through the IBU.

"Helping Delta Western fuel workers organize will allow them to negotiate improvements, and it also makes strategic sense," explained IBU President Alan Coté.

Coté noted that IBU members were working the tugs and barges that delivered fuel to the terminal, so there was already a natural and direct connection with the Delta Western workers. Another important connection was with ILWU Longshore workers at Unit 223 who handle containers at Dutch Harbor. The longshore workers provided encouragement and important support on picket lines during the bitter winter months. And the win at Delta Western may encourage workers at Cook Inlet Tug and Barge to stay strong as

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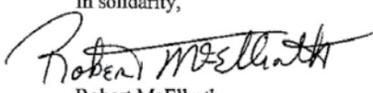
Brothers and Sisters:

On behalf of the Titled Officers of the ILWU, I am writing to ask for your support by making a donation to the ILWU Political Action Fund (PAF). We are asking every member to give at least \$50 to protect our union from the barrage of assaults from federal and state politicians, as well as support the politicians who stand with the ILWU. With your help, the ILWU Political Action Fund will continue to be a success as we support members of Congress who believe in the ILWU.

The ILWU represents a diverse group of workers from our brothers and sisters in the tourism industry, to our ferry boat operators, to our warehouse workers, to our longshoremen on the waterfront. We must continue to protect the interests of all our brothers and sisters. To do this, it is essential that we support our friends who fight for the rights of workers, oppose the end of Medicare, and are committed to strengthening Social Security. Unions are under attack across the country and without a sustainable and lucrative PAF, we cannot possibly elect and keep members of Congress in office who are there to protect us and fight for the working class.

As you know, the ILWU Coast Longshore Division is facing the most difficult set of contract negotiations that we've seen in years. Now more than ever, we need our friends in Congress to support us as we go toe to toe with the Pacific Maritime Association (PMA) to protect our benefits, our jurisdiction, and our union. Since our last contract negotiations in 2008, the ILWU has faced an onslaught of attacks from the employers and member companies of the PMA and grain companies in the northwest to undercut our union. In order for our union to be successful, we need help from not only our union brothers and sisters, but our friends in Congress too. If each member gives \$50, we will have the resources to fight.

With your support, our great union has the capacity to be a leading voice in the labor movement and beyond. Thank you in advance for your generous contribution.

In solidarity,

Robert McEllrath
International President

RMCE/akj ewa 39521



Sustaining political action: Local 40 member Dawn Des Brisay was the first person to become a monthly "sustaining member" of the ILWU political action fund. She signed up via the "Political Action" section of the ILWU's website. "I became a sustaining member of the ILWU Political Action Fund because it is a small investment with a big return. It gives ILWU members a voice in Washington to defeat anti-worker policy measures and help elect labor friendly officials." Des Brisay said. The ILWU officers have set a goal of 10,000 sustaining members donating \$10 a month to the Political Action Fund.

ILWU Political Action Fund website launched



In April the ILWU Political Action Fund (PAF) launched a new section on the ILWU.org website where members can securely donate to the PAF using a credit card. One-time and recurring monthly or quarterly donation options are available. To access the site go to www.ilwu.org and click the Political Action Fund button on the right-hand side of the navigation bar. When prompted enter the password 1934k to access the site's Political Action Center, then click the Donate to reach the donation form.



The purpose of the ILWU Political Action Fund is to make expenditures in Federal Elections to protect and advance the interests of ILWU members and the entire ILWU community.

Your contribution is voluntary and is separate from your union dues and is not a condition of membership. No favor or disadvantage will result from contributing or refusing to do so, and you are free to contribute more or less than the suggested amounts. Your contribution is not tax deductible.

Federal law prohibits the ILWU Political Action Fund from receiving contributions from individuals other than members of the ILWU, executive and administrative personnel of the ILWU, individuals with a relatively enduring and independently significant financial or organizational attachment to the ILWU, and their families. All donations will be screened and those from persons outside the restricted class will be returned.

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LETTERS TO THE DISPATCHER

Dear Editor,

Once again this year I write to encourage you to donate one day's pay to the ILWU Political Action Fund. This is our pot of money to help elect people who do the right thing and fight for the rights of workers in Washington.

We are in the vanguard of strong unionism. Many folks in and out of the labor movement look to the ILWU to determine the parameters of militancy and rank and file democracy as well as basic safety and working conditions.

My check will not only help the ILWU but the vast swath of middle class Americans who have been left out of the current economic picture.

Please join me.

In Solidarity,

Robin Doyno, Local 13
Los Angeles, CA

More Letters to the Editor on page 8.

Send your letters to the editor to:

The Dispatcher, 1188 Franklin St., San Francisco, CA 94109-6800
or email to editor@ilwu.org

Oregon ILWU members & pensioners:

Oregon Area District Council has endorsed these candidates for the May 20th primary:

Oregon Commissioner of Labor and Industries -
Brad Avakian

HD 31 - Brad Witt (D)

HD 42 - Rob Nosse (D)

HD 43 - Lew Frederick (D)

HD 44 - Tina Kotek (D)

HD 45 - Barbara Smith Warner (D)

Multnomah County Chair - Deborah Kafoury

Multnomah County Commission District 1 - Jules Bailey

Multnomah County Commission District 2 -
Loretta Smith

Clackamas County Commission - Jim Bernard

Clackamas County Commission - Paul Savas



West Coast Action & Solidarity Report

This is the first report of a regular series that will describe the work being done by International Transport Workers Federation (ITF) Inspectors on the West Coast. As the ITF Coordinator, I work with a dedicated team of four other ITF Inspectors who are responsible for protecting the rights and ensure the safety and proper treatment of seafarers who visit West Coast ports.

Southern California

Farther down the Coast, Stefan Mueller, the ITF Inspector for the Southern California Area used his 9-years' experience and quick thinking this winter to win contracts aboard 10 ships owned by Target Ship Management out of Singapore. Stefan boarded one of their vessels, the Panamanian-flagged, Sri Prem Veena, while she was tied-up at Berth F-21 in the Long Beach Harbor. Although the crew and captain initially said they were happy, Stefan's instincts and experience told him that something was wrong. He learned that the crew wanted better wages and working conditions, but didn't think such improvements were possible.

