Notes from the Picket Lines: 'The Beat Goes On'

THOUSANDS of workers, thousands of workers, thousands of workers, thousands of workers, thousand... do you hear me now? The economy of the entire area. But no politicians line up to demand that Boeing hire back all those people to continue building parts at a loss "until something can be worked out." No newspapers accuse Boeing of creating terrible damage to the economy. No one buys full page ads to try to inflame the public mind against Boeing.

Well, says Local 19's strike committee, "Longshoremen, like teamsters, railroad workers, Boeing workers, are also in business. We sell our labor power and skills to move cargo. But what happens if we follow the same business practices followed by Boeing or any other big business? "All hell'll break loose.""

"Is a man kind of wonder, doesn't it?!"

LIFE-SAVING TOO. Some B-shift pickets were doing duty Long Beach-Pier 246 recently when they heard a woman scream for help. Picket Ralph Piro saw a girl floating face down about 20 feet from the rocks. He dove in fully clothed, pulled her from the water, and longshore picket Hubert McCague administered artificial respiration. Piro returned to the wait and found a man wedged in the rocks, but he unfortunately was already dead. Nine-year-old Wilma Johnson was revived by the longshoremen even before the ambulance arrived, and though she was pretty sick she's been released and is home with her mother.

WOMAN POWER is what Local 10 is encouraging. It's taken a long time for most longshore and clerk women to come up against the men. But now it's becoming clear that women's auxiliaries up and down the coast are really being formed for doing their thing. For the last membership meeting, Local 10 asked every member to bring his wife to the next membership meeting because there will be a woman's auxiliary meeting at the same time.

THREE-FINGERED GUS is the handicapper who publishes regularly in Local 19's Strike Bulletin. An editor's note reads as follows: "Three fingers last Daily Double came in and won. He made a donation today to the Strike Fund. That's $45 minus the $2 bet. We seriously doubt any handicapper on the

Form or LA papers can make that statement."

TALENT, TALENT EVERYWHERE. With thanks to Barbers Union Local 1051 and the donation of Eddie's Marine Barber Shop at 338 North Avalon, Wilmington, and Fidel's at 4011 West Washington, Wilmington, kids of longshoremen and clerks here are getting free haircuts. See your Bulletin for these Goodies!

WITH A SMILE—this notice appeared in Local 63's Bulletin as follows: "Any member who doesn't do his picket duty will be named in the next strike issue." An effective way to keep anyone in line.

The same Bulletin notes "Contestants in the Picket Line officials have not yet been able to find a liquor store that will take food stamps.

Setting the Record Straight

PORTLAND — Local 8 president Dick Wise moved swiftly to counter newspaper innuendos that ILWU is allegedly receiving more from Rivergate and Swan Island in the way of benefits to the unions, and that this could keep the Oregon-Portland channel closed after the coast-west strike. In a wire to the AFL-CIO state council executive board, which adjourned September 3, Wise said:

"For weeks Port of Portland officials have been under pressure to the press raising the false issue that longshoremen are after all present benefits to the workers at Rivergate and Swan Island.

"There is not a word of truth in the union's publicized employer di-vide-and-conquer tactics."

ILWU's only objective, the wire said, is to save all jobs and get cargo handling secured by contract covering present and future leased port property.

MISLEADING

"This is already covered by our present agreement with the Port, but that body's politically appointed officers have misinterpreted this language and instead try to mislead the public as to the facts.

"We have not and do not lay any claim to the jobs of craft unions at the airport or to the jobs of mechanics, electricians, carpenters, operating engineers, millwrights, plumbers, etc., etc.

"This goes for all present and future leased port properties. We reiterate, our only concern is in securing our jobs of cargo handling on present properties, leased or otherwise."

The telegram was sent after a story on the West Coast Strike line reported that AFL-CIO convention delegates had endorsed an officers' convention resolution urging affiliate locals "having influence with the chairman or any of the convention officials of the Port of Portland to use their influence before jurisdictional rights are given away to the employers."

