

AN INJURY TO ONE IS AN INJURY TO ALL



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**MEETINGS:**

January	4
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— UNITY —



UNION BUSTER

June '98

**Join The Old Timers  
Seattle ILWU Pension  
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**ILWU UNITY**

BY DEL CASTLE

In view of the coming '99 negotiations it is necessary to take a look at where we stand. It is also necessary to point out that where we stand also means where does the membership stand. The membership is the union, including everyone carrying an ILWU book. That needs to be kept clearly in mind.

Where do we stand? In one sense we can say we stand on a proud record to the benefit of everyone of us. It is not necessary to recount our level of wages which are hardly equalled in other industries; our welfare benefits that keep the high cost of medical out of our pocket book; and our working conditions that beat assembly line sweat. In fact, M&M has been heralded as a "no sweat contract". In addition, the pension and welfare provisions for retirees and survivors are outstanding. Of course there is room for improvement, but that can only be gotten through the ILWU.

The PMA is preparing to cut those hard earned standards. Mr. Miniace, president and CEO of the PMA has served us with early warning. The 1999 negotiations, as we have previously noted in the RUSTY HOOK, will be based largely on countering PMA schemes. We will have to be thoroughly prepared.

The first and foremost necessity we face in '99 negotiations is unity in our ranks. This question must be faced seriously. We do not have the kind of unity that prevailed in the previous strikes and struggles that brought

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TOMORROW'S NEWS TONIGHT Steve Brodner



us our gains. But we must achieve that unity. As Abraham Lincoln once said, "A house divided against itself cannot stand." No truer words were ever spoken.

How do we achieve unity? First, recognition of what the union - meaning us - has achieved will convince us to unite. Secondly, the schemes of the PMA to take away what we have rightly earned in the way of wages, hours, working conditions and fringes will convince us that sticking together is good. Thirdly, and of great importance, we owe it to the rest of the labor movement to uphold the high union standards we have achieved. That will convince others that if the PMA can cut us, an example will be set for other employers.. Fortunately, other unions and the AFL-CIO as a whole are ready to take on labor's enemies. It is up to us to set an example as we have done since 1934. In '34 we turned the Great Depression around by getting a pay raise when all other industries were cutting wages and laying off workers. That was achieved by sticking to the union. Our leadership responsibility to the rest of the labor movement will convince many others.

And finally and most important, most of our membership will agree that cuts at this time are incredibly unfair. If CEOs and corporate presidents are earning 200 or more times our wage, by what measure do they demand that we take cuts? Of course, at this stage they may not try to tamper with wages, (unless they are out to break the union), but they will certainly target fringe benefits.

After all, Miniace's resume is in the HMO field. And we all know they and he are experts in cutting health care. And, as we all know, this hits the Old Timers hardest. And, in light of the present underhanded assault on "life-time coverage", it is clear the PMA wants to cut welfare or anything else it can.

So, the union is good for our health and that of our families. That reason alone should make even the weakest union supporter ready to unite in our struggle to save our nationally recognized decent living standard..

What tactics will the PMA use? The time honored tactic of divide and conquer is obvious. If I am not mistaken, they will try to offer steady jobs to those willing to turn against the union. We don't think this will work simply because steady workers will still need the ILWU to protect them from becoming part of the bosses program of lower wages, longer hours and unsafe working conditions. So, the PMA is not on very strong ground on that one. The union will always be on the waterfront because the we need it.

In addition containerization makes that scheme unlikely. There are not enough full time jobs available. For instance, would APL hire a steady gang for one day and pay them PGP for the rest of the week? Not likely. Other lines cannot offer much more.

They also want to do away with the hiring hall, as we have noted previously. They would be silly to try to do away with the hiring hall. It is not in their interest nor ours. The hiring hall can and will be preserved. All that needs to be done is to work out a democratic system of combining steady work and the hiring hall as has already been done in some ports and is provided for in Section 943. Our negotiating committee can be counted on to the preserve the hiring hall in spite of PMA schemes.

Finally, the possibility of a strike forced by PMA's failure to bargain in good faith or a lock-out by PMA against the union are both possible and pose a serious problem. The question is, is the PMA out to break the ILWU? I do not think so in spite of the warnings circu-

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lating in some media. The time is not ripe for all out anti-unionism. The outcome of the November elections that repudiated Gingrich, one of the most anti-union politicians, assures us that negotiations will be in a more favorable atmosphere. A republican win would have done the opposite.

The other wild card in all this is the ever more certainty of a global recession (as formerly noted in the RUSTY HOOK). If jobs become scarce, earnings go down and members are hanging out at the hall waiting for a job, the employers' offer of steady jobs will appeal to those who are weak in union support. But, as we pointed out, that won't work under containerization. If the global recession occurs, we have a new ball game and we will have to work out a program to solve that problem. And it is possible (see the editorial in this issue).

