The words “Bloody Thursday” hold special meaning for ILWU members who know how their union was founded 84 years ago when west coast maritime strikers were attacked by police and vigilantes who killed two workers and injured dozens more with bullets and batons along San Francisco’s Embarcadero waterfront on Thursday, July 5, 1934.

Police also clashed that same year with maritime workers in Southern California and the Puget Sound. A total of seven strikers were killed in 1934, including Dick Parker and John Knudsen who were fatally shot in Los Angeles on May 15; Seattle strikers Shelley Dallron and Olaf Hel- land were fatally shot respectively on June 30 and July 20; and Bruce Lindberg died in a strike-related attack in Hong Kong. They were among dozens of American union members killed that year by police and employer vigilantes who tried to stop workers from organizing unions and general strikes that briefly shut down San Francisco, Minneapolis and many workplaces that summer.

Worker solidarity forced West Coast waterfront employers to recognize the union and sign a contract with workers. Ever since, the martyrs from 1934 are honored each year at somber ceremonies and family celebrations up and down the west coast. The July 5th date was also chosen by President Franklin Roosevelt when he signed America’s first comprehensive labor law – the National Labor Relations Act – in Tacoma on July 5, 1935.

Bay Area events
ILWU members in the Bay Area gather each year outside the Longshoremen’s Memorial Hall, located less than a mile from the site where martyrs John Knudsen and Howard Sperry were shot. This year’s ceremony began with the laying of a wreath, followed by the playing of taps by Local 10’s Scott Barton and arrival of the Local 10 Drill Team. A beautiful solo of the national anthem was performed by Aaliyah Washington-Perry and Bay Area Pensioners President Lawrence Thibeaux served as the event MC who introduced Trevyn McCoy and Vaneta Ham- li. They explained how Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. became an honorary member of Local 10 in 1967 before he was martyred the following year in Memphis while supporting sanitation workers who were striking for more respect, safer conditions and better pay. Local 10 President Melvin Mackay and Secretary-Treasurer Farrell Dailey spoke about the challenges facing workers in the past and future.

Bay Area Longshoremen’s Memorial President Chris Christensen and Treasurer Mike Villeggiante joined Local 34 President David Gonzales and Auxiliary 17 President Clydenia Austin in call for unity against powerful employers and corporate greed. Oakland Mayor Libby Schaaf and San Francisco Supervisor Aaron Peskin both saluted the union’s legacy and continuing role in the labor movement. Special guest Erin Watson explained how she and almost 100 co-workers had recently organized a union affiliated with the ILWU at San Francisco Veterinary Specialists – the Bay Area’s largest animal hospital. The event concluded with remarks from historian Harvey Schwarz, followed by lunch and entertainment for children and adults.

continued on page 4
Tragedy in Longview
Ship’s parted line snaps back in Longview, ending two lives and impacting many more

At the peak of summer on the Columbia River, a ship’s mooring line snapped without warning in the middle of the night, killing two men on the job and injuring two others.

Our brothers who tragically lost their lives were Local 21 Longshore worker Byron “Jake” Jacobs, 34, of Longview, Washington, and Chief Mate Pinghan Li, 41, of China.

Jacobs was a fifth-generation ILWU member and a respected activist in Local 21.

The incident happened when ILWU members were working the ANSCAC Splendor at the Port of Longview on June 28, moving the ship along the dock at Bent 5 to secure it for loading.

At approximately 1:30 am, as the ship was being moved into position, the mooring line that connected the vessel to the dock parted, snapping back at a speed of about 750 feet per second. Without warning or time to respond, the line recoiled in two parts, whipping one ball toward the dock and the other ball toward the ship.

On the dock, the line struck three ILWU members. On the ship, the line struck Chief Mate Pinghan Li.

Sadly, the force of the impact killed Jacobs at the scene. Li was transported to St. Mary Regional Medical Center in Vancouver, where he died later that evening. A Local 21 Longshore worker and Local 28 security guard suffered non-life-threatening injuries.

