Nixon Wants Bill to Bust Dock Strike

WASHINGTON, D.C. — On the day President Nixon gave his “State of the Union” address, he also recommended that the federal government step in and break the ILWU West Coast dock strike.

The Administration asked Congress to pass a joint resolution containing the following major provisions:

- It would end the strike immediately;
- Enforcements of this would lead to a fine of not more than $100,000 per day;
- The Secretary of Labor would be instructed to appoint a three-man arbitration panel with exclusive jurisdiction over all aspects of the dock strike. This also includes the Hawaiian ILWU contract, which expired June 30, 1971, despite the fact that the Hawaiian ILWU locals are not on strike, as well as seamen locals on the West Coast and in Hawaii;
- The arbitration panel would be in deliberations within 15 days after enactment of the resolution, and come in with a decision within 90 days. The decision would be final for no less than 18 months and no longer than two years. During this time, all strikes and lockouts would be forbidden under penalty of stiff fines;
- The parties would have the right to present their case before the panel and the panel would have access to all books and documents relevant to the dispute;
- Any party to the dispute could appeal the panel’s decision to the President;
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Back on the Bricks

FIRST PICKETS — Silhouetted by the early morning sun, picketers from ILWU Locals 13 and 63 walk the line at container terminal 131 in the Port of Los Angeles, the first hour of picketing after the strike was resumed. The idled cranes behind the men tell the story of the effectiveness of the picket line.

---photo by Glenn Perry

ILWU Meets with Grain Men

HONOLULU — Sugar and pineapple negotiations were moving to the wire here as union members were being advised to “continue indefinitely.”

Both contracts expire January 31, but the sides remain at odds over union jurisdiction within Local 145’s jurisdiction.

While the parties are meeting, The Dispatcher reports that the negotiations are being described by one union spokesman as “utterly fruitless.”

“Pineapple companies are making concerted efforts to talk “poor瑜r,” trying to impress employees with carefully prepared statements even though they cannot afford it. According to the workers, these negotiations were met with little sympathy from the companies who are known to be ready to management.

ILWU secretary-treasurer Louis Whitaker, chief spokesman for sugar workers, rejected a company proposal that would liquidate Koha and not include that plantation.

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Talks Will Resume on January 31

SAN FRANCISCO — Talks between the ILWU Coast Negotiating Committee and the PMA were scheduled to resume January 31, the first hour after longshoremen plunked their pickets in the port.

Early Monday morning, January 17, after 23 hours of continuous talking and cajoling — and under threat of government intervention — time finally ran out. Besieged negotiators left the bargaining table and pickets hit the bricks at every West Coast port.

Federal mediator J. Curtis Counts had warned that he would propose a “legislative settlement.” Four days later, President Nixon presented a joint resolution to both houses of Congress calling for compulsory arbitration. (See story, column one, this page)

While the parties were close on many major issues — including most aspects of containerization, a serious impasse was reached over how the $5 per ton container tax fund should be used. (See Status of Negotiations, page 7.)

The PMA insisted on using the tax revenue to finance the work-over guarantee, the union wanted that revenue used for further benefits for the membership.

BREAK-OFF

After the parties broke off, and just before Bridges appeared at a huge press-radio-TV conference, the ILWU president asked Mr. Counts to carry back a message to the PMA that the union was willing to stop the strike and continue negotiating, but that the employers would not agree to a wage increase.

The PMA sent word back that it was willing to stop the clock, but not willing to give the retroactivity at that point.

From then on the Coast strike machinery went on into high gear again.

Pickets were ready to roll, in any case. Longshore and clerk locals had been informed that January 17 was the deadline unless an agreement had been reached.

The following day the Strike Strategy Committee met to map an action program for the renewed strike.

Previous strike policy decisions were continued, including working...