Finally, unity includes the entire union from top to bottom. Issues of malfeasance, misfeasance and dereliction of duty on the part of any union officials have to be put temporarily aside until after negotiations. If there are real grievances against any part of the leadership, and I am not saying there aren't, they pale in importance compared to what is at stake in the '99 negotiations. Such issues can be dealt with in our democratic union elections.

Let us remember, "Unity is the apple of our eye!"

In the Great Depression and during the union organizing campaigns of the 40s and 50s we sang a little song that might well remind us of the need for unity. It goes:

"Now if you want a raise in pay  
I'll tell you what to do  
Go and ask your boss for it  
And he will give it to you

Yes, he will give it to you, my friends,  
A raise in pay! without delay!  
He will give it to you.

Ooooooh!, put it on the ground  
Spread it all around  
It will make your flowers grow!"



## CORRESPONDENCE

From Brother ANTHONY JOSEPH:

"To all my union Brothers:

I'm trying to write after a slight stroke. I read the HOOK this issue, the first in my 25 years of retirement. I'm 93 years old - been in 3 locals in the union. Started local 54, Stockton, Calif. - traded to local 13 in the 70s - then to Seattle local 19 - retired from there. This PAUL MCCABE - is he from Pedro? I think he is the same guy that traded to a port North. ART MINK rings a bell with me, DEL CASTLE, too. Also RALPH SOUZA. After all, I was voted B.A. Jugum wanted me to run. I didn't like it. Excuse my writing after a stroke. 93 years old.

I have a son that's a Patrol Cop in Fellon, Nevada. Anyone going that way and gets stopped, tell him you know his Dad. My son's name is MARK JOSEPH - Fellon Cop.

Bless you all!"

Bless you, TONY for your fine letter. You don't know how good it is to hear from an OLD-OLD TIMER who took so much time and effort to let us know his story!

From our staunch supporter, JESSIE HRASKA:

"Gentleman, Comrades:

Yesterday, Sunday, I came upon your last issue of

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the RUSTY HOOK. Some how it got caught up in some of my regular mail and I didn't notice it. However, I have been planning to send you some support and here it is: twenty dollars. And I didn't know you had some of my writing in it, until I got into it.

Thank you for everything.

Sincerely in the spirit of international Brotherhood"

[and Sisterhood, JESSIE]

Thanks a million for your twenty dollar donation, JESSIE!

And from GRANT MYERS who is becoming one of our greatly appreciated donors - One hundred dollars:

"This \$100.00 check enclosed is to help defray expenses for putting out the RUSTY HOOK. Please deposit my check in a timely fashion. Thank you for your cooperation."

You bet we will cooperate, GRANT. We remember your last check for \$100.00 took a few months to clear due to confusion in our office. We're sorry about that, but very glad about the new \$100.00!

From Brother DAVID BRENNAN:

'Dear Sisters and Brothers:

Please enroll me as a lifetime member of the Seattle ILWU Pension Club.

Enclosed is a check to cover membership (\$115) plus a (\$100) donation to the Pension Club.

I'm still working but will retire at the start of the next Contract.

My work number is 78161.

In Solidarity,

DAVID BRENNAN."

Thanks ever so much, DAVID. We hope more of you out there will follow DAVID'S example and join the Club. Retirement doesn't mean we disappear. It means we have to continue the struggle for our gains and rights!

## LABOR VICTORY IN SETTLEMENT OF THE NEPTUNE JADE CASE—PMA DROPS ALL SUITS AGAINST DEFENDANTS!

In a stunning victory for the labor movement and its supporters, the Pacific Maritime Association, which represents global shipowner and stevedore companies, announced it is dropping all of its suits in the Neptune Jade dispute. The suits, which had become a cause celebre internationally, grew out of a solidarity action in September, 1997, initiated on the Oakland docks in support of 500 fired Liverpool, England dockworkers.

When the ship sailed for Vancouver, Canada and then Kobe and Yokohama, Japan with its scab cargo still on board, dockworkers there also refused to unload the ship. Alarmed by the IMF and World Bank-initiated deregulation and privatization schemes which have undermined unions around the world, waterfront workers are now recognizing the importance of coordinating labor support efforts internationally, like the Neptune Jade action.

The PMA has agreed to drop its suits against all of the Neptune Jade defendants, Robert Irminger, Jack Heyman, the Labor Party, the ILWU International and ILWU Locals 10 and 34. In exchange, the union gives up nothing. In the settlement brokered by ILWU International President Brian McWilliams, Heyman has agreed to drop his malicious prosecution countersuit against the PMA. With its legal attacks the PMA unwittingly stirred up a hornet's nest not only within the labor movement but amongst those concerned with democratic rights.



