

Documents on Challenge to Coast Committee Vote

Text of Almeida's Appeal

June 19, 1971

Dear Sir and Brother:

This letter is to officially notify you that I, Arthur A. Almeida, Book No. 30626, am protesting the recent coast committeeman election between Brother William T. Ward and myself for the following reasons:

1. The arbitrary denial of the right to vote to over 350 members of Local No. 13, namely, most of the "B" registered men. Although these men are rightfully included and protected by the Local No. 13 and ILWU constitutions, they have been disenfranchised.

2. The extension of the right to vote to our Hawaiian Brothers Longshore No. 142, with all due respect to them. In as much as said coast committee office does in no way affect them in their collective bargaining relations with their Hawaiian Island employers, such inclusion, therefore is unconstitutional.

3. Further, that such Longshore Division No. 142 is not part of the Pacific Coast Longshore Contract Document, ergo such extension of voting privilege is beyond their inherent constitutional rights.

4. That in the past in this port as well as other ports "B" registered and even deregistered members have voted and continue to vote to this very day.

As the protesting party, I am respectfully urging and requesting

Ward Asks Another Election Be Held

June 24, 1971

To the International Balloting Committee

Dear Sirs and Brothers:

In light of the challenge or protest as to the regularity of the recently concluded elections for the offices of the Coast Committee by candidate Brother Arthur A. Almeida, I feel it would be extremely hard to be effective with this type of background in the coming term. In the best interest of the ILWU, I urge you to declare the result invalid, and order another election to be held as soon as possible for the offices of the Coast Committee.

Sincerely and fraternally yours,
William T. Ward
Coast Committee

that the titled officers instruct the balloting committee to withhold tabulation and official pronouncement on said contested position until such time as a satisfactory solution can be achieved. Naturally, the question arises as to how best to pursue this serious contention. I am mindful that a referral to the International Executive Board could be considered since a coast committeeman carries vice presidential status. However, I believe a Longshore Caucus should be directly involved to resolve this issue in as much as this matter is covered under the ILWU Constitution, i.e. Industrial Group jurisdiction and their autonomous rights.

The intent of this letter is not to be construed to mean that any deliberate malice or intended wrongdoing was perpetrated. Nonetheless I do seek immediate attention.

Awaiting your official position and decision, I remain

Fraternally,

(Signed)

Arthur A. Almeida
Book No. 30626

Balloting Committee Holds Up Certification

June 25, 1971

To: All ILWU Locals — Longshore Division

Dear Sirs and Brothers:

Brother Arthur A. Almeida, Local 13, a candidate for Coast Committeeman California Area, has challenged the recent election, and in doing so has raised several points which require constitutional interpretation. As you know, interpreting the International Constitution is the exclusive authority of President Bridges, who talked at length with the balloting committee and indicated that he would sustain the challenge of Brother Almeida.

Therefore, the Committee is withholding the certification of the election for Coast Committeemen until the challenge of Brother Almeida has been finally resolved.

Fraternally,

Cleophas Williams, Chairman; Daniel P. Haleman, Joseph Campton, Ben Davis, Ray Morales, Balloting Committee.

Veva Phillips of Milwaukie, vice president for Oregon; and Alice Soames, Vancouver, vice-president for Canada.

The slate was installed by Leroy King, ILWU regional director for Northern California.

The long waited-for gift drawing

Yoshito Takamine Now Hawaii Division Head

HILO — Yoshito Takamine's appointment as Hawaii Division Director, replacing George Martin, was approved by the Local 142 Executive Board, which met in Honolulu on May 20-21.

Takamine, 44, who is on leave of absence from Honokaa Sugar Co., has served for many years as a Hawaii Division business agent, and has been elected to the State House of Representatives for seven terms. He has long been involved in various community activities.

Martin moved to San Francisco early this year to accept the interim appointment as International vice-president and director of organization, a post left vacant by the death of Jack W. Hall on Jan. 2.

Text of Bridges' Decision

TO ALL LONGSHORE AND CLERK LOCALS

Dear Sirs and Brothers:

I have received a challenge from Brother Arthur A. Almeida of Local 13 challenging the election to the Coast Labor Relations Committee. Brother Almeida raised several points which require constitutional interpretation. (Copy of Brother Almeida's protest is attached.)

Pursuant to the power vested in me by the Constitution of the ILWU:

Article VI, Section 7. "The President shall be the Executive Officer of the International and at all times shall supervise the affairs of the International and enforce this Constitution and all of the decisions and laws of the International. He shall interpret the Constitution and decisions of the International whenever any question regarding interpretation shall arise"; and

Article XIII, Section 1. "Whenever any question of interpretation of this Constitution arises it shall be submitted to the International President whose interpretation shall be final and binding unless appeal is taken, as herein provided for."

