



THE DISPATCHER

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United with the "United 6": Puget Sound ITF Inspector Cyrus Donato met with the United 6 and members of the local Filipino community. Donato interviewed the fishermen and reviewed their pay documentation and contracts to determine how much they are owed and what elements of their contracts were ignored.

Alleged labor trafficking in Washington spotlights vulnerability of foreign fishing vessel workers

ITF, community activists, seek justice, accountability, and wages for the 'United 6'

The International Transport Workers Federation (ITF) is raising awareness around a case of alleged labor trafficking of a group of Filipino fishermen in Washington State. The case was brought to the attention of Puget Sound ITF Inspector Cyrus Donato by family members of the fishermen. Activists from the Filipino community in Western Washington also alerted federal authorities. The case is under federal investigation with assistance from the Coast Guard, Customs Border Patrol, the U.S. Department of Justice Human Trafficking Prosecution Unit, and local authorities.

Stranded in Westport

The case involves 24 Filipino fishermen working for California-based McAdam's Fish who were contracted through Pescadores International, a Filipino labor agency. The workers say they were stranded and isolated on board fishing vessels in Westport, WA for more than three months without receiving their full wages and in substandard conditions while the company waited for the price of fish to increase, according to a news report by Cascade PBS. McAdams said Pescadores was responsible for the timely payment of wages to the workers and stated that the time spent docked in Westport was "longer than normal," the PBS report stated.

Before docking in Westport, the workers spent four months fishing for albacore tuna along the West

Coast. The fishermen would work up to 17-19 hours a day catching tuna using a "pole and line" method—considered to be one of the most sustainable methods of fishing because of the low rate of "bycatch" (the catching of other marine species unintentionally) and because it has a lower environmental impact than trawling. The tuna were then flash-frozen and stowed onboard the vessel. "Pole and line" caught fish certified by the Marine Stewardship Council is often marketed as eco-friendly to consumers willing to pay a premium for more green-friendly products. However, the eco-friendly certification obscures the human cost paid by vulnerable workers in the global fishing supply chain.

In September of last year, the vessels docked in Westport to unload *continued on page 6*

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Local 18 President Tim Campbell running for West Sacramento City Council

Long-time ILWU member on a mission to protect the port, represent working people

Local 18 President Tim Campbell, a thirty-one-year member of the ILWU, is on a mission to protect the Port of West Sacramento and to be a voice on the city council for working-class voters. Campbell decided to run for the District 2 seat after his attempt to win an appointment to the Port Commission in 2023 came up one vote short.

The port is governed by a five-member port commission. Four commissioners are appointed by the West Sacramento City Council who may also be city council members. One commissioner is appointed by the Yolo County Board of Supervisors who may be a county supervisor. Port commissioners must be residents of West Sacramento.

"I met with the City Manager, Aaron Laurel, and he told me the only way I would get on the port

commission would be by becoming a city council member. He didn't intend to ask me to run but that's how I took it," Campbell said "Once I started to get more involved with the city, I started to realize that there was a need to have labor at the table at the city council—not just on the port commission. Members of the city council asked me if I would consider running. I was unsure at first because it's a big commitment. After talking it over with my family and local, I decided to run."

West Sacramento Mayor Martha Guerrero has endorsed Campbell's campaign. Other endorsements include the ILWU Northern California District Council, the Dolores Huerta Democratic Club, and California State Treasurer Fiona Ma.

Campbell has been an ILWU member since 1993; he started out throwing sacks of rice. He made his book in the Local 17 Warehouse Division and in 2011 he became a longshore worker. He has been a

longtime advocate and activist for protecting the Port of West Sacramento. ILWU members at the port have handled a variety of cargo over the years including fertilizers, fish meal, coke, iron ore, black sand, project cargoes like windmills for green energy, rebar, steel, logs, plate steel, steel coils, rice, corn, grain, and soybeans. Most of the commodities that are exported from the port are grown in Northern California.

Campbell is embracing the opportunity to advocate for the Port of West Sacramento and be a voice for working-class residents like himself.

"I live in District 2. It's a modest-income district with lower-income and middle-class workers. They don't have a voice at the table. They don't feel they have someone they can relate to on the issues they are going through as working-class, blue-collar people," Campbell said. Key issues of concern for voters in District 2 include public safety such as adequate street lighting and sidewalks, and addressing the large numbers of unhoused people in the district.

"Voters in my district don't feel represented. They're not electing Tim Campbell; they're electing someone like themselves. They're electing a working-class person they can identify with and have a coffee or a beer with and not feel out of place. They didn't have that," said Campbell.

Campbell has been protecting the Port of West Sacramento since 2002 when he helped organize against a county ballot measure trying to close the port.

"Two people wanted to shut the port down because they didn't like the dust and how the port looked," Campbell said. "They fought to shut us down with a county ballot measure. We banded together as a group and went around and handed out pamphlets. I wore out two pairs of shoes knocking on doors and talking to people about the port. This port was built to create good jobs. The work that the port creates here stimulates the economy locally. Most people who work at the port live in West Sacramento. They shop in West Sacramento. They gas up their cars in West Sacramento. They spend their money here."

