



THE DISPATCHER

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Unions push back against chaotic first month of Trump administration
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The two year battle for a union at Alcatraz Cruises in San Francisco included four Unfair Labor Practices strikes and extensive community outreach and support.

Alcatraz Cruises workers ratify first contract

94% approve contract with wage gains, pension for workers

After reaching a tentative agreement on a first contract at the end of December, workers at Alcatraz Cruises in San Francisco voted overwhelmingly to ratify the agreement with 94 percent voting in the affirmative. The approximately 100 workers at Alcatraz Cruises are represented by the Inlandboatmen's Union of the Pacific (IBU), the Marine Division of the ILWU.

The victory comes after nearly two years of bargaining. In their agreement, workers won significant wage gains, access to the IBU health care and pension programs, and a fair and predictable scheduling system. The bargaining unit includes captains, first officers, deckhands, food and beverage workers, engineers, mechanics, custodians, guest service agents, and tram drivers.

Tristan Senft a First Officer at Alcatraz Cruises and member of the bargaining committee said the hard-won victory shows what workers can achieve when they stand together and fight for their rights.

"Workers have been fighting for a union at Alcatraz Cruises since September of 2022 and have been trying to get an agreement with the employer since January of 2023," Senft said. "Our employer pushed hard on us to give in, but my coworkers had the strength and courage to stand their ground. It is an honor to work alongside them, and I look forward to what the future holds."

"I appreciate the stability and the extra power the union brings that gives us a voice in the workplace," added captain Ian Tucker. "We've got good people here and we are all family. We have to take care of each other. I am grateful to our negotiating committee and all of the work-

ers who put in the blood, sweat, and tears to make this happen."

During the contract fight, workers went out on four Unfair Labor Practices (ULP) strikes. Members of IBU and Bay Area ILWU locals walked the picket lines with workers in solidarity and many customers asked for refunds from the company to show their support. Workers also spoke in front of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors and San Francisco Port Commission, built support with Alcatraz ferry passengers, held rallies on the Embarcadero, and pressured the company in Southern California and New York.

San Francisco Supervisor Aaron Peskin was a steadfast ally throughout this fight, from walking the picket line to passing a resolution in support of Alcatraz workers to helping deliver petitions to Hornblower management demanding a fair contract. Workers also received support

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Unions push back against chaotic first month of Trump administration

Blitz of executive orders targeting workers provokes protests, lawsuits

The conservative-leaning federal workers' unions are leading a pushback against the chaotic first month of the Trump Administration, which saw scores of executive orders and other actions undermining workers' rights. These included ordering the mass firing of federal workers, including an estimated 200,000 "probationary workers," canceling collective bargaining agreements reached with federal workers within 30 days of Trump's inauguration, and the unilateral impoundment of congressionally appropriated funds by the richest man in the world, Elon Musk, and the so-called Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE).

Trump's actions have also targeted the rights of trans and non-binary people, rolled back civil rights policies, weakened protections against discrimination, hamstringed the National Labor Relations Board, attempted to invalidate the birthright citizenship clause of the 14th Amendment of the Constitution, and doubled down on divisive racial grievance politics.

Trump's actions have closely followed Project 2025, the right-wing blueprint to radically reshape the federal government and expand executive power at the expense of workers. During the election, Trump claimed to "know nothing" about Project 2025.

In response, labor unions have organized rallies outside the U.S. Treasury Department and other federal agencies protesting DOGE personnel accessing sensitive government data. A rank-and-file coalition of federal workers also organized protests across the U.S. protesting the gutting of government services by the administration.

The union-led legal challenges to the Trump Administration's attacks on the federal workforce include:

- A lawsuit by the National Federation of Federal Employees and other unions challenging the firing of probationary employees, the deferred resignation policy, and large-scale workforce reductions they say violate federal laws.

- A lawsuit by the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) and other co-plaintiffs alleging that shutting down the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) without an act of Congress violates the Constitution's separation of powers.

- Two lawsuits by the National Treasury Employees Union against Consumer Financial Protection Bureau acting Director Russell Vought to block them from gaining access to employee information.

