



President Nixon explains his views to ILWU president Bridges at Portland meeting.

Nixon Uses Strikebreak Act

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"The Strike Strategy Committee urges all locals, in the event of any disagreement or dispute to use the grievance machinery as provided for under these contracts."

It was signed by Harry Bridges, Chairman, Coast Strike Strategy Committee.

The committee's program, the report said, is that "the return to work under a Taft-Hartley injunction is for the 80-day period, with a program of resuming the strike, if necessary, after the 80 days have elapsed."

Meantime, the letter added, contact will be made with the East Coast ILA, "... and meetings set up in order that joint strike strategy may be formulated, and then implemented at appropriate times and places."

DEADLOCK

When negotiations were recessed on the morning of Monday, October 4, the key issues on which the parties were deadlocked included a guaranteed wage proposal, the work of stuffing containers on and off docks, and certain demands on wages, welfare, vacations, grievance machinery and length of contract.

Pensions and manning scales and procedure had been tentatively settled.

Events leading to the current situation included:

- Resumption of negotiations on August 25, with intensive bargaining sessions, including nights and weekends.

- The first intervention by the government with J. Curtis Counts, director of the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, sitting in on all the joint talks.

- A dramatic meeting between President Nixon and ILWU president Bridges and PMA president Ed Flynn at the Benson Hotel in Portland.

This took place September 25, and both men agreed they would speed up negotiations and try to reach an agreement by the end of the following week.

- As the new month began, the ILA on East and Gulf coasts went out on strike—and for the first time all coasts were on the bricks at the same time!

- A last-ditch effort was made over the weekend by the negotiators, but by Monday morning, October 4, it was clear that they were deadlocked on certain key strike issues. Further negotiations were suspended when the PMA rejected a key union proposal on the wage guarantee.

- That morning, Counts told both sides he had been there for 19 days and had reached the conclusion that the parleys had reached an impasse. He said he was leaving, and would report to President Nixon. He warned that a Taft-Hartley injunction was quite likely.

- At a press conference soon after, Counts said the parties made a genuine effort... but were unable to accommodate their separate views. He added that papers for an injunction under T-H were already in order in Washington, D.C.

- President Nixon announced the same day he would seek an injunction and appointed a Board of Inquiry.

- At a Tuesday hearing before that board the union stated its position, saying that while the strike may cause inconvenience and a loss of profits to shippers and others, it did not imperil national health and safety.

- The Coast Strike Strategy Committee met and voted to recommend to all locals that they return to work.

At the time *The Dispatcher* went to press — on the 100th day of the strike — all dock locals were holding or scheduling stopwork membership meetings to receive full reports.

ILWU Strategy Committee Recommends Return to Work

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or not the east and west coast longshore strikes imperiled national health and safety. The union was notified that a hearing would be held by the board Tuesday, 9:30 a.m. The Coast Negotiating Committee voted to send representatives to the hearing before the board, along with the union attorneys.

At the hearing Tuesday morning the union stated its position as to the course of negotiations and intervention by the Federal government. It was the union's position that the strike, while creating a great deal of inconvenience and loss of profits to shippers and others, did not create a situation that imperiled national health and safety. The union's representatives and attorneys mentioned the union action in seeing to it that military and other cargoes kept moving; that ships and diverted cargoes were being handled in Mexican, Alaskan and BC ports; and that by union decision, the State of Hawaii had kept working.

It was agreed at the board meeting in the morning that after the lunch recess, both parties would appear with a written statement as to their positions.

The Coast Negotiating Committee met Tuesday afternoon to develop a program of action which is recommended to the Locals now on strike.

(1) To have the Regional Direct tell them to stand by for further injunctions to the Locals now on strike. They contact the Locals by phone to structure, if and when a Taft-Hartley injunction is issued.

(2) It was decided that the Committee's recommendation would be for the Locals to return to work under any T-H injunction. It should be understood that a return to work

under T-H injunction had not been anticipated by the longshore Caucus, and these recommendations are emergency measures to cope with the present situation.

(3) The officers were instructed to contest the issuance of an injunction in the courts.

(4) The Locals are advised that it is part of the Coast Negotiating Committee's recommendation that the return to work under a Taft-Hartley injunction is for the 80-day period, with a program of resuming the strike, if necessary, after the 80 days have elapsed. In the meantime, contact will be made with the East Coast ILA, and meetings set up in order that joint strike strategy may be formulated, and then implemented at appropriate times and places.

(5) The Coast Negotiating Committee shall recess, subject to call, and its members return to the various areas immediately if an injunction is issued, with the Sub-Committee authorized to meet with PMA to receive any PMA official proposal, but not for negotiating purposes.

(6) All locals to be notified by letter, and Local unions should immediately arrange for meetings to act upon these recommendations, and such parts of the program which are appropriate to publish will be published in the next issue of *The Dispatcher*.

(7) When joint meetings with ILA are arranged for the purpose of formulating joint strike strategy, the full Coast Strike Strategy Committee shall attend.

Faternally yours,

HARRY BRIDGES, Chairman
Coast Strike Strategy Committee

How Does Taft-Hartley Work

The Taft-Hartley Act was passed in 1947 in a period of hysteria over the "power of big labor."

In fact, after the war, workers who had kept their no-strike pledge during the conflict — and had watched businessmen evade price and profit controls continually — were demanding their fair share.

Three and a half million workers were on the bricks at various times in 1945, and 4.6 million struck for their long overdue demands in 1946.

The basic issue was the fact that while wages had been held to a raise of 15 percent of the 1941 scale, prices had soared by 45 percent and profits by 250 percent.

So Congress wrote Taft-Hartley in 1947.

"The bill was written sentence by sentence, paragraph by paragraph, page by page, by the National Association of Manufacturers," according to New York's Representative Daniel O'Toole.

Representative John McCormack of Massachusetts named names. The bill, he charged, had been drafted by a group of lobbyists for such corporations as General Electric, Allis-Chalmers, Inland Steel, J. I. Case, Chrysler, Rockefeller interests and others.

"COOLING-OFF"

In terms of the 1971 longshore strike, the most important part of the bill, of course, is the cooling-off provisions.

This section of the bill allows the President to, if he believes a strike will, "if permitted to continue, imperil the national health and safety," appoint a board of inquiry into the strike issues.

Upon receiving a report from the board "within such time as he may prescribe," the President may direct the Attorney General to petition any US District Court with jurisdiction, to issue an injunction against the strike if the court finds that it:

- Affects an entire industry or a substantial part thereof engaged in trade, commerce, transportation, transmission or communication among the several states or with foreign nations... and:

- "Will imperil the national health or safety."

Unless a settlement is reached earlier, the injunction is in force for 80 days.



After final negotiating session deadlocked, the strike committee met to discuss future strategy.