Campbell wants to use his position to be a champion for the port,



and an advocate for investment in for the port's success, a role he has already undertaken. Campbell said he has already spoken with California State Treasurer Fiona Ma about greening the port.

"I'm the one that is going after securing federal grant money for this port right now, which is kind of a reverse role. Usually, it's either the stevedoring company or the port itself, that's going after grants for equipment or infrastructure money, but nobody's doing that," Campbell said. "That affects good-paying jobs. Ports are economic drivers for the entire region. The way to realize the full potential of the port is to have a commission that makes it a priority. Right now we have no commissioners who have an interest in the port. That is going to change when I am elected."

Campbell's campaign is focused on speaking directly with voters, knocking on doors, and organizing barbecues so voters can get to know him and he can understand their concerns.

Campbell is also raising money because it's expensive to run for public office. "It's going to take about \$200,000 to win this district," Campbell estimated. "There's a saying: 'If you're not at the table you're on the menu.' We need to have labor at the table, even if it comes with a financial strain to get there—and not just a supporter of labor but workers from the labor movement at the table representing our interests."

To find out more about Tim's campaign for city council and how you can help visit:

www.TimForWestSac.com



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IBU mariners at Catalina Island Company fight for fair contract

Southern California Region IBU mariners working for Catalina Island Company have taken their campaign for a fair contract public after progress stalled at the bargaining table.

The unit consists of 8 mariners who work as deckhands and captains on Catalina Island Company's glass bottom boat tours. The workers have been bargaining since November 2023. In February, workers proposed a "last best and final" offer that was rejected by the employer and countered with their own last best and final which workers rejected.

At the beginning of April, workers terminated the temporary contract extension and began a public campaign to draw attention to their efforts to secure a fair agreement. Wages increased only 11.75 percent since

2017 while inflation in Southern California has increased by 26 percent over the same period, according to Southern California IBU Regional Director Cris Sogliuzzo.

Southern California ILWU locals have expressed their support in an online campaign and with letters to the employer urging them to reach a fair agreement with workers. IBU members also hand-billed outside the Catalina Island Conservancy Ball, to increase public awareness. The event is co-sponsored by Catalina Island Company.

"Whether it's a unit of 8 or 800, we will fight to ensure workers get a fair contract. I'd like to thank the entire ILWU family for their solidarity and support for these workers," Sogliuzzo said. Workers have notified the employer that they reserve the right to take future economic action.



IBU members hand billed outside the Catalina Island Conservancy Ball to raise public awareness about the fight for a fair contract by mariners working for the Catalina Island Company.



Standing up for Longshore jobs in Coos Bay: ILWU Local 12 held an informational picket on April 15 to protect work that has historically been performed by Local 12 for nearly 90 years. Local 12 was joined by ILWU International President Willie Adams, International Vice President (Mainland) Bobby Olvera, Jr., and Coast Committeeman Cam Williams.

A new podcast, *Organize the Unorganized*, tells the story of the CIO

Despite an exciting year of strikes and labor activity, union density more or less stayed flat in 2023 at 10%, and it remains at a dismal 6% in the private sector. As unions have declined in size and influence over the past decades, workers' incomes have stagnated even as productivity has soared. A country without strong unions is one with enormous wealth inequality, but it's also one where working people lack political representation, and so one where politics is unmoored from the concerns of most Americans. If we're going to lessen inequality and reinstall faith in American democracy, the best thing we could do is get millions of workers into the labor movement.

Labor upsurges tend to come in spurts. In the 1880s, workers poured into the Knights of Labor, which grew into an organization of 700,000 almost overnight, and then just as quickly fell apart. Unions also grew rapidly during and in the immediate aftermath of World War I, but the big post-war confrontations in steel and elsewhere were lost to the employers. Then, in the 1930s,

something of a miracle happened: millions of workers sought and gained recognition from some of the biggest corporations at the time—General Motors, US Steel, Goodyear. And not only that, but their gains stuck and laid the foundation for the most prosperous time for working people in American history.

This would not have been possible without the birth of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), the great labor federation that broke from the narrow craft orientation of the American Federation of Labor and spent enormous sums on organizing the unorganized. On their watch, steel, auto, rubber, meatpacking, electrical manufacturing, and many other industries went from non-union to almost fully organized in the space of a few years. To get some sense of the scale and rapidity of the transformation in labor relations the CIO was able to enact, imagine Amazon, FedEx, and Walmart becoming fully unionized by 2028.

In *Organize the Unorganized*, a limited-run podcast from the Center for Work & Democracy at Arizona State University and *Jacobin* magazine, I'm telling the story of the CIO with the help of prominent labor historians and experts. I'm also including clips of songs from the period, as well as archival material of speeches and oral histories from key CIO leaders. Why

did the leaders of the CIO choose that particular moment to invest in hiring a huge organizing corps? How were these organizers able to succeed in the face of employer hostility and backlash? Why did the collective bargaining compromises settle in the way they did? It's these questions and more that I hope to tackle in the podcast.