If the Trump administration's purge of these federal workers withstands legal challenges, it will be the single largest workforce reduction by an employer in U.S. history. The layoffs will disproportionately impact veterans and disabled veterans. *The Veteran's Preference Act of 1944* gives veterans who are disabled, who served on active duty in the Armed Forces during certain specified periods, or in military campaigns preference over others in hiring for virtually all federal government jobs. Approximately 30 percent of the federal workforce are veterans.



Federal workers and their unions are leading the pushback against the Trump Administration's attacks of the federal workforce and essential government services.

ment department nor concerned with government efficiency.

DOGE staff are not auditors or forensic accountants. The "department" is jokingly named after an internet meme but DOGE's actions have serious consequences for the public. Musk is reducing or eliminating essential government services without oversight or congressional authorization including funding cuts for veterans, public health, food safety, aviation safety, consumer financial protection, and other important government functions the public often takes for granted.

eral workers who spoke out after being fired. He had worked for the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs for 11 months and was one month shy of completing his probationary period when he was notified by email of his termination.

"It feels like we don't matter," Pasquino said in an interview with his local news station, WPTV, in Florida. "Our lives, our service — I'm a 100 percent disabled combat veteran, and the sacrifices that I made don't matter, because I'm an arbitrary number. Working at the Department of Veterans Affairs was the perfect opportunity for me to give back to veterans and continue to serve."

"Elon Musk and the misnamed "Department of Government Efficiency" are undertaking efforts to gut the federal workforce and impound funding. DOGE is neither a government department nor concerned with government efficiency."

Automating the federal workforce

According to a recent article in the *Washington Post*, the Trump Administration is trying to determine which jobs can be replaced by Artificial Intelligence or other forms of automation.

"The end goal is replacing the human workforce with machines," said an anonymous U.S. official. "Everything that can be machine-automated will be."

The impact of DOGE

Elon Musk and the misnamed "Department of Government Efficiency" are undertaking efforts to gut the federal workforce and impound funding. DOGE is neither a govern-

At least 50 workers from the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA), which oversees the U.S. nuclear weapons stockpile, were among those fired. The administration attempted to rescind the layoffs after concerns were raised that their dismissal could jeopardize national security.

NBC News and other outlets reported that after the layoffs, agency staff attempted to re-hire some workers but didn't know how to reach them after disabling their email accounts and deleting their personnel records. It's unclear how many of the laid-off employees returned to work.

David Pasquino, an 18-year Army veteran was one of the fed-

Trump's layoffs are hitting military families hard. For decades, the federal government has prioritized hiring spouses of active duty service members. Lawmakers and presidents have recognized it as important to the financial security of military families, a quarter of whom have experienced food insecurity in recent years.

Many of those hired perpetually end up as probationary employees even though they have spent years in federal service. Military spouses and their families move involuntarily, on average, every two to three years. As a result, federal employees frequently change positions or departments, triggering a new probationary period.

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ILWU delegation meets with key U.S. Representatives and Senators in DC

Defending ILWU interest and workers tops the agenda

Shortly after the presidential inauguration, the ILWU hit the ground running by sending a delegation to Washington, DC at the beginning of February to meet with members of Congress and key staff. Leading the delegation were ILWU Vice President Mainland Ryan Whitman, ILWU Vice President Hawaii Brandon Wolff, and CLD Coast Committeeman Cam Williams. Also in attendance were CLD Legislative Committee Chair Dan McKisson, ILWU Senior Policy Advisor Alexa Jurczak, ILWU Hawaii Director of Operations and Legislative Liaison Brenson Wailehua, and representatives from the union's new lobbying firm Nueva Vista Group (NVG).

The group met with multiple members of Congress and key staff to introduce the ILWU's new leadership and address issues of importance to the union. The main issues discussed were automation and job loss, port security and the threats to critical infrastructure posed by foreign adversaries, battery and energy storage safety and security, the Harbor Maintenance Tax/Di Minimis and the impact on diverted cargo from West Coast ports, the SHIPS for America Act, and grant funding.

The group focused on meetings with members from the Pacific Northwest and Hawaii given the delegation, including meetings with Senators Patty Murray (WA), Mazie Hirono (HI), and Brian Schatz (HI), and meetings with House of Representatives members Marilyn Strickland (WA), Emily Randall (WA), Rick Larsen (WA), Adam Smith (WA), Dan Newhouse (WA), Suzanne Bonamici (OR), Val Hoyle (OR), Jill Tokuda (HI), Ed Case (HI), Robert Garcia (CA), and Laura Friedman (CA). The remaining meetings were held with high-level staff in the offices of Senators Maria Cantwell (WA), Jeff Merkley (OR), Ron Wyden (OR), and Josh Hawley (MO) as well as House of Representatives member Marie Gluesenkamp Perez (WA).

