



The DISPATCHER

Published by the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union

Vol. 30, No. 3

Published semi-monthly at 150 Golden Gate Ave., San Francisco, Calif. 94102. Second class postage paid at San Francisco. Subscription \$2.50 per year

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February 11, 1972

Coast Dock Agreement



Flanked by ILWU president Harry Bridges, left, and PMA president Edmund Flynn, mediator Sam Kagel announces reaching of a tentative longshore agreement to the press. photo courtesy S.F. Examiner

Caucus to Meet; Then Coast Votes

SAN FRANCISCO — A tentative contract settlement was reached here by ILWU and PMA negotiators, subject to Caucus approval and rank and file ratification. The strike is won.

The agreement was concluded, after marathon negotiations, running over the weekend and late into the night, at 11 a.m., Tuesday, February 8.

The tentative settlement will be presented to the Coast Caucus, scheduled to convene Saturday, February 12, at 10 a.m., in the International building.

The Negotiating Committee voted overwhelmingly to recommend adoption of the agreement by the Caucus, and a "YES" vote in subsequent rank and file referendum.

Negotiations were renewed on January 31, two weeks after longshoremen and clerks hit the bricks again on January 17.

KAGEL MEDIATES

When negotiations appeared deadlocked, on Wednesday, February 2, both sides agreed to call in coast arbitrator Sam Kagel to act as mediator. Kagel vigorously moved from that point to the conclusion.

Even a two-day interruption, when ILWU president Bridges and PMA president Flynn were called to Washington, DC, to testify before House and Senate labor committees, did not halt the negotiations between the union and management committees. Bridges rapped Nixon's proposal as compulsory arbitration. Flynn asked that the legislation be passed.

Despite pressures from political figures in Washington warning that Nixon's compulsory arbitration law might be passed, union negotiators refused to be rushed until every significant point could be settled.

WIDE-RANGING

The wide-ranging settlement calls for wage raises totaling a \$1.12 over the 17-month agreement.

The agreement expires July 1, 1973.

Straight-time hourly wages are raised 72 cents to total \$5 per hour, retroactive to December 25, 1971, and \$5.40 per hour, effective July 1, 1972. Clerks will receive comparable adjustments.

The range of skill rate rates have increased between 10 and 30 cents per hour.

(A detailed summary of both economic and non-economic improve-

Bridges Raps Compulsory Arbitration

WASHINGTON, DC — "We have these blokes on the ropes. We're going to whip them, and they're depending on you to save them."

That's how ILWU president Harry Bridges summed up the situation last week as he testified before both Senate and House labor committees considering legislation to impose compulsory arbitration on the West Coast dock strike.

"The workers came out on strike with a vote on an industrywide secret referendum ballot and they will return the same way," Bridges said.

"WON'T WORK"

"In saying this," Bridges continued, "I mean no disrespect or defiance of President Nixon or his high office. I simply mean to say that in this instance, he is trying by methods that won't work to force an end to our strike."

The Nixon-sponsored joint resolution, Bridges said, "is the first step in bringing about compulsory arbitration for all unions. The passage of the joint resolution will change the face of America, and will bring us a long way down the road to compulsory arbitration; elimination of the right to strike, vesting the power over wages and working conditions in the hands of the government."

The ILWU president pointed out that the strike had in no way caused a "national emergency" which would make Congressional interven-

tion necessary. He reminded committee members that the ILWU had continued to load military cargo, and had responded positively to requests from the government to load emergency wheat for East Pakistan, as well as to a request to load supplies for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

Along the same lines, Bridges

Pine Pact Reached; Sugar Talks Tough

HONOLULU — ILWU Local 142's pineapple negotiating subcommittee last week announced that it had reached agreement with growers on a new contract.

Terms of the new pact were withheld pending reports to the membership and a ratification vote.

Sugar negotiations, in the meantime, toughened up as Local 142's sugar workers authorized their own negotiating subcommittee to call a strike if necessary. The vote was 97.3 percent in favor of strike authorization.

Local 142 sugar negotiators and employers issued a joint release in which they announced agreement to extend the present contract until midnight, February 20.

Both sugar and pine contracts officially expired January 31.

quoted a survey taken by Nixon's own labor department in 1970 which indicated that past dock strikes had not caused national emergencies or permanent loss of markets.

HAWAII

Bridges also pointed out that the joint resolution would apply to Hawaii, even though there had been no strike in the islands.

"In Hawaii," Bridges said, "our union made special provisions to handle the principal export crop, sugar. It permitted special voyages to bring such supplies as were necessary."

"There is no emergency in Hawaii. There never has been an emergency in Hawaii. The emergency has been manufactured in the facile minds of some of the members of Congress from that state — and in the mind of the present assistant secretary of labor who was formerly employed by the Hawaii Employers Council."

Finally, Bridges pointed out that ILWU, recognizing the need of farmers to export their goods, had begun separate negotiations with Pacific Coast grain elevator operators.

"Now, of course," he concluded, "there are hardships to the importers of foreign automobiles and the importers of scotch whiskey, but I hardly think that the lack of imports of these commodities consti-

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