In addition to exploring the basic history, strategy, and significance of the CIO, my hope is also to draw out lessons for the present moment. CIO organizers were able to channel militant and strategic disruption toward huge gains in a relatively friendly political-economic context. Today, the context is quite different, but with a progressive National Labor Relations Board and an incumbent president needing to win back working-class votes, the present moment is also an opportune one for labor to strike. And though there aren't anything like concentrated manufacturing facilities to occupy, with reshoring and limited reindustrialization, as well as the increasingly sophisticated but fragile distributional processes in the country, the possibilities for organized labor to seize strategic chokepoints are still numerous.

Among the many stories I recount on the podcast is that of the birth of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union in the dramatic confronta-



tion on the west coast in 1934. The genesis of the ILWU is a testament to what disruptive activity and multiracial solidarity can accomplish when skillfully channeled toward union recognition and gains. The ILWU was never one of the bigger unions in the CIO, but it was always one of the strongest and most influential. When CIO leaders looked to expand their reach west, there was really one key union to look to, and that was the one with a charismatic leader able to marshal the will of the rank-and-file in coordinated and militant action. The bravery and success of the ILWU captures well the heroic nature of the CIO moment, and I hope you'll tune in to *Organize the Unorganized* to hear its story, which is available on Jacobin radio or at soundcloud.com/organizetheunorganized.

— Benjamin Y. Fong

We are the ILWU



Local 22

Local 22 was chartered in 2006 and was previously Local 23-A. They are a part of the ILWU's warehouse division and represent more than 130 public sector workers who fill a variety of positions at the Port of Tacoma including: terminal security officers; port patrol—armed security that staff the port's main gate and perform other security duties; facilities workers who take care of all of the terminals and many of the buildings at the port; mechanics that take care of the port-owned cranes, straddle carriers, forklifts, and other heavy equipment; administrative staff; freight coordinators, administrative assistants; front desk receptionists, accounts payable and receivable, as well as some finance positions.



Mike Kisak Local 22 President Lead Construction Inspector

Currently, I'm the lead construction inspector for the Port of Tacoma. I've been here as a permanent employee for about 22 years altogether. If you include my time as a consultant, it's been over 30 years. I've been in the building trades my whole life so I've always been in a union, one way or another.

I'm in charge of all the construction that goes on here which could be anything from a new pier to repairing a pier after a vessel hits it, to tenants needing a new door or window in a building, to checking out the two bridges.

I love the work that I do. I have a lot of freedom. I enjoy being able to admire some of the work that we've done. There isn't a pier out here that I haven't worked on, expanded, or developed in some way. The things we do are amazing. Some of the work we can see the final product, but most of it is underground or in the water and you can't see all the work, but it's just fascinating.

The Port of Tacoma has its own carpenters, HVAC, electricians, heavy equipment, plumbers, and rail crews. A lot of that work is done internally with port employees. The bigger projects will go out to bid and general contractors will come in and do that work.

I've been an officer in some form or another from the beginning, starting as a steward, Vice President, and President—basically throughout my entire career I've been active in the union. You have to be active; you have to keep everybody strong. I want to help ensure that we get everything we deserve and that workers are protected. To me, that's the way to go.

Being a part of the ILWU is a source of strength and power. It's good to have numbers behind you. It's great to have that power when fighting for a fair contract. We had difficult contract negotiations last time, but we had solidarity and support from the rest of the ILWU. Instead of one, two, or 10 people, there are hundreds. When hundreds make phone calls instead of one or two, you get more done faster.

Jairus Brenneise Local 22 Business Agent Mechanic

I'm a crane mechanic on the container cranes. Before that, I worked on heavy equipment at other places around the region. Jobs are hard to get at the port. When we have openings, there's a lot of competition. I've been at the port for eight and a half years. This is my first experience with any type of union.

A year or two after I started at the port, I began getting involved with the union because I had some mentors that drew me in. I started as a shop steward. After I was a shop steward for a little while, there was a vacancy for the business agent position. I went for it and got elected. I've been serving on the executive board for almost my whole time here and have been involved in our last two contract negotiations.

I wanted to get involved because there was a leadership vacuum that needed to be filled. I also just have a passion for learning something new. I was already starting a new job and the union thing was new to me. I didn't know anything about it and it sparked an interest: "How do unions work? How do we do our business? What does it mean to be in the union?" That kind of drove me to a path of learning and participating. That got me more excited about serving and doing the day-to-day work of the union.

The union is why our wages, benefits, and working conditions are better. I made more money after starting here and have better working conditions. Why is that? It's solidarity. That's what a union does. When I learned that, I was super excited about it right off the bat. Being non-union for many years, you hear a lot of anti-union propaganda and whatnot and just naysayers. I tried to keep an open mind because I got this job and I liked it. My experience with the ILWU in general and Local 22, solidified that being in a union is a much better situation for the worker and that I can get behind the labor movement.

We're a small local here. It's nice to have leadership and people on your side. I know in some bigger unions that the elected leadership is not available. But that isn't the case here. Of course, we all know Willie because he is from Tacoma, but it's nice to know that the International Executive Board and officers are accessible to the rank and file. I just love the solidarity that we have coastwide.