Jacobs leaves his wife, Megan, and their three children: Harlow, age 8, Phoenix age 5, and Monroe, age 1.

Li leaves behind his wife and their 13-year-old child.

Families and friends say goodbye
Less than 24 hours after the incident, approximately 200 people gathered next to the ship at Bent 5 to pay their respects during a candlelight vigil. Normally closed to the public, the port provided a podium and allowed Jacobs’ friends, family and fellow longshore workers to gather for two hours at the site.

Li’s wife reportedly flew from China to escort her husband’s remains home.

Jacobs’ family and friends gathered again on July 6 at the Cowlitz County Events Center, where 500 people heard stories of his love for his family and his dedication to unionism.

His obituary read, “Byron was a devoted husband, father, son and brother who loved all of his family. He loved coaching his daughter in sports. Byron really enjoyed visiting and vacationing with his father and family in North Carolina, and learning about his Lumbee Indian heritage.”

At the July 12 Port of Longview Commission meeting, several commissioners spoke in favor of creating a permanent memorial, and Port CEO Norm Kreibiel recommended working with Local 21 to craft and site an appropriate tribute.

After a moment of silence, Port Commissioner Jeff Wilson said, “We’re going to hurt for a very long time.”

EGT Activism
Jacobs was raised in an ILWU home, as his step-father, Billy Roberts, was a fourth-generation Longshore worker.

Roberts had left the Longview area after high school to serve in the military, and returned home with his wife, Jill, and her two young sons, Byron and Michael.

Roberts joined Local 21 as a hardship as his new family settled in, and over the years, Jill and the boys came to work on the docks as well. After graduating from high school themselves, Byron and Michael Jacobs became fifth-generation members of the ILWU.

With his deep union roots, Jacobs stepped up in a big way when Export Grain Terminal (EGT) attempted to open a massive new grain elevator at the port without ILWU labor in 2011. He became an activist alongside hundreds of supporters in the Pacific Northwest and Coastwise in what became a painful fight to protect ILWU jurisdiction.

Over the course of a year of protests, dozens of ILWU members, officers and supporters were arrested for standing up for the union – including Jacobs, on more than one occasion.

Local 21 pensioner Michael “Kelly” Muller recalled an EGT protest at which he and Jacobs were maced, beaten and arrested by railroad police. The two Longshoremens had tried to protect members of the women’s auxiliary who were sitting peacefully on the railroad tracks leading to EGT, when law enforcement started aggressively handling the women.

Associated Press photos of Muller and Jacobs being attacked by police in riot gear became a well-known image of the David versus Goliath battle.

The union’s fight ultimately succeeded in securing ILWU jurisdiction at EGT, and Local 21 members have been manning the EGT grain terminal since 2012.

“I can tell you that there was no better fighter for the union than Byron,” Dan Coffman, who was Local 21 President at the time, told mourners at Jacobs’ service. Coffman also mourned Jacobs as the kid he had coached in baseball and who was his own son’s best friend.

Current Local 21 President Jake Ford said, “Byron loved his union and his work and will be incredibly missed.”

Waterfront Dangers
The deaths of Jacobs and Li, and the multiple injuries, affected longshore workers in the community and beyond. In 2016, Longview suffered a loss when Local 92 Walking Boss Jim Meadows died while working at the Weyerhaeuser log export terminal. Coastwise, it’s rare to meet a longtime Longshore worker who hasn’t had a workplace fatality or catastrophic injury hit close to home.

The maritime industry has changed over the centuries, but Longshore workers and mariners have suffered from the threat of parted mooring lines since the dawn of shipping. When synthetic lines part, they do so silently and at a speed which allows no time to prevent injury. Without proper use, maintenance and training, lines can pose a deadly threat.