Stefan called the owner's representative, Captain M.S. Wadwa, and kept the London ITF office and myself in the loop. He convinced company into doing the right thing and signing-up their 10 ships under an ITF TCC

Collective Bargaining Agreement. The crew will now enjoy the better wages, hours and working conditions that over 9,000 fellow seafarers enjoy on ships worldwide with ITF contracts.

Puget Sound

One of the other tasks that ITF Inspectors perform, besides organizing seafarers is our work to help enforce rules adopted by the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and International Labour Organization (ILO). We also ensure compliance with the International Ship and Port Facility code and the U.S. equivalent, known as the Maritime Security Act (MTSA). These laws assure that seafarers are allowed visitation rights from chaplains and ITF labor representatives. Protecting these rights is an essential part of the ITF's campaign to protect workers employed by ships operating under what is known as a "Flag of Convenience" (FOC). These FOC ships are deliberately registered by wealthy owners in countries with weak labor laws and poor enforcement.

Puget Sound ITF Inspector Lila Smith, has been an advocate for merchant seamen to have their rights respected by the US Coast Guard and facility operators in her region since these conventions were put into force after 9-11. She recently had a situation in the small Port of Olympia where a chaplain was denied access to a ship. Through her list of contacts made over the years, she was able to protect the seamen's rights and resolve the dispute in a professional manner.



Paid up: Crewmembers on the Korean Lily received back wages owed by their employer, thanks to help from ITF Coordinator Jeff Engels, front row, 2nd from right.

Seattle

As the ITF Coordinator for the West Coast, I was able to assist the crew of the Korean Lily, who received \$45,303 that they were owed by their employer on April 4th at terminal 86 in Seattle. The crew of this ship contacted the ITF. I met with a handful of brave yet scared sailors who went ashore where they produced the documents showing that their Manning Agency (Seamaster) in the Philippines was illegally deducting funds from their monthly home allotment, as well as withholding "leave pay" from seafarers on this FOC Ship.

Thankfully, this ship had an ITF Collective Bargaining Agreement with

the Japan Seamen's Union and I was able to contact Japan, ITF headquarters in London, and the Charterer of the ship—in this case, Louis Dreyfuss. The Captain and ship's management company, ISM Ship Management in Singapore, realized that the Korean Lily was not going anywhere until the crew received their pay that was due. ILWU Local 19 President Cameron Williams was also alerted to the situation, as well as the longshoreman who were working at the terminal. The company decided to pay the workers what was owed, and the ship was then free to leave.

—By Jeff Engels, ITF Coordinator,
West Coast USA



Bound back-issues of the Dispatcher

Handsome, leather-bound, gold embossed editions of the Dispatcher are available. A year's worth of ILWU history makes a great gift or family memento. Supplies are limited, not all years are available. Cost is only \$10 for a year's worth of ILWU history. Email orders to editor@ilwu.org or make a check out or money order (U.S. funds) to ILWU and send to ILWU Library, 1188 Franklin St., San Francisco, CA 94109.

Colombian longshore workers face exploitation and racism at the Port of Buenaventura

Workers must sell paychecks for loans

Labor contractors on the docks in Buenaventura, the largest port in Colombia, pay \$200 for two weeks work loading and unloading ships. They don't pay cash. On payday, longshoremen have to go to a loanshark, and borrow against the promise of a paycheck, but for considerably less – \$170 or \$180. “They have to sell the pay from the contractor,” charges Jhon Jairo Castro, president of the Union Portuaria, or Dockworkers' Union, in Buenaventura.

To get that pay they have to work far longer than the government-mandated maximum workweek of 48 hours. Some labor eight hours on, then get eight hours off, and then return for another eight hours. Others work “the devil's shift” – kept on the docks for 24 or even 36 hours, but only paid for eight. “Everyone is hired on a daily basis, and gets paid by the hour, with no daily guarantee,” Castro says.

In 1994 the Colombian Port Authority was privatized and replaced by the privately-run Regional Port Society of Buenaventura. A second private company, TECSA, S.A., runs Port operations under contract. TECSA then brings in an “intermediary,” which hires a temporary employment agency. The agency uses a labor contractor, who has no office and simply stands on the street, hiring longshoremen. The contractor has no financial resources for meeting a payroll, thus forcing workers to wait weeks to get paid, or to sell the promise of a paycheck.

“People cannot earn enough to support themselves,” Castro says. “We have port workers who are actively working who make only 200 dollars a month. We have workers who have to beg in the streets, who sleep on the sidewalks. Even after working 20 years they have no social security and no pensions.”

Buenaventura's 370,000 inhabitants are mostly Afro-Colombian – people descended from slaves brought from Africa during centuries as a Spanish colony. Over 80% of its people live in poverty, and a third are unemployed, four times the national average. Two thirds of Buenaventura homes have no sewer connection, and almost half have no drinking water. Life expectancy here is 51, while nationally it is 62.

“Poverty causes the disintegration of families,” Castro says. “Our children are recruited as prostitutes, or into criminal gangs and illegal armed groups.”

The conditions of Buenaventura's longshore workers, and the harsh reprisals against them for trying to form unions, dramatically illustrate the failure of Colombia's Labor Action Plan. Negotiated three years ago as part of its free trade agreement with the United States, it's condemned as totally ineffective in a recent report by the country's labor federations, backed by the AFL-CIO. Tarcisio Rivera, president of the Central Unitaria de Colombia, calls

the trade agreement and labor action plan “useless and detrimental for both the Colombian economy and the rights of workers.”

The report, supported by a number of international labor organizations including IndustriALL Global Union–Américas, cited extensive illegal subcontracting and illegal hiring. “This is the case at the port of Buenaventura ... where several intermediary companies ... have practiced illegal intermediation for the benefit of the port operator, TECSA S.A.” According to Castro, “the national government is responsible for this system, because it privatized the ports and didn't implement any regulations or labor standards covering employment.”