Accordingly, I have decided to sustain the protest and order a new election to be held on July 12, 13 and 14, with report of balloting to be no later than July 16, 1971. The results of the balloting shall be reported to the Balloting Committee which conducted the previous election.

I have made this decision and ruling for the following reasons:

(1) The first point raised by Brother Almeida, namely, who has the right to vote in Local 13 — usually, such determinations have been left to the local unions and the interpretation of local union constitutions. It is not at all unusual in our locals for some members of the local to be prevented from voting by official action of the local membership. However, what happened in the instant case of Local 13 is that some 350 full union members were not allowed to vote — only because they were not fully registered. This action is contrary to the International Constitution and alone is sufficient grounds to invalidate the election.

(2) Brother Almeida's challenge to the right of longshore members of

Local 142, Hawaii, to vote in the election for Coast Committee support the challenge here, too.

Researching the past history of caucuses I find that although longshore and clerk locals on many occasions have seated delegates from locals other than those covered by the longshore/clerk agreements, past caucuses did not extend to them the right to vote for Coast Committee members.

For example: The Alaska locals have been seated in longshore caucuses for many years with full voice and vote; and likewise for many years the waterfront division of our union has had an official position of merging Alaska contracts and funds with the Pacific Coast longshore/clerks' contracts and funds. Examination of past caucus transcripts reveals that the delegates of the Alaska locals invariably abstained from voting in roll call votes.

Examination of the transcript of the long caucus held last October and the recent caucus in April shows that although the Hawaii delegates were seated with full voice and vote, they abstained from voting on some roll calls on contractual matters, and also did not participate in the voting in the primary election for Coast Committee held in the caucus as required by the International Constitution.

In the present case we are dealing with only a fraction of Local 142 membership as compared with the Alaska locals that are all separate locals. It should be noted, however, that the Coast Pro Rata Committee received pro rata payments from Local 142 since last October. I have carefully examined the transcripts of the Caucus, and I do not find any caucus decision specifically allowing the Longshore Division of Local 142 to participate in the voting.

The recent voting in the waterfront division for the election of Coast Committeemen resulted in one incumbent being elected—Bill Ward, Local 13—and one incumbent being defeated—Bill Forrester, Local 51. Naturally, I do not make such a serious decision as International President of declaring an election by secret ballot null and void without giving the matter serious thought, and realizing I must adhere strictly to the Constitution, regardless of what opinions I might have. In the instant case I let the Balloting Committee know that I notified both incumbent Committeemen, Ward and Forrester, what I intended to do in this matter, and can only say that both of them agreed with me, even though another election could well result in the defeat of Brother Ward by Brother Almeida.

The Balloting Committee agreed that this matter was a constitutional question, and in my hands.

(3) I feel that it is very unfair to have the Coast Committee function under a cloud when the election has been challenged, particularly when the election was as close as the recent election.

It has always been our practice to pay very careful attention to any challenge to an election. In this case, allowing the 350 members to vote — referred to in Brother Almeida's protest and the elimination of the Hawaii vote — could change the results for both offices; therefore, I feel that there is no timely alternative but to order an entire new election for the Coast Labor Relations Committee.

Fraternally yours,
Harry Bridges
President

Auxiliaries Pledge Support to Dockers

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another action they demanded that drug addiction be declared a service-connected disability.

In a final session Valerie Taylor of North Bend, president of the Federated since 1949, was reelected without opposition, as were Ruth Harris, of Los Angeles, first vice-president, and Gladys Hoover of Hoquiam, treasurer.

Wenonah Drasnin, who acted as convention secretary, was elected to the post long held by Norma Kala, who resigned on the eve of the convention.

In other changes among the titled officers, Vivian George, president of Auxiliary 3, Seattle, was elected vice-president for Washington, replacing Nettie Craycraft, who resigned.

Helen Kaunisto, president of Auxiliary 8, Wilmington, was elected vice-president for Southern California, replacing Gertrud Brasted, also of Auxiliary 8, in the only election contest.

Dawn Rutter, vice-president for Northern California and chairman of the convention arrangements committee, was reelected; as were

on the lithograph of Harriet Tubman was a convention feature. It was won by a Coos Bay longshoreman, Jerry Holliday, secretary Local 12.

The project netted \$830 for Freedom City, Mississippi, where Delta Negroes driven from their work as cotton choppers on a plantation for daring to organize a "Freedom local," are planting seeds and making their own way on land secured through a grant.

A total of 38 delegates and ten alternates were registered, with representation coming from six auxiliaries in Washington, two in Oregon, five in California and two in Canada.

The British Columbia delegation was lead by Canadian Area Vice-President Alice Soames.

Local 8 Elections

PORTLAND — In mid-term elections held in June, Don Ronne was elected business agent/LRC; Shadow Dulin was elected mid-term dispatcher, and Bob Cranston was named relief dispatcher.