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*Special Message  
to All Lifetime Members:*

*Life time membership does not include the assessment for the PCPA Convention to be held in Seattle in 2002.*

*The assessment is \$ 3.00 per year for 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001 and 2002*

## AN INJURY TO ONE IS AN INJURY TO ALL

### Editorial

#### EXCEPT FOR A FEW

What if there is a global recession? What will it mean to us and to the population of the globe? To most of us it means hard times. Losses - except for a few - will mount into billions.

Assuming it does happen, we naturally ask the question: why? It happens primarily because of the nature of the capitalist system. The capitalist system works in a circle called "boom and bust" - something like a dog chasing its tail - neither the dog or the tail get anywhere.

Every bust contains a boom. But there is a difference in each boom. It comes with less strength than the last one, accompanied by lower living standards - except for a few. This recent boom is seen as coming with a service economy with less well paid jobs in industry and more low pay jobs in services - as in waiting on table - except for a few. The coming bust will sink to a lower level because it starts out at the service economy level and sinks from there - except for a few. It can be so bad that entire economies around the world could collapse in the manner of the Russian example where virtually everybody is living at a sub-welfare level - except for a few.

So, what can be done? Do we just stand by and let the economy slide down a slippery slope? Is there a way out? A look at the last Great Depression could give us suggestions. That may be ancient history for most of us, but history has lessons to teach us.

The Great depression was tackled in a positive way. Billions of dollars were poured into public works and millions of unemployed were put to work - at a minimum wage, from 30 to 70 dollars a month - but it was better than food vouchers at around two and a half dollars a week. They did a number of good works

such as Seattle's Arboretum. That poured money into the economy and recovery started a slow beginning. However - the few (then called "economic royalists") - through the Republicans in Congress, began to cut the jobs for all called the Works Progress Administration. The few - called it a "socialist" program. As a consequence, the economy took another downturn in 1938.

We would have gone into another economic tail-spin if it hadn't been for WWII. With the war and war industry, everybody went into the armed forces or to work at industrial wages (in Seattle shipyards it was eighty cents an hour, in '41). The depression ended and prosperity lasted until the early '70s. Then another economic dip began. For instance, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor statistics the typical workers is worse off today than in either 1973 or 1989. After that a slow decline into a service economy has lasted until we see today's beginning of a global bust. Accompanying lower, service wages, money in circulation began to dwindle - except for a few.

Within the capitalist boom and bust economy, we can see the immediate cause of the slowdown. That is



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simply over production. Too many goods are chasing too few dollars. For instance it is estimated that the world market for automobiles is around fifty million mostly supplied by U.S. manufactories. But with Asia moving into the market with Toyotas and Hondas among others; and with China threatening car production, the economy is about to drown in automobiles. No wonder auto companies offer bonuses and rock bottom interest rates on new cars. And this year some are even selling '99 cars at '98 prices for the first time since the Great Depression.

Now it is pretty simple to conclude from this that what is needed is more dollars in the pockets of buyers. Overcoming overproduction can come only in two ways: one, by closing factories until the economy runs out of goods, and we have a full-blown depression with millions of unemployed, or, two, putting money into circulation. Of course, NAFTA and GATT and MIA have made the prospect of vast unemployment only worse by shipping jobs overseas. As noted, in the 30s money was put into circulation by vast public works projects such as Coulee Dam under the New Deal to boost the economy out of depression. WWII finally supplied enough buying power through wartime production and jobs to bring the system back to prosperity. But, at a tremendous sacrifice of lives and property.

So what do we do now? We have a Congress that is controlled by Republicans (at least until year 2000) who would rather give a tax cut to the rich than provide jobs at union wages. But jobs is now the only way to go. We do not have a world war to bring us death and prosperity.

The only solution left is that of higher wages. Since we do not have unemployment at the scale of the Great Depression, the only solution is higher wages in private industry. A public works solution is not necessary unless the global bust is stupidly allowed full development. By simply putting more money in more workers' pockets we will buy more goods, put more factories to work and avoid world-wide economic collapse.

This is a radical proposal. But it does not advocate overthrow of the capitalist system by force and violence. It is, like the New Deal in the Great Depression, a proposal to reform the system enough to save it. It is also a common sense proposal. No machine can run without gas. The economic machine needs more gas in the form of high wages. What we need is a national program for more jobs at higher wages. If industry is unable to provide it, then we need a national budget for a war against economic depression. The budget could subsidize those industries which cannot afford higher wages. It would undoubtedly take many billions of dollars but the economic benefit far outweighs the cost. We are always ready

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Harry Bridges  
Chair in Labor Studies

## Unhappy about the Way Most Maritime Museums Portray Longshore Workers?

Here's your chance to contribute to a more accurate public perception of the waterfront and its workers. The Harry Bridges Chair/Center for Labor Studies at UW encourages ILWU pensioners to spend one or more days as tour guides for an upcoming documentary photo exhibit which examines the changing nature of waterfront work in nine major ports around the world.