Today the port consists of four terminals, handling 14 million tons of cargo. The largest is mostly owned by DP World of the Arab Emirates, Harinera del Valle (a Colombian food company), Asocaña, (sugarcane growers) and the city government.

Lines operating in the port include APL, China Shipping, CMA-CMG, Cosco Line, CSAV, Evergreen, Hapag Lloyd, K Line, MOL, MSC Line, NYK Line, PIL (Pacific International Lines), and Wan Hai Lines. One wharf even belongs to the Colombian military, which leases it to Grupo Portuario, a private company.

The capacity of the port of Buenaventura will grow enormously with the new Aguadulce terminal. It has begun some operations, but much is still under construction, and full operation is scheduled for 2016. International Container Terminal Services (ICTSI), through its subsidiary Sociedad Puerto Industrial Aguadulce – SPI (Aguadulce Industrial Port Society), was given this port concession for 30 years by the Colombian government. One ICTSI partner is Compas, a Colombian company with operations in the US (Houston) and Panama (Bahía Las Minas). The longshore union is making plans to organize workers in Aguadulce as the workforce grows, and expects that employment conditions will be the same as those in the rest of the port.

In the free trade agreement's first year Colombian exports to the US fell by 15% while imports from the United States grew by nearly the same amount. “The government promised that the free trade agreement would increase our income,” Castro adds, “but our misery increased instead. Businesses have gone into debt with the banks and then been forced into bankruptcy. Wages have gone down. It's caused a tremendous social breakdown.”

Treaty supporters promised the Labor Action Plan would curb attacks on unions trying to resist the impact. Those increased too, however. “In 2013, 26 trade unionists were murdered, four more than in 2012,” according to the AFL-CIO. “Attempted murders also increased, from seven to 13. Since the LAP was signed, there have been 31 attempted murders, six forced disappearances and nearly 1,000 death threats.” Some 86.8% of murders went



Faces of displacement: According to Human Rights Watch, Buenaventura has led all Colombian municipalities in the numbers of newly displaced persons. They counted 22,028 residents who fled in 2011, 15,191 in 2012, and 13,468 between January and October 2013 in a recent report by the organization.

unpunished, and 99.9% of threats against unionists, giving an overall impunity rate for human rights violations against trade unionists of 96.7%.

For Buenaventura longshoremen, those numbers are more than statistics. Castro accuses companies in the port of mass firings when workers organize. “They demand that workers sign letters resigning from the union to get hired,” he charges. “A number of our members have been murdered, but the authorities ‘investigate’ and then say it has nothing to do with their union activity.”

The result is a climate of fear. “Talking about the union invites being fired. We call it labor terrorism. There is absolutely no guarantee of your right to union activity.”

Only a minority of the port's 6000 workers, therefore, belong to the union. “We survive because of solidarity, from our own members and from other organizations,” Castro explains. “We have the right on paper to negotiate with the employers, but it's another thing to be able to exercise it. In 2012 we had a strike at TECSA and started negotiations. The company filed a suit against our union, demanding that all our members be fired and our union dissolved. The government backs them with the police and laws that violate our rights, like the decree that anyone blocking the street during demonstrations would be imprisoned.”

According to Neil Martin of the Project for International Accompaniment and Support in Colombia (PASO), which organizes support for the Union Portuaria, “The union's strategy is to organize these sub-contracted workers into a low profile Workers Committee until a majority is willing to go on strike. Other strategies include building city-wide coalitions between unions and grassroots community organizations around broader social issues in Buenaventura, and increased involvement in international networks.”

Other workers and unions in Colombia also share the problems faced by the Union Portuaria. But in Buenaventura the union says it is also targeted because of discrimination against Afro-Colombians. Employers, it says,

bring people from the interior and give them better jobs than the ones available to Buenaventura residents. “In the Afro-Colombian community work and pay is lowest and most unequal,” Castro says. “The cane cutters. The longshoremen. Those who work in the African palms.”

Of Colombia's 44 million people, 49.2% live below the poverty line. But poverty is not evenly distributed. The country's healthcare system, damaged by budget cuts to fund the government's counterinsurgency war, covers 40% of white Colombians. Only 10% of black Colombians get health services. A mere 3% of Afro Colombian workers receive social security benefits.

Institutionalized inequality is reinforced by internal displacement. From 1940 to 1990, Colombia's urban population grew from 31% to 77%, as people fled rural poverty and decades of civil war. But by 2009 Colombia's Constitutional Court found the fundamental rights of displaced Afro Colombians were “massively and continuously ignored,” citing Buenaventura as a symbol of inequality.

Human Rights Watch's 2014 report, “The Crisis in Buenaventura,” says “for the past three years, Buenaventura has led all Colombian municipalities in the numbers of newly displaced persons.” It counted 22,028 residents who fled in 2011, 15,191 in 2012, and 13,468 between January and October 2013.

According to Castro, in the last decade sixty thousand people have been forced out. “Now the latest plans for expanding the port will affect another five to ten thousand. Since almost 99% of displaced people are Afro-Colombians, privatization and displacement have a racist component.”

Human Rights Watch charges that violence drives displacement. At its height the right wing paramilitary organization, the United Self Defense Forces (AUC), killed more than 1000 Buenaventurans in 2000 and 2001 alone, according to prosecutors. After the AUC was “demobilized” in December of 2004, other rightwing paramilitary groups emerged incorporating former AUC members.

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Trabajadores portuarios de Colombia sufren explotación y racismo

Reciben préstamos en lugar de su cheque de pago

Los contratistas laborales en los muelles de Buenaventura, el puerto más grande de Colombia, pagan \$200 por cargar y descargar barcos por dos semanas, y además no pagan el trabajo en efectivo. El día de pago, los estibadores tienen que presentarse ante un prestamista y sacar un préstamo, usando el cheque de pago como garantía, pero la cantidad del préstamo es por bastante menos que su sueldo - \$170 o \$180. “Tienen que entregar el pago que reciben del contratista,” acusa John Jairo Castro, Presidente de la Unión Portuaria en Buenaventura.