Wise's wire to the labor meeting expressed appreciation of the "support of many AFL-CIO officers, unions and rank and file members who have given our strike," as well as appreciation of the "support you have extended in your convention which benefit all labor."

No employer inspires such incredulity as these facts from our members!"

BUMMAGING—For $5, a few Sundays ago, you could rent a table at the Local 10 hiring hall parking lot to sell your old junk. You got the profits from the sales, theLocal 10 strike fund got the $5, and everyone was happy.

From the LA Weekly

Following are some vignettes from IWU West Coast Strike Bulletins:

D.O.G. BITES MAN DEPARTMENT

When the story is favorable to the employer it becomes front page news with banner head: If you hit the Oregon-Olympic-Columbia River Strike Bulletin, but it's good to the union, the story gets the deep six or at least on inside page six. A case in point was a superior court ordering the Port of Portland, Oregon, Washington, to release cargo.

When the strike committee told the port its members were ready, willing and able to deliver cargo on the docks, the steeplechase company and the port said no dice. When the judge ordered the port to open the warehouses and make the cargo available and use the "personnel now available" (longshoremen, checkers and walkers) the story got buried so deep most people never heard about it.

"That's Freedom of the Press," commented the bullet.

SOMEBODY LIKES US! Local 19's president, Suma Maloney, received a letter from NASA, praising the "good job" done by Local 19 longshoremen on stacking shipping containers for the recent moon shot. "It called for some real stevedoring and our guys gave it the old one-two, and chartered the Seattle strike bulletin.

THE NAME OF THE GAME. When the ILWU Labor and Mediation and Conciliation Board called on all strikes to end and unions to return to work, workers at the San Rafael Independent and the LA Herald Examiner tried to return to work. But they were rejected and the Mediation Service ruled in favor of the scabs on the grounds that this did not include unions which have, already, lost strikes.

So that's the "Name of the Game" says Local 34's Digest. The Name of the Game is you lose. If you hit the bricks and the employer can run in scabs, you lose. If you stop the scabs, you lose. If you stop the back to work — you lose.

That's why we're going to change some of the ground rules," says the Local 34 Bulletin. "We are going to start playing in the home ball park. We are going to change the Name of the Game to We Win!"

Local 34's Bulletin also recalled that the Roofers Union suspended a strike among four locals because they felt too small and poor to fight the government.

Roofers Union official Charles Tibbats received a congratulatory telegram from Secretary of Labor Hodgson.

Commented the union official: "I've got a goddamn good mind to send it back unopened, or use it the next time I go to the bathroom. We are going back under protest. We sure as hell are not proud of it."

GOVERNMENT STOOGES with their wishy-washy answers drew the ire of Local 69's Marine Clerk's Strike Bulletin in the Los Angeles-Long Beach Harbor Area. The "honorable and reputable businessmen" let banks, the military-industrial complex, Wall Street and insurance companies run wild and free, while working people are blamed for the inflation.

"We all should know what has caused most of the inflationary ills of our country. . . . That's right — that damn 'civil war' in Vietnam! That endless and senseless conflict has blinded our government as to where our priorities and responsibilities really lie. Yet, the Administration is endeavoring to place all the blame of this mess on labor.

The workers of America!

"One thing we all have learned during this period — how to exercise our right to vote — a vote that will break down anti-labor administration and elect people that will represent the workers!

EQUAL RIGHTS? Seattle's Local 19 Strike Bulletin notes that every time the Boeing Company — a very astute business concern — finds that profits are going down, they lay off thousands of workers, throw them on the welfare rolls, hurting the economy of the entire area. But no politicians line up to demand that Boeing hire back all those people to continue building parts at a loss "until something can be worked out." No newspapers accuse Boeing of creating terrible damage to the economy. No one buys full page ads to try to inflame the public mind against Boeing.

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