The June 28 incident remains under investigation by the Coast Guard, Washington State Department of Labor and Industries, and the ILWU Coast Safety Committee. Jacobs’ widow has filed a wrongful death suit against the ship owner and operators in the U.S. District Court in Portland.

“There’s not a single ILWU member who isn’t moved by the two families’ losses and the trauma suffered by the witnesses and survivors,” said ILWU International President Robert McEllrath. “This split-second snap-back has changed the lives of four families and is a tragic reminder of the dangers we face on the docks.”

“I remember Byron as a good man who worked hard for his family and his union,” said McEllrath. “We will continue fighting every day to make our jobs safer, because the most terrible news is when a parent doesn’t come home from work.”

A fund has been set up to support Jacobs’ family, and contributions may be made to the Byron Jacobs Memorial Account at Longshoreman’s Federal Credit Union in Longview.

Jacobs’ step-father, Billy Roberts, said, “On behalf of Byron’s family, I want to thank everybody in the union for their well wishes and support. I want to thank the ILWU for living up to its motto, ‘An Injury to One is an Injury to All.’”

Byron Jacobs is survived by his wife, Megan, and their children: Harlow, 8, Phoenix, 5, and Monroe, 1.

*ILWU Roots: Byron Jacobs, seen here in blue, was a fifth-generation member of Local 21. He marched in support of KEK workers in November 2017 along with his step-father, Local 92 member Billy Roberts, brother Michael of Local 21, son Phoenix on his shoulders, and mother Jill of Local 21.*
ILWU members help tenants fight evictions and build power in Tacoma

When I arrived for my first meeting of the Tiki Tenants Organizing Committee in Tacoma this past April, a group of 50 people were already gathering in the outdoor courtyard and sitting in a circle of mismatched chairs. I didn’t see anyone I knew, but was quickly approached by an elderly African-American man who saw my ILWU shirt, greeted me with a smile, and introduced himself.

“My father was a member of ILWU local 10 and I remember running around the union hall in San Francisco when I was a little boy,” he said. After growing up, Julius Bance, Sr. told me he had done a stint in the Army, then worked as a “tank-haul” truck driver until retiring. I wanted to learn more, but our conversation was cut short by a woman who introduced herself as an organizer with the Tenants Union of Washington State. She asked everyone to quickly find empty seats and pull-in close together.

The meeting started with introductions and some encouraging words about showing each other respect when we spoke. This was the first time this group of people had met together, and I soon discovered why many were anxious while I listened and took notes about the stories that I heard.

An elderly man who just had back surgery was given 26 days to pack and move. A blind woman in a wheelchair move.

An elderly and disabled tenants are among those being helped from organizing efforts supported by Local 23’s Young Worker’s Committee.

Speaking out: Tacoma’s City Council is hearing from tenants who are organizing for justice.

Elderly and disabled tenants are among those being helped from organizing efforts supported by Local 23’s Young Worker’s Committee.

“no cause” = no rights and no justice

A “no cause eviction” is just like getting fired at work for no good reason, which is how almost every American workplace operates unless a union contract says otherwise. Passing “just cause” protections for tenants and organizing muscle

Our first task was to help one of the tenants pack up their belongings and move, which was a difficult task. This was the first time this group of people had met together, and I soon discovered why many were anxious while I listened and took notes about the stories that I heard.