Para poder recibir ese pago tienen que trabajar muchas horas más que las 48 horas por semana laborable que el gobierno establece como el máximo. Algunos trabajan ocho horas, descansan ocho horas y luego vuelven por ocho horas más. “A todos se les contrata por día, y se les paga por hora, pero sin garantizar el número de horas por día,” dice Castro.

En 1994, la Autoridad Portuaria de Colombia fue privatizada y substituida por la Sociedad Portuaria Regional de Buenaventura, que está controlada por particulares. Una segunda empresa privada, TECSA, S.A., fue contratada para encargarse de las operaciones portuarias. TECSA luego empleó un “intermediario” que contrató una agencia de empleados eventuales. La agencia usa un contratista laboral, que no tiene ninguna oficina y simplemente sale a la calle para contratar mano de obra para el puerto. El contratista no tiene los recursos económicos para cubrir la nómina de pagos, obligando así a los trabajadores a esperar semanas para recibir su pago, o sacar préstamos a cambio de un futuro cheque de pago.

“La gente no puede ganar lo suficiente para mantenerse,” dice Castro. “Tenemos trabajadores portuarios que trabajan a tiempo completo y sólo ganan 200 dólares por mes. Tenemos compañeros que tienen que mendigar en las calles, que viven en las banquetas. Incluso después de trabajar 20 años no tienen seguridad social ni pensiones.”

Los 370,000 habitantes de Buenaventura son en su mayoría afro colombianos, es decir personas descendientes de esclavos traídos de África durante los siglos de la colonia española. Más del 80% de su gente vive en la pobreza, y una tercera parte está desempleada, lo cual es cuatro veces más que el promedio nacional. Dos terceras partes de los hogares en Buenaventura no están conectados a la red de saneamiento, y casi la mitad carecen de agua potable. La expectativa de vida aquí es de 51 años, mientras que en todo el país es de 62 años.

“La pobreza causa la desintegración de las familias,” dice Castro. “Nuestros hijos terminan de prostitutas, en pandillas criminales o grupos armados ilegales.”

Las condiciones de los trabajadores portuarios de Buenaventura, y las represalias severas contra ellos por tratar de formar sindicatos, es una muestra patente del fracaso del Plan de Acción Laboral de Colombia. Este, que fue negociado hace

tres años como parte del tratado de libre comercio con Estados Unidos, ha sido repudiado como totalmente ineficaz en un informe producido recientemente por las federaciones gremiales del país, con respaldo del AFL-CIO. Tarcisio Rivera, Presidente de la Central Unitaria de Colombia, califica el tratado comercial y plan de acción laboral de “inútil y perjudicial para la economía de Colombia y para los derechos de los trabajadores.”

El informe, que fue avalada por varias organizaciones sindicales internacionales entre ellas IndustriALL Global Union – Américas, citó la extensa subcontratación ilegal por terceros y las contrataciones ilegales de trabajadores. “Este es el caso del puerto de Buenaventura ... en el que varias compañías intermediarias... han practicado la intermediación ilegal para beneficio de la compañía que opera el puerto, TECSA S.A.” Según Castro, “el gobierno nacional es el responsable de que exista este sistema, porque privatizó los puertos y no estableció ningún reglamento o normas laborales que rijan la contratación.”

Hoy en día el puerto consiste de cuatro terminales, en las que se maneja 14 millones de toneladas de carga. La más grande es propiedad en su mayor parte de DP World de los Emiratos Árabes, Harinera del Valle (una empresa alimenticia de Colombia), Asocaña (cultivadores de caña de azúcar) y el gobierno municipal. Las líneas navieras que usan el puerto incluyen APL, China Shipping, CMA-CMG, Cosco Line, CSAV, Evergreen, Hapag Lloyd, K Line, MOL, MSC Line, NYK Line, PIL (Pacific International Lines), y Wan Hai Lines. Uno de los muelles incluso es propiedad de las fuerzas militares colombianas, que lo arrienda al Grupo Portuario, una empresa privada.

La capacidad del puerto de Buenaventura se expandirá enormemente con la nueva terminal de Aguadulce. Algunas operaciones se han iniciado en ella, pero la gran parte todavía está en construcción, y se espera que opere a toda su capacidad en 2016. International Container Terminal Services (ICTSI), por medio de su subsidiaria Sociedad Puerto Industrial Aguadulce – SPI, recibió esta concesión del gobierno colombiano por 30 años. Uno de los socios de ICTSI es Compas, una empresa colombiana que opera en E.U. (Houston) y Panamá (Bahía Las Minas). El sindicato de trabajadores portuarios tiene planeado organizar a los trabajadores de Aguadulce a medida que vaya creciendo la fuerza laboral, y espera que las condiciones de empleo sean las mismas que las imperantes en el resto del puerto.

En el primer año de vida del tratado de libre comercio, las exportaciones de Colombia disminuyeron en un 15% mientras que las exportaciones estadounidenses aumentaron en casi el mismo porcentaje. “El gobierno prometió que con el tratado iban a aumentar nuestros ingresos,” agrega Castro, “pero más bien aumentó la miseria. Los negocios se endeudaron con los bancos y luego se les forzó a quedar en quiebra. Los sueldos han bajado. Ha creado una tremenda desintegración social.”

Los simpatizantes del Tratado prometieron que el Plan de Acción Laboral frenaría los ataques contra los sindicatos que trataran de resistirse al impacto. Esos, por lo contrario, aumentaron también. “En

2013, 26 sindicalistas fueron asesinados, cuatro más que en 2012,” según el AFL-CIO. “Las tentativas de asesinato también aumentaron, de siete a 13. Desde la firma del LAP, han habido 31 conatos de asesinato, seis desaparecidos y casi 1,000 amenazas de muerte.” Aproximadamente 86.8% de los asesinatos se cometieron con impunidad, al igual que 99.9% de las amenazas contra sindicalistas, lo cual ha dado un índice de impunidad en general de 96.7% en los casos de violaciones de derechos humanos de sindicalistas.

