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NEGOTIATIONS

Negotiations have been proceeding in one form or another for the past twelve months. The Union Committee and Membership have been very patient with our employers whether they be Shipping Federation members, Wharf operators, or Coastwise operators. The program which we are aiming for is not at all unreasonable.

We want a Master Contract to secure our jurisdiction, and to make it possible for a member to be transferred about in the industry and take his pension, welfare, and vacation credits with him.

We want a Mechanization Protection program to secure our jobs for life, to provide for a share of the savings due to the machine, the quicker turn-around of vessels, and the decrease in the number of men on the job. With our share of these savings, we want a fund established to provide for a bonus on normal retirement, early retirement, disability benefits, re-location, and job training.

All these demands are reasonable and will be more than paid for by the decrease in the number of men on the job. We aren't being unreasonable in our other demands concerning wages (15¢ - 1962, and 18¢ from August 1, 1963), welfare, and job conditions.

We have repeatedly tried to get the Shipping Federation, and Wharf Operators, and Coastwise Operators together so that we can negotiate a Master Contract and Mechanization program. We know that they have been meeting during the last couple of weeks. However, we have been unable to get any information as to whether or not they are setting up procedure so that a Master Contract can be negotiated.

On Friday last, the Vancouver Wharves produced letters to and from the Shipping Federation in which they requested to negotiate along with the Federation. The Federation's reply was that they will consider this and reply on April 25th. After all these months we aren't optimistic about this.

The Shipping Federation Conciliation Board is meeting on Tuesday, April 23rd.

At our Coast Committee meeting on Friday, April 19th, all the delegates were of the opinion that we had waited as long as we could be expected to wait to settle our problems without strike action. We have carried on a "no-strike" program since last September in the hopes that the employers would get themselves together and get down to serious negotiations. The time for patience has ended, and we now must prepare for a strike in the industry.

FINAL ACTION

Strike action is the last resort left to your negotiation Committee, and is given serious consideration before it is implemented. Your Committee has tried everything in the book to try and resolve these negotiations, but we were not successful in convincing the employers that our requests for changes for the new Agreement are reasonable and just. We, therefore, call on you to take this final action. Your Local will be setting up Strike Committees, and more detailed reports will be given at your membership meetings.

ISSUES AT STAKE

Issue No. 1 - Jurisdiction! Some of our people still are of the opinion that this is not too important. This we must refute. As long as we have exclusion clauses in our agreements that exclude, or take away our right to any job in the process of loading or unloading a ship, or takes away our right of preparing cargoes in warehouses, on docks, or in these new terminal operations, this work of loading and unloading, and preparation of cargoes is our work, and must be included in the coming Agreement. With the changes to newer types of ships where less or no men are required, our jurisdiction on the dock and warehouse must be protected, and will be even if we do have to go all the way.

The P.C. delegates to the International Convention and Caucus reported our situation, and the Pacific Coast, Hawaiian, and Alaskan delegates voted unanimously to support us in any action we were required to take to achieve our program. Further evidence of the interest of the rest of the I.L.W.U. in the Canadian I.L.W.U. was the unanimous Convention decision to have the 1965 International Convention in Canada. We feel that we are strong enough to handle our strike ourselves, but it is nice to know that if things get rough that the rest of the I.L.W.U. are prepared to give full financial support, and, if necessary, lay their contracts on the line in their fight to support us.

Roy S. Smith, Chairman

Roy S. Smith

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Leo Labinsky

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