Local 22 is unique in that we work alongside longshore but we are in the warehouse division. I think it's just wise for us all to stay close-knit and together. It's easy as a smaller local to get lost especially if you're warehouse. I hope going forward for the ILWU as a whole we continue to stick together.



Barry McColeman Port Patrol

I am an armed security officer for the Port of Tacoma. I was a policeman in Tacoma for 30 years. There are a lot of retired police down here from the area. Most days, I'm at one static post—the entrance to one of the terminals. I check TWIC credentials. I also do a lot of PR work for the port at the gate. There are a lot of lost people, a lot of people who are down here for the first time; we get a lot of old people looking for the

casino. The roads have changed throughout the port as terminals have expanded; people are looking for restaurants that used to be here, or roads or bridges that no longer exist. This particular gate that I'm at now is open 24/7. We staff it around the clock.

If I work overtime shifts, I'll be on patrol. We have two patrols at a time within the Port of Tacoma and will respond to the port property. We patrol to make sure everything is secure. If somebody needs to be let into a locked facility, we carry a giant keyring—kind of the stereotypical security guard—with 100 keys on it. We use the same three all the time but it's got the other ones just in case.

In my mind, this job is a combination of PR and preparing for the worst-case scenario. They hire experienced former police officers who have a background in making good decisions. If the worst thing you could think of happened—some sort of terrorist attack or something—we would be here to operate until the first responders arrive. We make sure that the port is secure and the port employees and vendors feel safe. There are a lot of unarmed security guards that work within the port as well, but the port patrol from Local 22 are the only ones that are armed down here.

I was looking for a job where I could use the stuff I learned as a police officer and the training and experience I have. I also enjoy the PR part

where I get to be nice to people and help people out. I worked in narcotics, gangs, and gang homicide for a long time. I feel like a fireman here—people are always glad to see you which is not the case as a police officer. When the fire department shows up, it's either to render medical aid or your house is on fire and they're there to put it out. Whereas the police are always there because something bad happened. Either you're there to arrest somebody, something terrible has happened to somebody, or you've had your stuff broken into and they are there after the fact. I was looking for something where I could just be nice to people and try to help people have a better day. I'm still checking the IDs, but I tell everyone to have a good shift. I've gotten to know a lot of the longshoremen, the other port workers who work in maintenance, some management, and port commissioners. They all come through the gate. I get to meet all kinds of different people and I treat them all the same.

I appreciate the strength and the unity of the ILWU. I was in a union with the police department but it was a union in name only. We got better wages, that kind of thing but it was every man for himself. The ILWU has a mentality to look out for fellow workers. The "An injury to one is an injury to all" slogan is something ILWU members seem to take seriously.

The way I conduct my business is to treat everybody with respect and treat everybody the same. I'm very appreciative of the way everybody treats me down here. More than 99.9% of the people I deal with treat me with respect every day. Maybe it's because I'm old, but I would like to think it's because I'm wearing a uniform and they know I'm doing my job trying to keep everybody safe. That's appreciated and I didn't feel that way as a police officer.



Steven Bowles Facilities Foreman

I started a little over 21 years ago. I came in at the entry level and was on the sweeper crew. It was cleaning bathrooms, cleaning warehouses, and running the sweeper trucks. Within the first year, I was bumped up to buildings and grounds where we maintain vegetation. After about 10 years, I stepped in as the grounds lead. I ran a crew of three or four guys plus another three or four interns during the summer. A year later, I picked up the sweeper crew which morphed into what they now call the environmental techs. It's the same work—we still run the garbage trucks, and sweepers, and move equipment, and they also added all the stormwater catch basin work; we take care of all the catch basins, oil/water separators, and any of the filtration systems and bioretention systems. Three months ago I was bumped up to foreman. Now I oversee the grounds crew, the stormwater crew, and the rail guys; we take care of our rail assets.

Being a part of the ILWU is a blessing. Especially for blue-collar workers, unions seem to be going away in America. I'm very proud to be part of the ILWU which is one of the stronger unions left. I appreciate the job stability and not having to come to work worrying about whether I'm going to be laid off because we're in an "at-will state." The union scale and getting a livable wage has allowed me the opportunity to raise three girls and keep my wife happy.

I like working with everyone here. I like the majority of people I work with. We get to deal with all the departments over here. We work with a lot of the guys out on the docks. I like working with people and that's the biggest thing.

Sandy Miller Freight coordinator

I'm a freight coordinator. We support the breakbulk terminal. We work on vessel documents and work with truck drivers and longshore workers. It's kind of a customer service job. When someone comes to pick up a piece of cargo, we create documents for them; we check all the releases to make sure the shipping lines have released it, make sure it has cleared customs, make sure the port has released it, and then we release it to the customer. They pick up the cargo and off they go. We troubleshoot when there are problems. We are the liaison with whoever shipped it and will call them if there's a problem and work with the longshore from there.