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Southern California

Honoring the Legacy of 1934

Columbia River

Portland’s 84th Annual July 5th Memorial Picnic was held at the Oakes Amusement Park along the banks of the Willamette River. The event was organized with help from Locals 8, 40, 92, Local 5, the Inlandboatmen’s Union, Auxiliary 5, the Columbia River Pensioners and the Local 8 Federal Credit Union - who all contributed to the picnic’s success. An estimated 1200 family and friends attended throughout the day. Events began with a memorial service where a wreath of flowers was placed into the current of the Willamette River in honor of the ILWU’s fallen martyrs, while Paul Grannard played taps. Later in the day, musical entertainment was provided by Local 8 member Dave Degman & the Rogue River Band. Volunteers served over 1,000 hot dogs, 36 gallons of chili and 1200 ice cream bars. Auxiliary 5 provided entertainment for many by hosting bingo games throughout the day. Special thanks was extended to Local 8 Vice President Tom Owens and his family for all their help with the event – along with support from Ash-E Kelly Hill for running the kitchen, Tom Wehage for selling all the raffle tickets, Auxiliary 5 members for operating the bingo games, Steffen Hill and his crew for selling the amusement ride bands, Paul Cole for donating the use of his boat, Local 8 Secretary Troy Mosteller and Local 8 President Bruce Holte and all their family members for helping to make the event a success.

Tacoma:

Local 23’s traditional July 5th Pic-nic at Spanaway Lake Park continued with an even larger crowd this year that seemed to include more families and children. The games for kids were popular, as were bingo games for the older set organized by Auxiliary #35 members. A delicious BBQ lunch satisfied everyone. This year’s event was coordinated by Trustees Eric Sowers, Art Jackson and Kyle Copeland along with Dan Wiker, Local 23 Pensioners, Auxiliary #35 and a host of volunteers.

Seattle:

Vasa Park on Lake Sammamish is once again where ILWU members in Puget Sound held their July 5th celebration. Pensioner San Huniu conducted the opening ceremony that honored members who passed during the previous years – along with the martyrs of 1934. A BBQ lunch followed with side dishes and strawberry shortcake. Local 19 member Robert Willis, brought out his fancy corn roasting machine and Local 19 member Mike Callanan grilled some tasty oysters. There was swimming in the lake, a bouncy castle, water slide, and other games for kids. Local 19’s Ali Vokich put together a 50/50 raffle that benefitted the Young Workers Committee. Teresa Neufang gathered together great prizes for a raffle that benefitted the West Seattle Food Bank. Both raffles were a huge hit Local 19 member Cosette Hill worked hard to provide some awesome shirts and swag for sale at the picnic. The event was well-attended with about 900 who came to the park. Coordinator Sarah Esch sent a “big super shout-out to all the volunteers who made our picnic such a huge success, including Bruce and Nicole Lenz, Svava Alumbaugh, Charlie Wilbert, Randy Wilbur, Mark Williams, Kimoa Moliaio, Kullen Fernandez, Warren Fairbanks, April Benjamin, Donald Vanison, James Bump, Joe Toro, Thomas Galloway, Tim Darby, Tyrone Harvey, John Persal, Justin Hirsch, and everyone else who helped load and unload our rental truck.” Local 500 member Joulene Tse and Local 514’s Mike Parent travelled from Vancouver, Canada to attend the picnic and took photos of the event.

Honoring So Cal’s fallen martyrs

Like past years, the event began with a morning memorial at the Roosevelt Memorial Park in Gardena where martyrs Dickie Parker and John Knudsen were buried after being shot on May 15, 1934; both died and gave the first sacrifice on the sacrifices made by workers and laborers. The ILWU on the west coast. ILWU members and Local 5, the Inlandboatmen’s Union, Auxiliary #35 and a host of volunteers.

Wilmington Picnic:

This year’s So Cal’s harbor-area Bloody Thursday Picnic was once again the site for this year’s So Cal’s harbor-area Bloody Thursday Picnic. The annual event has grown to attract nearly two-thousand participants, and the Sports Complex is one of the few area sites than can handle the larger crowd and parking. This year’s Organizing Committee included Steve Lenares and Melon Cesar Hall.

Southern California ILWU members, pensioners and their families enjoyed a sunny day in Wilmington.
A large group of clients, community leaders, pet owners and union members came out on April 12 to show their support for a successful organizing effort by nearly 100 workers at the Bay Area’s largest animal hospital.

