

Longshoremen Set West Coast Strike for Today

UPI, AP

SAN FRANCISCO — Contract talks between the Longshoremen's Union and ship-owners broke off last night and a strike was called for today at 8 a.m.

Officials of the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union and the Pacific Maritime Association announced in a joint statement that they would resume negotiations "in the near future in an attempt to reach an agreement" on a new pact.

A union spokesman said all work would stop except on Army passenger baggage, mail and perishables now on the docks.

Of the 15,000 longshoremen affected, 1,000 work out of the port of Seattle and 1,250 out of other ports on Puget Sound and in Grays Harbor.

A strike would not halt military cargoes.

The ILWU's international representative in Seattle, Oliver Olson, declined to speculate as to how long the strike might last. "We have no contract, so consequently we don't work," Olson said. "That's all I can say." He said decisions about picketing would be made by officials of the various locals here.

It would affect some Alaska cargoes, but railbarge service to Alaska would be unaffected, and arrangements are being made with Foss-Alaska and the Pioneer Alaska-Line to keep cargo moving to Alaska areas that cannot exist without ocean supply.

ILWU locals have polled better than 95 per cent in favor of a strike.

The union wants 40-hour guaranteed work week for regulars and raises of \$1.60 on basic hourly wages of \$4.25 over a two-year contract period; with 85 cents the first year, 75 cents the second. Another major demand is a \$500-a-month pension for workers retiring after 25 years' service.