A NEW YEAR begins—and for about 16,000 members of the ILWU, who work the ships, piers and dock areas this will become known as "Longshore Year -1971."

During the past year the longest caucus in ILWU history came up with a heavy set of demands emphasizing the great changes taking place in the lives of working people.

Mechanization has been accelerating as never before and workers everywhere are facing the specter of unemployment even though productivity is continuously on the rise. So the caucus demanded a guarantee of work or pay. It's called job security and it's something working people everywhere are starting to believe they have coming as a fundamental right in our rich society.

There are many other demands— hefty wage hikes, a $500 per month pension, many fringe improvements and much, much more. One of the reasons for the early caucus was to prepare for all eventualities—including a strike.

WE KNOW THAT if we must take strike action we may be facing serious threats from the Nixon Administration. The political climate in Washington has grown increasingly unfriendly. There are signs that the Nixon Administration—with plenty of encouragement from reactionary, anti-labor Southern Democrats—will be trying to get anti-strike legislation, particularly in the transportation industry.

They may also try to force through compulsory arbitration. At a time such as this, when the burden of inflation, unemployment and excess taxation places the heaviest burden on the working class, compulsory arbitration could become a form of serfdom.

If it takes a strike to win what our longshore division members feel they need, and if it can't be won across the bargaining table—then a strike it will be. There is no doubt about the temper of that long longshore caucus.

At this printing of The Dispatcher negotiations are still broken off. They will stay that way until developments, in our opinion of the negotiating committee, warrant further bargaining. Naturally, any negotiating committee that represents workers wants and hopes to settle successfully across the bargaining table.

BUILD UP MUSCLE means not only cementing unity within the longshore division, but calling on all sections of the ILWU for full backing and support.

More than that, it means getting the support of the entire labor movement. This unity and support is something we've had before and we know it's still there when we need it. The time may not be far off as we move into "Longshore Year -1971."