The event took place on the sidewalk in front of the San Francisco Veterinary Specialists (SFVS), the Mission District animal care facility that provides critical services such as cardiology and chemotherapy for Bay Area pets. Workers at SFVS voted nearly 3 to 1 in April to form a union and join the ILWU. In the weeks leading up to the vote, workers had to endure an anti-union campaign orchestrated by management that continues to this day as negotiations for a first contract are underway to secure better pay, real benefits, improved training and better retention.

“Improving conditions here will have a direct impact on the animals we care for and people who love them,” said Brianna-Lynn De Libertis, an experienced Medical Liaison at the facility who also serves on her new union’s Community Action Team. “The turnout and diversity of support we saw on July 12 was inspiring,” she said, citing the participation of so many different community leaders, including two who had a special impact.

The first was Sandra Mack, a SFVS client who brought along her dog – and a pile of pet bills from SFVS. Mack had heard about vet workers organizing at SFVS from her colleagues at the California Alliance for Retired Americans (CARA) where she is President of the group’s Education Fund. The statewide network represents thousands of senior activists in California, including many in the Bay Area. Mack spoke confidently and was unwavering in support for the SFVS employees, their desire to improve care for animals and improve the value to pet owners who pay the bills.

San Francisco Supervisor Hillary Ronen also attended as the elected representative for the Mission District where SFVS is located. Ronen is a dynamic political leader who is respected in the neighborhood, Bay Area and larger political world.

Ronen arrived at the event carrying a letter that she wanted to personally deliver to VCA/Mars management. She said the letter called on the corporation to start respecting worker efforts to improve conditions – and cooperate with the new union. She also said Mars/VCA should stop stalling and start negotiating seriously – noting they had only agreed to one negotiating session per month in an effort to frustrate workers. She concluded her talk by asking a group of employees to accompany her as she entered the building to personally deliver the letter to management.

A variety of union members attended, including members of ILWU Local 6 and 10, the ILWU’s local representing animal care workers in San Francisco. The company refuses to meet more than once a month for first contract talks.

Community leaders supported animal care workers on April 12. Workers at VCA/SFVS recently joined the ILWU. The company refuses to meet more than once a month for first contract talks.

Showing solidarity for animal care workers in San Francisco
W
hen I last wrote for The Dispatcher from Chile in 1996, the pri-
vate pension companies (known as AFP’s) who ran Chile’s system of individual pension accounts were already unpopular. Inde-
pendent economists and union leaders warned then that the system would eventually fail. The privatized social security sys-
tem was imposed on Chile in the early 1980s by the brutal, U.S.-backed mili-
tary dictatorship of General Augusto Pinochet. After thousands of murders, widespread torture, imprisonment and repression of once-powerful unions, the country became a laboratory for imposing extreme free market ideas generated by University of Chicago Economist, Milton Friedman. A group of Chilean students who rioted in the streets, Friedman were known as “the Chilean Boys,” and they oversaw the sell-off of public-owned companies, deregulation of business and privatization of educa-
tion, healthcare and Social Security. Chile’s public programs dated back to the 1920s and included a comprehen-
sive national healthcare system. A conservative, young Chilean

Social Security Privatization is a disaster in Chile; Anti-union politicians and Wall St. still want it here

More than 20 years ago The Dispatcher warned that an experiment imposed by a

bodily dictatorship would fail. We were right, and the Chilean people are angry.

When the Supreme Court installed

Anti-union politicians and Wall St. still want it here

Photo by No Mas AFP

• July/August 2018

Social Security and Medicare, which they

warned that an experiment imposed by a

entrenched system.”

leaders warned then that the

system would eventually fail.

the privatizers had a champion in the

White House. But unlike Chile, resis-
tance from U.S. unions and allies was
able to stop the plan to privatize Social
Security and Medicare – at least for the

time being.