Para los trabajadores portuarios de Buenaventura, esas cifras son más que meras estadísticas. Castro acusa a las compañías portuarias por los despidos masivos cuando los trabajadores se sindicalizan. “Ellos exigen que los trabajadores firmen cartas renunciando al sindicato para que se les dé empleo,” acusa él. “Varios de nuestros afiliados han sido asesinados, pero las autoridades supuestamente investigan y luego dicen que no tiene nada que ver con su actividad sindical.”

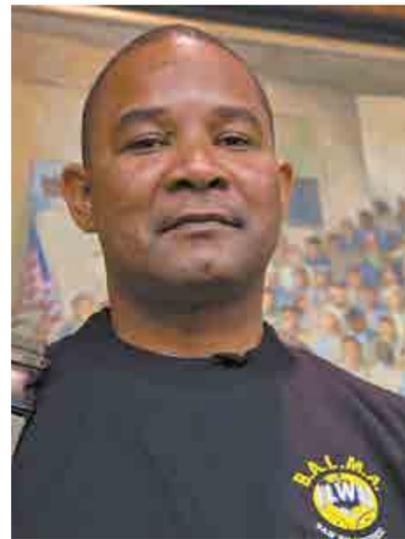
El resultado es un clima de temor. “El hablar acerca del sindicato es exponerse al despido. Le llamamos terrorismo laboral. No existe ninguna garantía en absoluto de nuestro derecho de participar en el sindicato.”

Por eso sólo una minoría de los 6,000 trabajadores del puerto pertenecen a sindicatos. “Sobrevivimos por la solidaridad, de nuestros afiliados y de otras organizaciones,” explica Castro. “Se supone que tenemos el derecho de negociar con los empleadores, pero es casi imposible hacer valer ese derecho. En 2012 tuvimos una huelga contra TECSA y empezamos a negociar. La compañía entabló una demanda contra nuestro sindicato, exigiendo que todos nuestros afiliados fueran despedidos y que nuestro sindicato quedara disuelto. El gobierno los respalda con la policía y con leyes que violan nuestros derechos, como el decreto que establece que cualquiera que bloquee la calle durante las manifestaciones sea encarcelado.”

Según Neil Martin del Proyecto de Acompañamiento y Apoyo Internacional en Colombia (PASO), que organiza el apoyo para la Unión Portuaria, “La estrategia del sindicato es agrupar a estos trabajadores subcontratados en un Comité de Trabajadores que no llame mucho la atención hasta que una mayoría esté dispuesta a hacer la huelga. Otras estrategias incluyen la creación de coaliciones que abarquen a los sindicatos y organizaciones comunitarias de base de toda la ciudad en torno a problemas sociales más amplios en Buenaventura, y una mayor participación en redes internacionales.”

Otros trabajadores y sindicatos en Colombia también tienen los mismos problemas que afronta la Unión Portuaria, pero en Buenaventura el Sindicato dice que también se ha convertido en blanco por la discriminación contra los afro colombianos. Los empleadores, según dice, traen gente del interior y les dan mejores empleos que los que ofrecen a los residentes de Buenaventura. “En la comunidad afro colombiana, el trabajo y el pago es el más bajo y más desigual,” dice Castro. “Los cortadores de caña. Los estibadores. Los que trabajan en las palmeras africanas.”

De los 44 millones de habitantes de



John Jairo Castro, Presidente de la Unión Portuaria en Buenaventura

Photo by David Bacon

Colombia, 49.2% viven con ingresos inferiores al nivel de pobreza. Pero ni siquiera la pobreza no está distribuida equitativamente. El sistema de salud del país, que ha sufrido recortes de fondos requeridos para la guerra del gobierno contra la contrainsurgencia, sirve a un 40% de los colombianos blancos. Sólo el 10% de los colombianos negros reciben servicios médicos. Apenas un 3% de trabajadores afro colombianos reciben beneficios de seguridad social.

La desigualdad institucionalizada es reforzada por el desplazamiento interno de la población. Desde 1940 a 1990, la población urbana de Colombia creció de 31% a 77%, a medida que la gente huyó de la pobreza rural y décadas de guerra civil. Pero para 2009 el Tribunal Constitucional de Colombia había dictado que los derechos fundamentales de los afro colombianos desplazados fueron “ignorados de manera masiva y continua,” citando el caso de Buenaventura como símbolo de la desigualdad.

Según un informe producido por Human Rights Watch en 2014 titulado “La Crisis en Buenaventura”, dice que “por los últimos tres años, Buenaventura ha encabezado a todas las municipalidades colombianas en cuanto al número de personas recién desplazadas.” Contó 22,028 residentes que huyeron en 2011, 15,191 en 2012 y 13,468 entre enero y octubre de 2013.

Según Castro, en la última década sesenta mil personas se han visto obligadas a salir. “Ahora los planes más recientes referentes a la expansión del puerto afectará a otros cinco a diez mil personas. Como casi el 99% de las personas desplazadas son afro colombianos, la privatización y desplazamiento tienen un componente racista.”

Human Rights Watch plantea que la violencia lleva al desplazamiento. En su apogeo, la organización derechista paramilitar, las Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia (AUC), mató a más de 1,000 residentes de Buenaventura solo en 2000 y 2001, según la fiscalía. Después de que las AUC fueron “desmovilizadas” en diciembre de 2004, otros grupos paramilitares de derecha emergieron, incorporando a los antiguos miembros de las AUC.

Hay personas que son desaparecidas todos los años – 24 en 2006, 63 en 2008, 43 en 2010 y 38 en 2013, según se expone en el informe. Muchos cadáveres son desmembrados, sus restos son traídos por las

continued on page 8

Delta Western workers secure union victory in Dutch Harbor

continued from page 1

they take steps to organize their own union. Finally, the victory will help all IBU members who are employed by Foss, especially during the next contract negotiations. "Having more union members and greater union density at Foss is important," said Coté.

The little town of Dutch Harbor now has three different groups of workers connected to the ILWU: the Delta Western workers, Harbormasters affiliated with the IBU, and the largest longshore local in Alaska.

Building the foundation

Leo, Robin and five other co-workers laid the foundation for a winning union campaign when the group decided to confront serious and persistent management abuse. All but one of eleven employees employed at the beginning of the campaign were Filipino-American – while almost all managers were white. The workers kept organizing despite constant threats of firing, unsafe conditions and substandard pay scales.