I've been at the port since 1998, off and on. I was in the union when I started, then I moved to a real estate department that was non-represented. In 2017, I came back into the union. I retired in 2018 and then luckily, I came back. Because of COVID, breakbulk went through the roof here at the Port of Tacoma, and the staff at that time just couldn't take care of it. The director of operations saw me and asked me if I could come back to work. And so I've been working since then. I love my job here. I love the working environment. Our relationship between management and the freight coordinators is fantastic. We feel supported and my relationship with longshore is great.

I feel very supported being in the union. Because of the contract, I know what percentage raise I'm going to get. When I was in a non-represented position I didn't have that guarantee. We get paid well for what we do but I do work very hard. The port is the best job that I've ever had. We have fantastic benefits and that is also because we are part of the union. My husband also works here. We're a union family. He's worked here since 2000 and works out in maintenance. We both appreciate being a part of the union.



ILWU International Executive Board endorses Joe Biden for President

At their meeting on April 22-24, the ILWU International Executive Board endorsed President Joe Biden for re-election citing the union's strong relationship with the administration, President Biden's extensive support for workers, and the ILWU and his legislative accomplishments that have benefited workers included a \$400 billion infrastructure bill that provided hundreds of millions of dollars in much-needed investments in West Coast ports.

The ILWU has had regular communication with and access to the Biden Administration. ILWU International President Willie Adams was invited to the White House by the President on several occasions to dis-

cuss supply chain issues and issues related to West Coast ports.

President Biden visited the Port of Los Angeles in 2022 and several members of the Biden Administration including Secretary of Labor Marty Walsh, Secretary of Transportation Pete Buttigieg, Port and Supply Chain Envoy Gen. Stephen Lyons (Ret), and Deputy Secretary of Commerce Don Graves have visited ports and ILWU locals along the West Coast. The Biden Administration also gave the ILWU a seat on its supply chain advisory group giving the ILWU input in shaping the administration's supply chain policies.

President Biden also appointed retired Local 52 member Max Vekich to the Federal Maritime Commission (FMC), bringing the experience and perspective of Vekich's 40-year career on the waterfront to the FMC.



Lifetime Achievement Award: ILWU International President Willie Adams was honored with a lifetime achievement award on April 25 by the San Francisco Labor Council at their annual COPE banquet. Pres Adams received the award for his dedication, sacrifice, commitment, and dedication the labor movement and the working class.

Alleged labor trafficking in Washington spotlights vulnerability of foreign fishing vessel workers

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their catch. All but one of the captains departed after docking leaving the Filipino fishermen stuck onboard the vessels for months without pay until federal authorities finally intervened in late December 2023.

Visas and vulnerability

The U.S. does not require foreign fishing workers on U.S.-flagged vessels to have work visas and as a result, they could not legally leave the boats and workers say they felt trapped. The workers said they were told they faced a \$4,200 fine if they so much as stepped onto the dock, preventing them from using the bathroom or visiting fishermen stranded on other boats.

“It’s like the children’s game ‘the floor is lava,’” explained Donato,” describing the tragic and absurd situation the workers faced. “If you touch the pier you get a \$4,200 fine, and you’re shipped back to your country without receiving your full wages.”

The workers were confined on five separate 20-foot vessels. Donato explained, “These vessels aren’t deep draft commercial ships with a full range of amenities. In the eyes of the government, these workers don’t exist, leaving them isolated and vulnerable.”

Six of the fishermen left the vessels with federal agents and are cooperating with the investigation.

The United 6

The six workers who remained in the U.S. have dubbed themselves the “United 6.” In addition to cooperating with the investigation, they have been fighting for \$6,404.05- \$7,449.55 in back wages workers say that each of them is owed, and working with Filipino community organizations to raise awareness about the vulnerability of foreign fishermen. The workers have been granted “Continued Presence” designation by the U.S. government, a temporary immigration designation given to individuals identified by law enforcement as victims of human trafficking.

Far-reaching impacts

ITF West Coast Coordinator Ryan Brazeau explained the far-reaching impact that the failure to pay proper wages or failure to pay wages on time can have on seafarers’ families back home.

“There is a snowball effect that comes with not being paid wages on a regular basis. It doesn’t stop at the seafarer, especially for Filipino workers who have extended family members dependent on them. It can affect their access to health care or their ability to afford food. It is common for an extended family to live in one domicile and they are all affected if one company is not paying a seafarer or a fisherman their regular wages. It can be catastrophic,” said Brazeau.



United 6 fisherman Reyner Dagalea (second from left), ITF Inspector Cyrus Donato (right), and community supporter Jill Mangaliman (left), met with the immigration legal adviser to WA Governor Jay Inslee Meghan Kelly-Stallings (second from right) to express their thanks for the state’s resources and support in the investigation, give testimonials to the governor’s office about the case, and discuss ways oversight of labor conditions of fishing vessel workers can be increased in Washington.



“The onboard conditions were squalor, it was like a tin coffin,” Donato said of the conditions he found aboard the vessels.



Three fishermen were stranded onboard Natalie Victoria. “It is distressing to be trapped in your workplace with no end in sight. U.S. citizens and those with visas have the ability to go ashore to get the necessary rest and recuperation,” Donato said.