Allan Sekula's "Fish Story" will run at the Henry Art Gallery, on the UW campus, from February 11 — May 16, 1999. As one of the numerous co-sponsors of the photo exhibit and related events (which will celebrate the 65th anniversary of the 1934 West Coast strike and 80th anniversary of the Seattle General Strike), the Harry Bridges Chair suggested that for one or more days the art gallery use ILWU pensioners as docents who would be able to provide unique commentary on Sekula's fascinating photographs. Attending the exhibit will be not only the typical art gallery aficionados, but also high school and college students who know little about the history of work on the waterfront. This will be an opportunity to truly transform people's understanding of labor's role in history.

Volunteering for this important opportunity will only commit you to guiding tours on one day, and perhaps attending a brief orientation at the Henry Art Gallery sometime beforehand. Depending upon the amount of time you commit, some compensation may be available. If you are interested, please contact Ken Lang or Jessica Roach before January 15th at the UW Center for Labor Studies, (206) 543-7946.

**I see in the near future a crises approaching that unnerves me and causes me to tremble for the safety of my country....corporations have been enthroned and an era of corruption in high places will follow, and the money power of the country will endeavor to prolong its reign by working on the prejudices of the people until all wealth is aggregated in a few hands and the Republic in destroyed**

**Abraham Lincoln Nov. 21, 1864**

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to spend billions on wars of death and destruction. Doesn't it make better sense to use billions of dollars for prosperity in peace rather than for death and destruction in war?

In addition, prosperity for all at home would help the rest of the world because we would be buying their goods as well - not to mention that the increase would stimulate foreign trade and provide more jobs for longshore workers. If we cannot have a war with an outside enemy, why not have a war, with all its financing, against the enemy of bust, recession and depression and threat of totalitarianism? That would be the greatest war in history. In fact, it would make a new world.

Some economists and politicians, not noted for common sense argue that uncontrollable inflation would result and bring about economic dislocation of a different kind. We solved that problem with national price control in WWII that worked. We can do it again.

So, let's use a little common sense, provide higher wages and let the good times roll!



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## Shipowners feel the power of Mumbai dockers

(Tokyo, 17 November 1998) An exercise in inter-union solidarity in the Indian port of Mumbai (Bombay) has caused ship owners to seriously reconsider the working conditions of their crews when visiting the Arabian Sea port. Members of the powerful Transport & Dock Workers' Union in the port have refused to work cargo on ships identified as targets by the ITF Inspectors. Officials of ratings' union NUSI (National Union of Seafarers of India) and officers' union MUI (Maritime Union of India) meanwhile continue patrolling the waterfront searching out ships which do not meet international standards.

Three St. Vincent & the Grenadines flagged FOCs - Indian-owned Sea Grace I, Peoples' Republic of China (PRC) owned Zi Jin and Bangladesh-owned Tasmia - as well as Greek-owned, Panamanian registered ship Sun II are all stuck alongside the docks under boycott.

The Bangladeshi seafarers aboard 1977 general cargo ship Tasmia were forced by the manning agent to sign undertakings to have nothing to do with the ITF or its international network of maritime unions. Sailors receive a pitiful all-up package of USD450 per month, well below International Labor Organization minimum levels. Discussions are underway with the owner to conclude an agreement acceptable to the ITF.

On hearing the circumstances of the ship, ITF Special Seafarers' Department Assistant Secretary Stephen Cotton said, "what on earth an owner in one of the poorest countries in the region would hope to gain by flagging a ship out is beyond my comprehension."

A clear case of double bookkeeping was detected on PRC-crewed Zi Jin, so dock workers immediately downed tools forcing PRC government representatives to fly to Mumbai to sign an ITF agreement.

Greek owners of Filipino crewed Sun II have signaled their willingness to negotiate a deal with the same ITF Inspector that their ship's master physically threatened.

Ukrainian crewed Sea Grace I sits idle at the berth while the Indian owners negotiate with union representatives.

The East Coast of the sub-continent was forced into a slow start to the ITF Week of Action against FOCs by horrendous weather conditions. Docker unions in Calcutta, Visakhapatnam and Chennai are keen to contribute to this year's campaign after having been the backbone of the 1997 action week.

International Transport Workers' Federation seafarer & docker affiliates will be targeting sub-standard ships and supporting maltreated, poorly paid crews throughout the week in commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the ITF's FOC Campaign.



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"We are writing the constitution of a single global economy."  
 -Renato Ruggerio, director-general of the World Trade Organization

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