Alan Coté, Randall Baker, Chuck Wendt, International Organizer Jon Brier, and IBU Region 37 Business Agent Isagani Angeles met with workers throughout the campaign in various planning sessions and check-ins.

Adam Dalton, longtime IBU member in Southern California with experience leading strikes and union recognition campaigns, stepped up to coordinate daily campaign efforts on the ground in Dutch Harbor as an IBU Project Organizer.

Employer violations & worker strikes

Over the next six months, Delta Western workers filed federal charges against the company for violating labor laws and went on strike in February. The same thing happened again in March when the company committed

more labor law violations. Company managers were targeting union supporters for harassment, removing access to critical safety equipment and threatening to deny eligibility for the company retirement plan.

Each "lightning strike" disrupted company fueling operations at critical times when a barge was present, costing the company serious daily losses while boosting workers' sense of collective strength. Picket lines were bolstered with large numbers of Unit 223 and Filipino-American Society members, who stood in solidarity to ensure that the strikes maintained critical mass and high spirits.

Before managers could react, Delta Western workers were back working on the job each time, safely resuming operations while management scrambled to get control. The next time a fuel barge was scheduled to arrive in late March, frantic managers spent tens of thousands of dollars flying in extra personnel, only to see it wasted because no strike had occurred.

Decision to hold an NLRB election

Eventually, the group consulted with union leaders and decided it was time to switch gears from demanding voluntary recognition to filing for an election through the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB).

"Any time we have a chance to win voluntary recognition for the union, we want to fight for it," said Coté. "Side-stepping NLRB election rules – which are stacked against workers to benefit employers – is always the better way to go when you can do it. We realized about a month ago, however, that it was time to file for a vote. If any group of workers had the strength and unity to outlast management's union-busting through the election process, it was these folks who had been through two strikes and multiple confrontations on the job."



Resisting anti-union pressure

As expected, there was no shortage of management dirty tricks before the vote. The company tried to pass-off managers as workers in order to stack the vote. Then they said some workers should be classified as managers in order to exclude pro-union voters. They recruited anti-union employees from Anchorage and hired them to work at Dutch Harbor. Their final effort involved flying corporate executives from Seattle to conduct weeks of "captive" audience meetings, in which workers were forced to listen to union-busting messages on every shift.

"In spite of company attempts to scare us or buy us off from joining together, we believed in each other," observed Eli Ashbeck, a Delta Western worker. "We decided it was time to speak with one voice for fair treatment for all employees."

When the NLRB conducted the election with ballots written in English and Tagalog on April 10, a majority of employees voted to form a union.

"I'm inspired and thrilled by the courage, resolve and tenacity that our newest members have shown," said

Adam Dalton. "Delta Western workers have set an example for everyone who values fairness, respect and dignity on the job."

Hope for the future

Delta Western employee Erwin Riodil noted that the victory's significance goes beyond the fuel terminal itself. "I'm glad we could show our fellow Dutch Harbor residents that we care about securing decent lives for all our families—this is really a win for our community."

"What a great feeling to know we will get on with sitting down as equals with management to bargain and decide on some fair rules for our workplace," added Dacio. "We're really looking forward to helping this company become a model employer for Unalaska and beyond."

ILWU International Vice President (Mainland) Ray Familathe said, "This victory resulted from a joint effort by the Delta Western workers, International Organizing Department, Inland-boatmen's Union, Alaska Longshore Division and community supporters in Dutch Harbor."

MAY IS MEDICAL, DENTAL PLAN CHOICE MONTH

Active and retired longshore families in the ports where members have a choice can change medical and/or dental plans during the Open Enrollment period May 1 to May 31, 2014. The change will be effective July 1, 2014. In addition to the May Open Enrollment period, members may change their medical plan and/or dental plan once at any time during the Plan Year (July 1-June 30).

The July 1, 2008 Memorandum of Understanding between the ILWU and PMA provides that new registrants in the ports where members have a choice of medical plans shall be assigned Kaiser HMO Plan or Group Health Cooperative HMO Plan for the first 24 months of registration. After 24 months, those registrants who have qualified for continued eligibility under the Mid-Year/Annual Review hour's requirement will have a choice of medical plans. New registrants in San Francisco, Sacramento, Stockton, Los Angeles, Portland/Vancouver and Washington will have a choice of dental plans on the first of the month following registration, and may change dental plans during the Open Enrollment period and one additional time during the Plan Year.

MEDICAL CHOICE: The medical plan choices are Kaiser Foundation Health Plan or the ILWU-PMA Coastwise Indemnity Plan for Southern California Locals 13, 26, 29, 46, 63 and 94. Northern California Locals 10, 18, 34 (San Francisco), 34 (Stockton), 54, 75 and 91; and Oregon-Columbia River Locals 4, 8, 40, and 92. In the Washington State area, the medical plan choices for Locals 19, 23, 32, 47, 52 and 98 are Group Health Cooperative or the ILWU-PMA Coastwise Indemnity Plan.

DENTAL CHOICE: For Los Angeles Locals 13, 26, 63 and 94 the dental plan choices are Delta Dental of California, Harbor Dental Associates or Dental Health Services. For Southern California Locals 29 and 46 the dental plan choices are Delta Dental of California or Dental Health Services. For San Francisco Locals 10, 34, 75 and 91 the dental plan choices are Delta Dental of California, Dental Health Services, or Gentle Dental San Francisco. For Sacramento and Stockton Locals 18, 34 and 54 the dental plan choices are Delta Dental of California or Dental Health Services. For Portland/Vancouver Locals 4, 8, 40 and 92 the dental plan choices are LifeMap-Willamette Dental, Oregon Kaiser Dental Plan or Oregon/Washington Dental Service. For Washington Locals 7, 19, 21, 23, 24, 25, 27, 32, 47, 51, 52 and 98 the dental plan choices are Washington Dental Service or Dental Health Services.

Information on the medical and dental plans, and forms to change plans, can be obtained at the Locals and the ILWU-PMA Benefit Plans office.

