

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



Following are some vignettes from ILWU West Coast Strike Bulletins: **DOG BITES MAN DEPARTMENT.** When the story is favorable to the employer it becomes front page news with banner headlines, says the Oregon-Columbia River Strike Bulletin. But if the story is 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 Vancouver, 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 stevedore 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 Shaun Maloney received a letter from NASA, praising the "good job" done by Local 19 longshoremen on stowing tracking equipment for the recent moon shot. "It called for some real stevedoring and our guys gave it the old college try," chortles the Seattle strike bulletin.

**THE NAME OF THE GAME.** When the US 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 who 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 goddamned 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 63's Marine Clerk's Strike Bulletin in the Los Angeles-Long Beach Harbor Areas. 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. . . . Yes, 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 sweep out this 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.

Well, says Local 19's strike scribes: "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 principles followed by Boeing or any other big industrial business? "All hell'd break loose." "Makes a man kind of wonder, doesn't it?"

**LIFE-SAVING TOO.** Some "B" shift pickets were doing duty at 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 water and found a man wedged in the rocks, but he unfortunately was already dead. Nine-year-old Wilma Johnson was revived by the longshoreman 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 locals to pay much attention, but now it's becoming clear that women's auxiliaries up and down the coast are really being cheered 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." Looks like things are getting squared away.

**THREE-FINGERED GUS** is the handicapper who publishes regularly in Local 13's Strike Bulletin. An editor's note reads as follows: "Three-fingers last Daily Double came in and paid \$45. He made a donation today to the Strike Fund of \$43. 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 1000 and the donation of Eddie's Marine Barber Shop at 328 North Avalon, Wilmington, and Fidel's Barber Shop, 516 West Anaheim, Wilmington, kids of longshoremen and clerks here are getting free haircuts. Watch 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, due to being deceased, must submit a copy of his death certificate to Clearance Committee; otherwise he will be in serious trouble!"

The same Bulletin notes: "Contrary to a popular rumor, your 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 innuendoes that ILWU is after jobs at Rivergate and Swan Island in the jurisdiction of other unions, and that this could keep the waterfront in Portland closed after the coast-wise strike is settled.

In a wire to the AFL-CIO state convention in Eugene which adjourned September 3, Wise said:

"For weeks Port of Portland officials have been feeding stories to the press raising the false issue that longshoremen are after all present and future jobs at Rivergate and Swan Island.

"There is not a word of truth in these well publicized employer divide-and-conquer tactics."

ILWU's only objective, the wire said, is that "our jobs covering cargo handling be secured by contract covering present and future leased port properties.

### MISLEADING

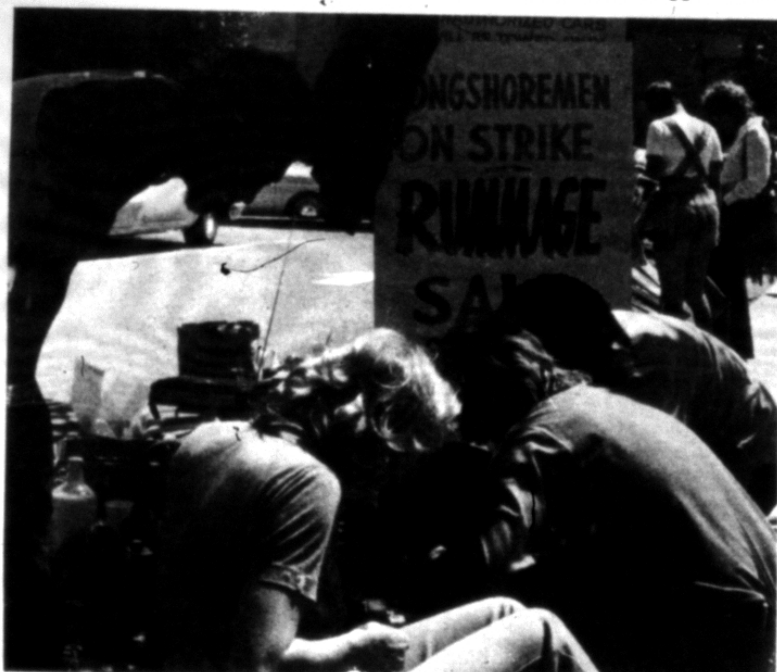
"This is already covered by our present agreement with the Port, but that body's politically appointed officials refuse to renew this language and instead try to mislead the public as to the facts.

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

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

The telegram was sent after a story in The Oregon Journal reported that AFL-CIO convention delegates had endorsed an officers' committee recommendation urging affiliate locals "having influence with the chairman or any of the commissioners of the Port of Portland to use their influence before jurisdictional rights are given away to the ILWU."

Wise's wire to the labor meeting expressed appreciation of the "support many AFL-CIO officers, unions and rank and file members have given our strike," as well as appreciation of the "many measures adopted in your convention which benefit all labor. . . . No employer inspired smokescreen hides these facts from our members."



**RUMMAGING**—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, the Local 10 strike fund got the \$5, and everyone was happy.