In addition to the wage issue, the workers say they were made to endure living in inadequate and substandard conditions while confined to the vessels for three months. According to a Justice for the United 6 campaign fact sheet, those conditions included:

- Inadequate facilities on the boat that affected the daily needs of the fishermen like hot water for bathing;
- Lack of adequate medical care;
- Being forced to defecate and urinate on the vessel without proper sewage or cleaning;
- Isolation that affected their physical well-being and mental health.

Filing for abandonment

Donato said the ITF filed five abandonment claims against McAdams’ vessels with the International Labor Organization and they have been accepted. Abandoned status indicates that a shipowner failed to fulfill certain obligations to a seafarer such as the timely repatriation, payment of outstanding wages, and providing necessities such as adequate food, accommodation, and medical care. “It is the first time U.S. flagged fishing vessels have been listed as abandoned by the ILO,” he said.

Impact of isolation

At a recent community forum in Seattle, Reyner Dagalea, one of the United 6, spoke about his experience stuck aboard the vessel which resulted in feelings of severe isolation. “I stayed alone in the boat. I felt so sad and lonely during my stay there. This is the first time I stayed alone in the boat since we cannot go to another boat or anywhere else but only stay inside the boat,” Dagalea said. “I felt like a prisoner on board. I always remember my family in the Philippines, worried that I cannot support them financially

due to the situation. I was deprived of my freedom and not treated like a human being.”

Bureaucratic confusion

Factors contributing to the vulnerability of foreign fishing workers on US-flagged vessels include overlapping jurisdictions by agencies and departments and U.S. Immigration laws that leave workers with little protection. The Immigration and Nationality Act excludes most foreign fishermen employed on U.S. vessels from eligibility for nonimmigrant visas.

“The core problem is that U.S. law specifically excludes these fishermen from getting traditional crew member visas. If you have someone who doesn’t have a work visa, that creates a vulnerability, and compounds the asymmetry in power that can be exploited,” Donato said.

Proper government oversight is hampered by overlapping jurisdiction and confusion as to which U.S. agencies bear the responsibility for monitoring the labor conditions of fishermen who are not considered to be legally present in the U.S., according to a 2019 report, *The Price Of Paradise*, published by the Georgetown Law Human Rights Institute.

“At sea and at the piers, various agencies and departments have jurisdiction to address fishing and immigration regulations, as well as direct or indirect statutory authority to address forced labor. However, overlapping jurisdiction creates confusion regarding which agency or department holds responsibility for addressing forced labor or other abuses on U.S.-flagged fishing vessels. As a result, neither advocates nor fishermen know where to report abuses,” the report states.

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New Novel by Local 10 veteran Herb Mills, *Presente: A Dockworker Story*

Edited by Peter Cole and Matthew Telson

Herb Mills (1930-2018), the author of *Presente: A Dockworker Story* (Hard Ball Press, 2023), was a highly regarded ILWU stalwart and an effective progressive campaigner. During his active years on the waterfront, 1963-1991, he served Local 10 as shop steward, stewards' council chair, business agent, and secretary-treasurer.

Mills led efforts to keep military cargo from going to brutally repressive authoritarian regimes in Latin America, stopped South Korea's military government from executing democratic standard-bearer Kim Dae-jung, and fought for health and safety on the job. During the 1970s, he led an important battle to get asbestos off the San Francisco waterfront. In January 2018, Local 10 presented Mills with a lifetime achievement award.

Herb was a man of many accomplishments, including academic credentials. As a young person, he toiled in a Ford Motor Company manufacturing plant, took labor studies classes, and graduated from the University of Michigan. When he was 30, he demonstrated in San Francisco against the infamous McCarthy era House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC). After Mills left graduate school at the University of California, Berkeley, in 1963, he went to work on the San Francisco waterfront, and wrote numerous scholarly articles and papers about the

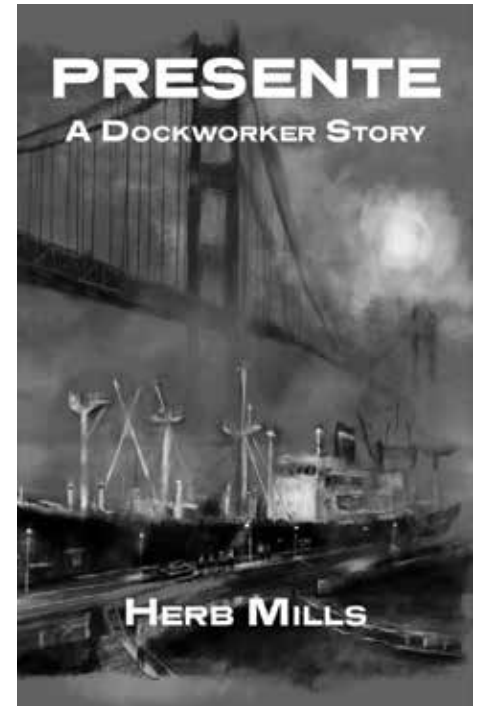
ILWU. He eventually earned a Ph.D. in political science from the University of California, Irvine.

