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# MILITANT LONGSHOREMAN

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## 1987 COAST CONTRACT NO CONCESSIONS -- NO TAKEBACKS

Six months before the coast contract runs out the most common question that brothers in Local 10 are asking is "Do you think PMA is going to demand concessions?" Three years ago the question most often asked was "What are we going for in this contract?" It's just possible that PMA will miscalculate the mood of longshoremen and insist on concessions - "take aways" in either conditions or money. We know that the waterfront employers want more "flexibility", that they want to eliminate categories and assign men to any jobs. We also note that PMA is demanding that the dispatch hall be moved to Oakland and all travel time be done away with.

What PMA may not figure on is that Longshoremen know that we gave the employers major concession many years ago, lost thousands of jobs as a result, and got very damn little in return. Bridges and Goldblat's two M and N agreements 1961/1966 gave up manning and allowed massive mechanization. The 9.43 skilled steadyman section drove a wedge in the union, undermined the hiring hall, and gave Bay Area PMA the highest coastwise production on container ships. Longshoremen are in no mood for concessions; if PMA doesn't understand that they could walk into a strike situation. Just recently PMA came very close to precipitating coastwise work stoppages over their refusal to employ partially disabled longshoremen in three different ports and their demand that these men be deregistered.

## WHAT IS PRESIDENT HERMAN'S STRATEGY?

International President Jimmy Herman seems to be pushing a strategy of trying to buy off PMA by offering a long-term contract in exchange for a status quo agreement with "modifications". Look out for those "modifications"! There are two things wrong with long contracts. First of all, too many of us remember how the employers ran wild, tearing up job conditions during Harry Bridge's two 5 year contracts 1961-1971. With no strike threat at the end of a contract facing them PMA, backed up by a tame arbitrator and a timid international could go even further than they already have in undermining job conditions and weakening the union.

Second- many powerful unions tried to hold on to wages and conditions in the face of Capitalism's anti-labor offensive by signing long term contracts. What happened? Their employers arbitrarily violated the terms of the agreement, demanded contract reopeners, and cut wages and benefits mid-way during the contracts.

We have to get the union ready for a strike even to keep what we have contractually. Our weakest link is the International. Even before going into a strike we have to demand that the strike and negotiations be run by a broad rank and file strike committee based on locally elected strike committees. If negotiations and strike strategy are left in the control of the Coast Committee we'll be in deep trouble.

## WHAT HAPPENED TO THE ILA?

The disastrous erosion in their jurisdiction that overwhelmed the ILA in their contract this year made a deep impression on our ILWU brothers. After non-union stevedoring companies successfully wrested more than half the work away from the Gulf and South Atlantic ILA, those locals signed special contracts with massive take-aways in wages, benefits, and manning. Then when the ILA international called a union-wide strike following stalled negotiations for their master contract, the Gulf and South Atlantic Ports kept working! Result- New York and the North Atlantic ILA made major concessions in manning and wage guarantees.

## NO PLACE TO HIDE

The growing international crisis of capitalism and the weakness and disunity of the trade union and working class political movements leave ILWU longshoremen with no real economic security. Even those of us approaching retirement know that our pensions and social security are no more secure than this rotting economic system from which our union wrested these gains in earlier decades. Our appeals for the ILWU to take the lead in organizing a workers party to expropriate basic industry and finance capital aren't just utopian demands; we're simply describing the only way out for the working class here and internationally.

One way our union can try to influence events is to reaffirm and send to the coast longshore caucus the resolution we sent to the last international convention: a resolution calling for a 48 hour coast longshore protest strike if Reagan takes military action against Nicaragua.

## CROWLEY DEMANDS: 33% WAGE CUTS/ELIMINATE THE HIRING HALL

12 Crowley contracts with the IBU-ILWU (INLAND BOATMEN'S UNION) are up on Feb. first, next year. Crowley is demanding 33% wage concessions and an end to the union hiring hall. These contracts cover tug and barge work from Alaska to Los Angeles. Crowley is a PMA member and has contracts with the ILWU longshore division in Hawaii and the northwest. Full longshore support to the IBU-ILWU to defeat Crowleys takeaway demands would be a signal to PMA to back off on any concession demands. But don't forget; several years ago Jimmy Herman ordered Local 10 longshoremen to cross an IBU picket line against a Crowley scab barge at the army base!

## MILITANT LONGSHOREMAN PROGRAM

1. DEFEND OUR JOBS AND LIVELIHOOD - Six hour shift, no extensions, at eight hours pay. Manning scales on all ship operations, one man - one job. Weekly PGP. Full no - cap C.O.L.A. on wages. Joint maritime union action against non - union barge, shipping, and longshore operations. No ghost riders or witnesses. No long term contracts.
2. DEFEND THE HIRING HALL - use regular gangs on container ships; no dispatch of "unit gangs". Call all 9.43 men back to the hall. Stop work action to defend the hiring hall and older and disabled men.

3. DEFEND UNION CONDITIONS AND SAFETY THROUGH JOB ACTION-Stop PMA chiseling on the contract. Eliminate "work as directed", "no illegal work stoppage", and arbitration sections from the contract. Mobilize to smash anti-labor injunctions. No employer drug or alcohol screening.

4. DEFEND OUR UNION - No Class B or C longshoremen. Register directly to Class A. Keep racist anti-labor government and courts out of the union and BALMA. Support unions resistance against court suits and government "investigations". Union action to break down racial and sexual discrimination and employer favoritism on the waterfront. Organize for a coastwide strike to get what we need- No concessions - no give backs.

5. BUILD LABOR SOLIDARITY - against government/employer strikebreaking. No more defeated PATCO or HORNEL strikes. Honor all class struggle picket lines - remove phony, racist, anti-working class picket lines. Don't handle struck or diverted cargo. No raiding of other unions. Organize the disorganized, and the unemployed. Defend IRU - ILWU (INLAND BOATMEN) against Crowley union busting.

6. STOP NAZI/KLAN TERROR through union organized labor/black latino defense actions. No dependance on capitalist police or courts to smash fascists..

7. WORKING CLASS ACTION TO STOP REAGAN'S WAR DRIVE - Labor strikes to oppose U.S. military actions against Cuba, Nicaragua, or Salvadoran leftist insurgents. Boycott military cargo to Central America. Build labor action to smash the apartheid injunction.

8. INTERNATIONAL LABOR SOLIDARITY - oppose protectionist trade restrictions - for a massive trade union program of aid to help non - U.S. workers build unions and fight super - exploitation by the multi-national corporations - Defend undocumented workers with union strike action.

9. BREAK WITH THE DEMOCRATIC AND REPUBLICAN PARTIES - Start now to build a workers party based on the unions to fight for a workers government which will seize all major industry without payment to the capitalists and establish a planned economy to end exploitation, racism, poverty, and war.