All Medical and Dental Program Choice Forms and enrollment forms, as applicable, must be completed and received by the Benefit Plans office by May 31 for the enrollment change to be effective July 1.

ICTSI cited for serious safety violations in Portland

A routine inspection by the federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration at the Portland facility operated by International Container Terminal Services Incorporated (ICTSI) has resulted in a dozen “serious” safety violations and over \$18,000 in fines.

The violations were classified by the agency a “serious” because they “could cause an accident or illness that would most likely result in death or serious physical harm.” In addition to issuing the 12 “serious” citations

for violations that ranged from potentially hazardous lead exposure to dangerously unguarded machinery that could kill or maim workers, OSHA also issued five “other than serious” citations – each involving a potentially dangerous safety lapse, including potential exposures to poisonous cadmium, deadly carbon monoxide, defective welds, and a forklift that was modified without approval of the manufacturer or an engineer.

Curiously, it was a spokesman for the Port of Portland – not ICTSI – who defended the company’s dangerous working conditions. The Port spokes-

man sought to reassure the public by asserting that ICTSI’s dangerous safety violations “have been and will continue to be addressed by our terminal operator.” The Port has been defending their controversial tenant and showering ICTSI with lavish subsidies, despite the fact that the Philippine-based corporation reported profits of \$172 million last year; up 20% from the previous year. ICTSI’s CEO Enrique Razon has amassed a personal fortune estimated to be \$4.5 billion, according to Forbes magazine.

“ICTSI operates largely in developing countries where safety and

health laws are usually ignored or not enforced,” said ILWU Coast Committeeman Leal Sundet, who noted that Portland is ICTSI’s only U.S. operation. “For years this company has been blaming workers and carriers instead of correcting their own mismanagement and safety problems in Portland. It will be interesting to see if ICTSI will now accept responsibility, pay their fines and correct these and other hazards that weren’t cited – or choose the low road by appealing the fines and denying any responsibility.”

Dutch dockworkers win back more pension assets with international solidarity & ILWU help

Members of the Dutch dockworkers union (FVN) declared victory on April 14, following the successful resolution of a long fight that recovered roughly \$260 million worth in worker pension assets that were held by a private insurance company beginning in 2007.

The seven-year fight involved a dispute with the global insurance giant, Aegon, which operates in 25 countries and has vast real estate holdings, including San Francisco’s landmark “Transamerica Pyramid office building” in the city’s financial district.

The Pyramid was the site of several high-profile protests, including Janu-

ary 2009 and June, 2011, when delegations of Dutch dockers were joined by ILWU International President Bob McEllrath and ILWU members, along with support from the Teamsters.

FVN Chairman Niek Stam expressed thanks to union members in the United States, Great Britain and Australia who helped with the lengthy struggle. “I’m deeply grateful to the ILWU and other unions for putting pressure on Transamerica/Aegon in San Francisco. He also thanked the Maritime Union of Australia (MUA) for helping the Dutch dockers organize protests at Aegon’s offices in Sydney.

“It took a global campaign to prompt a global insurance giant to reach a pension settlement with dockworkers,” said Stam.



Long struggle pays off: ILWU International President Bob McEllrath (L) stood with FVN union Chairman Niek Stam during a January 2009 protest in San Francisco to help Dutch Dockers recover their pension assets.

ATTENTION: LOCAL 10 MEMBERS

Trustees of the Smolin-Melin Scholarship Fund are prepared to accept applications for scholarships for the academic year 2014-2015. Now is the time to indicate your interest. **June 1, 2014 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.

The Trustees have agreed that (1) no applicant will be awarded more than four scholarships, (2) a fifth scholarship would be considered after careful review of the applicant’s record and if circumstances warrant and (3) in no event would an applicant be considered for a sixth scholarship.

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 Beth Ross, counsel for ILWU Local 10, David Erkkila, a retired member of Local 10 and a friend of Victor Smolin, and Eugene Vrana, retired Director of Educational Services 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 Nicole Bridges at (415) 771-6400 or email her at nbridges@leonardcarder.com. She will then send you the application form with the necessary explanatory materials.

Colombian longshore workers face exploitation and racism

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People are “disappeared” every year – 24 in 2006, 63 in 2008, 43 in 2010 and 38 in 2013, the report states. Many corpses are dismembered, washed up on the beaches after being cut apart in “chop up houses.”

Paramilitaries require permits to hold gatherings, enforce curfews and prohibit visitors in the areas they control. They cooperate with local busi-

nessmen. After water was privatized several years ago, service was cut to 2-3 hours a day, while rates went up. When protesting residents refused to pay, company representatives showed up at their homes with men carrying machine guns.

“In Bajamar,” HRW says “for the first three days of November, there were shootouts three or four times a day, lasting up to two hours. On the third day, the Urabeños removed a man from

a house and executed him in front of community members.”

Despite repression and extreme violence, however, the longshore union in Buenaventura continues to exist. It participates actively in labor resistance to Colombia’s free trade policies. “We admire the people who can stand up to pressure from the companies and the port association,” Castro says. The union organized two strikes last

year and won contracts, although several workers were beaten and thirty were fired.”

“Today we see more unity in our community, like the recent strike in the countryside which led to a strike among longshore workers and students. With this kind of mobilization we will be able to stop the policies that are hurting us, and change Colombian society.”

– David Bacon

Trabajadores portuarios de Colombia sufren explotación y racismo

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mareas a las playas después de ser descuartizados en “casas de pique.”

Las organizaciones paramilitares requieren que las personas saquen permisos para reunirse, cumplan el toque de queda y prohíben visitantes en las zonas que ellos controlan. Cooperan con los empresarios locales. Después de que el suministro del agua fue privatizada hace varios años, este fue reducido a 2 ó 3 horas por día, mientras que aumentaron las tarifas. Cuando los residentes protestaron y se negaron a pagar, los representantes de la compañía llegaron a sus hogares con hombres armados con metralletas.

“En Bajamar,” dice HRW “los primeros tres días de noviembre hubo tres o cuatro balaceras al día que duraron hasta por dos horas. Al tercer día, los urabeños sacaron un hombre de su casa y lo ejecutaron ante los miembros de la comunidad.”