After much deliberation, Mills decided that the best way to inform the largest number of people about the culture and social justice legacy of the ILWU was to write a novel focused on the union. He worked for years on the manuscript of *Presente*, but was unable to complete the project in his lifetime. Fortunately, after Mills's death Professor Peter Cole of Western Illinois University, the prize-winning author of *Dockworker Power*, Matthew Telson, a Hard Ball Press writing consultant, and Stephanie Fay edited Mills's draft. Publisher Timothy Sheard, the founder of Hard Ball Press, worked cooperatively with Mills's family to shape *Presente* into book form. Marc Nelson, a noted artist and illustrator, designed the book's cover.

Cole, Telson, Fay, Sheard, and Nelson's efforts have produced an engaging, fast-paced, inspiring version of Mills's novel. Adhering to the way Herb envisioned it, the book is a fictionalized 231-page story about Mills's struggle as a union officer to stop the shipment of arms to a corrupt, murderous El Salvadorian junta and to save Kim Dae-jung's life at the same time. The novel is set in late December 1980, shortly before conservative Republican Ronald Reagan takes office as president of the United States. Reagan, his people, and Tropic Steamship, a fictional shipping company, are quite happy

working with the junta. The odds that Mills's protagonist, Local 10 Secretary-Treasurer Steve Morrow, will succeed in his quest for social justice abroad do not look promising. But with the help of numerous activists from the ILWU International, Locals 10 and 34, and influential liberal religious groups, Morrow resolutely pursues his two-pronged goal. The novel's title, an echo from the 1930s Spanish Civil War, comes from an emotional church meeting honoring martyrs killed by the El Salvadorian junta.

As the novel progresses, Mills weaves in descriptions of ILWU life and culture, including the friendship, mutual respect, and unity in struggle of ILWU partisans. We also learn about daily on-the-job difficulties that democratically elected rank-and-file union leaders like Morrow encounter when trying to deal with resourceful, powerful, and often deceitful corporate adversaries. There are references in the book to ongoing health and safety concerns that Morrow must handle for Local 10's members, such as worn-out and dangerous longshore equipment and loose asbestos in ships. Morrow also has to repeatedly stop waterfront employers from short-changing individual workers' pay. By the end of the novel we have a well-rounded picture of what Morrow is up against and how he must think and act to effectively meet numerous, often overlapping challenges.



Several short, informative sections covering fourteen pages follow the end of Mills's story on page 231. Included are a profile of Mills's life and work; an afterword by Peter Cole; acknowledgments by Rebecca Mills, Herb's friend and former wife, and by Cole; a note about illustrator Marc Nelson; and a helpful glossary of names and organizations mentioned in the book.

You can support ILWU Local 5's strike fund by ordering *Presente* through the Powell's Books Partnership Link found on the Local 5 website (<https://www.ilwulocal5.com/support>).

— Harvey Schwartz
Curator, ILWU Oral History Collection

Alleged labor trafficking in Washington spotlights vulnerability of foreign fishing vessel workers

continued from page 6

To illustrate the point, Donato notes that U.S. law requires that foreign fishermen have a signed labor contract. "Regulators check to ensure that there is a contract, but no one checks to make sure that employers are living up to the terms of the agreement," he said.

The report continues: "All of these vulnerabilities are further aggravated by the fishermen's lack of familiarity with U.S. law and fear of being deported if they assert their rights. Strong competition, spurred by a booming global fishing industry and a ready supply of vulnerable and inexpensive foreign workers, renders the fishermen's employment structurally precarious. When aggregated, these conditions strip away the fishermen's bargaining power and exclude them from basic legal protections, leaving them at greater risk of being exploited or subjected to forced labor."

A 2021 *Task Force on Human Trafficking in Fishing in International Waters*

Report to Congress similarly concludes that fishing workers are uniquely vulnerable: "Fishing vessel workers, especially foreign workers, lack most basic labor protections and are unlikely to be in a position to report even extreme violations such as forced labor crimes."

Donato said that the ITF doesn't usually inspect fishing vessels such as these on the West Coast unless a case is brought to their attention. "I have the right to board deep draft commercial ships at MTSA (Maritime Transportation Security Act) regulated facilities but these fishing vessels aren't MTSA regulated, so it's another gray area but I fundamentally have the right to materially assist those that request it," Donato said. "The Westport case has demonstrated a need to provide better protections for workers on these fishing vessels."

The need for reform

Chris Williams with ITF's Fisheries Section noted the irony of the situation that the U.S., a vocal advocate

in combating trafficking in the fishing industry throughout the global fishing supply chain, has failed to address the issue off its coasts and in its ports.

"The U.S. is pushing levers all over the world, funding projects, and running campaigns to combat forced labor in fishing. But then there appears to be no political will to sort out the same structural factors and legal immigration loopholes domestically. The vulnerability created for migrant fishers makes them easy to exploit for profit, and the USA should be leading by example to put an end to this and ensure all workers in America have protections and rights at work," he said.