While I was visiting Chile earlier this
year in April, my cab driver, Maur-
icio Sanhueza, told me, “Things have
gotten a lot worse since you were here in
1996.” He added, “José Piñera is hated everywhere in Chile.”

Piñera had promised Chilean work-
ers that the AFP system would provide
70 percent of their salary when they retired, but this “replacement rate” is now in the 30-35 percent range, says financial advis-
or Álvaro Gallegos, who served briefly as Superintendent of Pensions under a
recent democratically-elected govern-
ment. “In another decade,” he adds, it
will be down to 15 percent.”

During this year’s trip, I asked many
people, but had trouble finding any
working person who believed that they
will be able to retire with dignity under
the private system. They know that the
AFP’s are ripping them-off with high fees and confusing rules designed to
keep pension payouts as low as possible.

Hector Manuel, 75, was working
as a hospital orderly and expected a

good retirement under Social Security. “I was told I had to switch and be
‘retired’ in 2005, but now has to keep
working as a cleaner at another hos-
pital.” The more I think about it,
the more anxious I get, but I will never
be able to stop working.”

Seamstress Sonia Garcia, puts it in
even glummer terms: “I will have to
work until I die. I just hope I can save
enough to pay for my coffin.”

The Wall Street financial collapse of
2008 brought crisis to Chile as well.
The value of private accounts dropped
30-35 percent and set the stage for
a massive reform movement. A group
of unions stepped-up to create an organi-
ization called No Mas AFP in 2013, and
grassroots organizations began throughout
Chile.

“Our second major mobiliza-
tion, in 2016, had two million people
marching in cities throughout Chile,
the largest march in our history,” says
Luis Mesina, President of the Confed-
eration of Bank Workers and a top leader of the movement.

Two million Chileans marching in
their nation of 18 million would be
the equivalent of almost 40 million people protesting in the U.S.

Last year, No Mas AFP ran a nation-
wide referendum supervised by two
universities that ensured that each reg-
istered voter could only vote once.

“We had 8,500 volunteers who
helped conduct the referendum throughout Chile, union members,
seniors, students and even some con-
servative people,” adds Mesina. “The
results showed that 1.74 million of
Chile’s 3 million registered voters par-
ticipated, and voted 96.7 percent of
them opposed the AFPs.”

But that doesn’t mean that funda-
mental change will come easily.

Dozens of people interviewed for
this article had the same response when
I asked them if they remembered
Piñera promise that workers would
become the owners of Chile. Each
of them told me, “It is the AFPs that have
become the owners of Chile.”

The six AFPs—three of which are
totally or partially owned by U.S. com-
panies like Met Life and Prudential—
control assets equal to about 70 percent
of Chile’s Gross Domestic Product. They wield enormous political and economic power that holds influence over politi-
cal forces – who are among the few
that remain in the nation’s once robust
civil society system. He may have been bloody dictator, murderer and torturer, but he wasn’t a fool.

Fred J. Sokolowy has written several previous articles for The Dispatcher and is now a retired editor and communications director for various unions. He is a member of the National Writers Union, UAW Local 1961.
The most worker-friendly President in almost a century was elected by a landslide of Mexican votes on July 1st. Andrés Manuel López Obrador – known as “AMLO” – pledged to follow three principles that, if honored, would set him apart from his corrupt predecessors: “do not lie, do not steal, and do not betray the people,” was his promise on election night.

He’s inheriting a country with vast oil and mineral resources but a poverty rate of 50% - compared to about 15% in the U.S., still the highest poverty rate among wealthy nations. AMLO has promised to increase anti-poverty spending, cut waste and try to recover more revenue from oil and other resources that were mostly public until being privatized 25 years ago – helping to create some of the world’s richest billionaires, including Carlos Slim, worth $67 billion.