No obstante la represión y extrema violencia, el sindicato de trabajadores portuarios en Buenaventura sigue existiendo. Participa activamente haciendo resistencia a las políticas de libre comercio de Colombia. “Admiramos a la gente que se resiste a la presión de las compañías y la asociación portuaria,” dice Castro. La Unión organizó dos huelgas el año pasado y consiguió negociar contratos colectivos, aunque varios trabajadores fueron golpeados y treinta fueron despedidos.”

“Hoy hay más unidad en nuestra comunidad, como en la reciente huelga en el campo que llevó a una huelga de trabajadores portuarios y estudiantes. Con este tipo de movilización lograremos detener las políticas que nos están perjudicando y cambiar la sociedad colombiana.”

—David Bacon

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ADRP—Oregon
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ILWU WAREHOUSE DIVISION

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ILWU CANADA

EAP—British Columbia
John Felicella
3665 Kingsway, Ste 300
Vancouver, BC V5R 5WR
(604) 254-7911

TRANSITIONS

NEW PENSIONERS:

Local 8: George B. Kelly, Jr.;
Local 10: James E. Rauk; Melvin E. Thompson; **Local 13:** Chuck Choomngern; Albert Guglielmo;
Local 19: John T. Robbins;
Local 63: Eugene “Joe” Ponce; Darlene C. Acevedo;

DECEASED PENSIONERS:

Local 4: Edwin O. Knopp;
Local 8: James V. Strader;
Local 10: Myron Robinson; Earl Perkins (Evelyn); Ray J. Mackin; Horace Lane; Isaac W. Terry Jr;
Local 13: Camilo L. Lopez; Rex R. Lovett; Arthur Toliver Jr.; Harold L. Banks; **Local 19:** Robert L. Hall;
Local 21: Neil R. Palmer; **Local 23:**

James W. Braithwaite; **Local 27:** Obert W. Schilke; **Local 34:** Monty B. Bodine (Barbara); **Local 94:** Nick A. Zanze (Beverly);

DECEASED SURVIVORS:

Local 7: EVerna M. Koehn;
Local 10: Dorothy J. Mack;
Local 13: AliceJean Butts;
Georgia Scocchio; **Local 19:** Rosa L. Olsen; **Local 21:** Ila M.

Hoiness; **Local 23:** Esther Carlson; **Local 40:** Dorotha L. Oylar; Vera L. Murray; **Local 46:** Bessie Soto; Edna Rodriguez; **Local 52:** Maxine M. Montgomery; **Local 63:** Esperanza Acebo; Bernice M. Hershey; **Local 98:** Harriett J. Gomez;

LETTERS TO THE DISPATCHER

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Dear Editor,

I'd like to note the passing of an important historian – Edward Beechert – who deserves recognition for his work to document efforts by ILWU members to improve the lives of workers on the mainland and in Hawaii. He joined a labor union at age 14 and never stopped believing in peace and justice. Beechert worked his way through UC Berkeley as a Teamster cab driver and union grocery clerk, then joined the Army where he served in Europe from 1943-46. After earning a PhD, Beechert devoted most of his life to documenting the struggles by ILWU members to improve conditions for workers living in the Hawaiian Islands.



Beechert did serious labor research at the university level, but he didn't hesitate to speak out, get involved and share his own opinions on controversial issues. He sometimes joined Local 142 at marches and demonstrations. Some of his best work included detailed interviews with important ILWU leaders, including International Secretary-Treasurer Lou Goldblatt, Hawaii Regional Director and International Vice President Jack Hall, Local 142 President Carl Damaso, Hawaii organizers Frank Thompson and Chet Meske, and Local 142 activist Dave Thompson. His many books and articles recognized the work by ILWU members who transformed Hawaii from a plantation economy for the few into a more decent and democratic society. Beechert's masterful 1985 publication, WORKING IN HAWAII: A LABOR HISTORY, is still consulted by historians and labor devotees who are interested in the ILWU in the Islands.

Beechert was very kind and helpful to me when I was a young and not so young historian, and he treated others the same way. I will miss him and his many contributions to the ILWU.

Harvey Schwartz
Berkeley, CA

Dear Editor,

The ILWU Local 32 Pensioners Club has a membership of 40 members. Last Monday 22 members turned out for our monthly meeting. We held a “tarpaulin muster” and raised \$1500 for the victims of the Oso landslide here in Washington. It is just one example of the ongoing compassion and generosity exhibited by PCPA Clubs up and down the coast. Our members continually breathe life into our union's motto: “An injury to one is an injury to all”.

Our Clubs honor what the ILWU stands for, and we do what we can to help other working class folks whenever the need arises. We're “retired from the job...not from the struggle”!

In solidarity,

Rich Austin, PCPA President & ILWU Local 32 Pensioners
Everett, WA

Dear Editor,

With our ILWU contract coming up this year we see that Congress and the President are considering raising the country's minimum wage to \$10.10 an hour. Think about living on that. Back in the 60's when I last worked for minimum wage, it would now be \$15.00 or more if the 1960's minimum wage had been pegged to inflation and productivity. \$15.00 is no increase; it is the same buying power the minimum was in the 1960's. Worker productivity has doubled in the interim but the minimum wages has lagged far behind.

So how can the working poor make it on \$7.00 or \$8.00 an hour? The answer is they can't, so their employers shows them how to get food stamps and other government assistance that we all pay for in our taxes. It is morally correct that you and I should help the working poor. What seems odd here is that their employers are making a profit by you and I subsidizing their workers. That's socialism for the rich. That's just not right.

Not paying people who work for a living a living wage is not the American way and the memory of my mother's voice telling me that I am my brother's keeper is being perverted. I am being played for a fool. Well played I may be but a fool I am not. I'm calling Congress at 202-224 3121 and asking Congress for a living wage. We are a better country than to pay a wage we know is not livable. If business people cannot make their living without the public subsidizing their employees they need to move out of the way, its called capitalism.

Lewis Wright, Local 63 (Ret.)
San Pedro, CA