To date, there has been few efforts by legislators to improve protections for foreign fishermen. In 2017, after the Associated Press reported on the conditions of 700 longline fishing workers without visas who were confined to vessels in Honolulu, Senator Mazie Hirono, introduced a bill, co-sponsored by Senator Brian Schatz, that would

have created a visa category for foreign crewmembers employed on Hawaii-based longline fishing vessels, but the bill never got out of committee. The ITF is advocating for changes to U.S. laws, better government oversight and enforcement, and is looking into ways West Coast inspectors can better monitor conditions for fishing vessel workers including gaining access to boats to be able to speak with the crews.

The United 6 continue to speak out to raise awareness as they seek accountability, justice, and reforms that will protect foreign fishing vessel workers. The government has not provided an update on the status of the investigation or whether any charges will be filed.

To find out more about the case of the United 6 you can visit:

<https://linktr.ee/justiceforunited6>.



Honoring Lewis Wright: On March 27, 2024, ILWU Credit Union dedicated their San Pedro Branch in memory of ILWU Brother Lewis Wright, to honor his leadership and legacy. As an active volunteer on the ILWU Credit Union Board of Directors for 32 years, Lewis' dedication and commitment to the Credit Union and their members was instrumental for their growth and success. Thank you to everyone, including Lewis' family, who attended the San Pedro Branch Dedication honoring Lewis.

April 1, 2024

ATTENTION: LOCAL 10 MEMBERS

The Trustees of the Smolin-Melin Scholarship Fund are prepared to accept applications for scholarships for the academic year 2024-2025. Now is the time to indicate your interest. **June 1, 2024 is the application deadline.**

Victor Smolin and Carlton Melin were longtime members of Local 10 who left a sum of money to establish the scholarship fund. They specified that scholarships were to be available to children of Class A Local 10 members to further their "collegiate" education. The Trustees of the Fund interpret "members" to mean **active members in good standing at the time of disbursement of scholarship funds**, deceased members and retired members. The Trustees interpret "collegiate" to apply only to **full-time** study (at least 12 units per semester or quarter) at either a four-year college or an academic junior college.

The Trustees have agreed that (1) no applicant will be awarded more than four scholarships, (2) a fifth scholarship would be considered after careful review of the applicant's record and if circumstances warrant and (3) in no event would an applicant be considered for a sixth scholarship.

Based always on available assets, the Fund historically has awarded scholarships in a range from \$1,000 to \$2,500 for full-time students at four-year colleges or universities, and from \$350 to \$1,750 for full-time students at two-year colleges.

The Trustees are Eleanor Morton, counsel for ILWU Local 10, Eugene Vrana, Retired Director of Educational Services and Librarian for ILWU, and Nicole Bridges, Fund Administrator and the granddaughter of Harry Bridges.

To request an application, simply email Nicole Bridges at:
nbridges@leonardcarder.com

She will then send you the application form with the necessary explanatory materials.

TRANSITIONS

NEW PENSIONERS:

Local 10: Lester Foy, Jr.; Harold Spencer Laday; Ronnie L. Ott;
Local 13: John W. Barnett; Dave Bellhouse; Robert W. Briggs; John L. Garcia; Lawrence L. Lesure; William Luhrsen; Joel B. Norman; Paul W. Orcutt; Douglas K. Pearce; David E. Rivera; Oscar Saenz; William G. Woodbury; **Local 26:** Patricia A. Mason; **Local 34:** Henry M. Pellom;
Local 40: Linda Wickersham;
Local 63: Charles A. Alford; Irina Dela Rosa; Raine D. Franklin; Ronald D. Quick; **Local 94:** David L. Roberts;

DECEASED ACTIVE MEMBERS

Local 10: Christopher Abdin;
Local 13: Saadia Ortiz; Brandon Peterson; **Local 23:** Dirk J. Graham;
Local 54: Jesse A. Soria;

DECEASED PENSIONERS:

Local 8: Felix Brown Jr.; Earnest E. Egner; Craig M. Pettit; **Local 10:** John R. Delgado; Michael R. Gherardi;

Kendall D. Hadley; Tung H. Nguyen;
Local 13: O'Neal Baldwin; David Buono; John S. Cruz; Richard Hedes; Joe Palacios, Jr.; Ralph J. Tupaz;
Local 19: Larry V. Dees; Herbert Munson; Douglas R. Phelps;
Local 29: Michael P. Morgan;
Local 32: Robert Reef;
Local 34: Carmen Di Cini; Dennis Duree; Daniel Rougeau;
Local 52: Philip L. Curtis; Stephen T. Lauritsen; **Local 63:** Michael S. Howit;
Local 91: Chester Blakely;
Local 94: Dean Elliott;

DECEASED SURVIVORS:

Local 10: Mercedes A. Bangay; Cynthia Rutter; Gladys Sims;
Local 13: Doris Hogue; Claudia C. O'Dell; **Local 21:** Floria L. Gardner; Betty Jessee; **Local 52:** Catherine F. Cardinal; **Local 63:** Carol L. Clay; Joanne Hall; **Local 94:** Bobbie L. Hilbert;

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