The photo on the right shows retired Local 63 member Lewis Wright, who became a dual citizen of the U.S. and Mexico with his Mexican wife Angélica and daughter Angéles – all three voted for AMLO and have red dye on their finger to prove they already voted. “The extra finger in the bottom of the photo came from our 5-year-old granddaughter, Diagna, who has a clean finger,” said Wright. Voters in Mexico are required to put ink on their thumbs, called “dedos,” to prevent duplicate voting. AMLO won over 30 million “dedos” – more than twice what his nearest rival received.

Members of Local 6 gathered for their 71st Annual Convention on May 19th.

Castaing also said that Local 6 continues working with community groups to secure warehouse positions on the West Oakland Army Base development.

Castaing pointed to extensive renovations being made at the Local 6 hall. He also reported that a tenant in the union’s San Jose property who had been behind with rent is now current. He said they are in the process of selling the San Jose property and will invest proceeds from the sale to benefit the union membership.

On May 19th, the ILWU Local 6 held their 71st Annual Constitutional Convention. In his Officer’s Report, Local 6 Secretary-Treasurer Chris Castaing spoke about recent contract ratifications at Stratas Food, Cemex Richmond, PDM Steel, Heath Ceramics, Calcott, Alameda Hospital, International Paper and Gallo. He also spoke about some recent organizing efforts including the successful campaign to organize Pharmacy Techs at Alameda Hospital, multiple ongoing efforts to organize in the growing cannabis industry and the successful organizing drive of veterinary techs and customer service representatives at San Francisco VCA pet hospital.

The photo on the right shows the President more worker-friendly, who formed a new party that pledged to help workers and fight poverty.
ILWU members help tenants fight evictions and build power in Tacoma

continued from page 3

to overturn those restrictions through a statewide ballot measure that would allow local rent control ordinances.

Building a community coalition

While thinking about bigger strategies is important, we try to stay grounded by showing up to help ten-
sants pack up and move when they're forced out. The project keeps us in touch with Tacoma's working class, and it helps unite our diverse mem-
bership at Local 23 (A, B and Casual members), along with volunteers from Local 22, members of IATSE 15, IBEW 46, AFSCME Council 28 representing Washington State Employees, Indivis-
ible Tacoma, South Sound Democratic Socialists of America, Associated Min-
isters, students from the University of Puget Sound, and many other organi-
zations that are helping with this work.

Organizing is organizing

Whether we're facing a landlord or a boss, organizing is the only practi-
cal way for people to solve problems that are too big for individual solu-
tions. Labor unions have organized to win safer working conditions, health care benefits, living wages and dig-
ity in retirement. They also allow us to shore up jurisdiction and maintain
power in Tacoma

we organize, big landlords and devel-
opers will continue winning with their money and power. Organizing can also
help us take a deeper look into the root causes of housing injustice – includ-
ing our economic system that forces so many to live on the margins while a handful at the top enjoy enormous wealth. The system isn't fair and bal-
anced. 54% of Tacomans are paying
rent. We estimate that roughly 114,000
Tacoma residents would benefit from
better housing laws and tenants protec-
tions that the Tiki Tenant Organizing
Committee is fighting for.

Good strategy for unions

This housing issue can put unions front and center in these community
struggles and help build power for workers beyond the jobsite. There are
almost 50,000 union members con-
ected through the Pierce County Cen-
tral Labor Council. If we can mobilize
that power, we'd have the mass base
for a powerful movement – which is precisely where our unions need to
be in times like these. Politicians seem
to be feeling the public concern about
affordable housing, as is the news media. This could be one of those rare
occasions when elected officials, the media, community and civic leaders
are all willing to support our struggle
together and mass evic-
tions that destabilize our school dis-
ciplines. Labor unions have
organized to

A Helping Hand...
...when you need it most. That’s what we’re all about.

We are the representatives of the ILWU- sponsored
recovery programs. We provide professional and
confidential assistance to you and your family for
alcoholism, drug abuse and other problems—and
we’re just a phone call away.

ILWU members help tenants fight evictions and build power in Tacoma

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