In the spirit of working across the aisle, it is important to note that of the meetings attended, two were with Republican offices (Newhouse and Hawley) that work on committees and issues that overlap with ILWU interests. Rep. Newhouse shared some of the same concerns as ILWU around port security and the impacts of tariffs on the agricultural community and Washington ports. Senator Hawley's office shared an overview of their "pro-worker framework" that strengthens protections for workers and their right to join a union. However, when asked if the Senator would be taking a position on the current attacks on the NLRB and stand up for working people, the Senator's staff said he would have to get back to us.

It was clear during this trip that most members and staff were rattled by the Trump Administration's current dismantling of established agencies and the purge of government employees. Despite the climate in DC, members and staff heard our issues and even recognized some possible space where we could address some issues of ours with the administration. Most importantly, when ILWU asked what we could do to be helpful, members like Senator Hirono stressed the importance of all of us working together and coordinating our efforts to protect democracy. As she stated, our three pillars of strength are communication, litigation, and legislation. Other members such as Senator Murray and Reps Bonamici and Tokuda asked that we keep them informed of what's happening at home and alert them if funding for authorized projects and services becomes unavailable.

The impacts on the ILWU and the labor movement from the Administration's changes look to be significant. Some of these include:

Tariffs – U.S. tariffs and retaliatory tariffs from other countries are still being waged and we may not see full impacts for months. We expect to see fewer imports soon of steel, onshore wind turbines, and autos. Building U.S. capacity to replace imports like steel could take years and even longer



From left to right: Senior Policy Advisor Alexa Jurczak, International Vice President (Mainland) Ryan Whitman, Federal Maritime Commissioner Max Vekich, Coast Committeeman Cam Williams, and Coast Longshore Division Legislative Committee Chair Dan McKisson.

for extra capacity to see exports of steel. In the Administration's previous term, we saw significant retaliatory tariffs on agricultural exports. The agricultural communities received \$40 billion in aid to offset those export losses. Some in the agricultural community have waged a campaign of "Trade not Aid."

Hydrogen Hubs – Seven billion dollars have been awarded by Congress to hydrogen hubs around the country with \$3 billion allocated for hubs in Washington, Oregon, and California. Funding has been jeopardized on hydrogen infrastructure projects that include West Coast ports.

"The ILWU will continue to advocate for workers' rights, the livelihood of our members, and most of all, protect democracy at all costs."

Maritime Advisory Committee on Occupational Safety and Health (MACOSH) – the ILWU Coast Safety Committee has participated on this committee for many years. MACOSH has had all future meetings canceled. This move cancels our voice for addressing safety issues for our members.

Infrastructure Grant Funding – ports saw record funding by Congress for infrastructure projects in the last few years. The Administration has unilaterally paused or eliminated Congressionally approved funding and ports are finding that funds are now not available for their projects.

USAID – This agency has been completely dismantled leaving projects around the world that aid millions of people in limbo. USAID is also where the "Food For Peace" program receives funding. Food For Peace loads U.S. flag ships with U.S. agricultural products to feed the hungry in emergency situations. This program also helps U.S. shipping by keeping Jones Act ships and crews active in our severely depleted U.S. shipping fleet. There is a proposed bill that would move \$1.8 billion in funding for the Food For Peace program to USDA. The ILWU has given support to this bill that supports the Jones Act, U.S. farmers, and ILWU workers.

U.S. International Trade Commission – All future meetings have been canceled. USITC is a forum where labor has been provided a voice on the impacts of international trade. Labor's voice has been canceled.

These are just some of the impacts we see from the Administration's unprecedented unilateral changes being implemented. Many of the changes are politically based. New administrations have the right by law to select and appoint some positions based on their political beliefs and the approval of the Senate. However, the unilateral dismantling of congressionally approved agencies and funding is already being challenged by multiple lawsuits and we expect to see a lengthy battle play out in the courts. The firing of government employees without cause and replacement with political allies is illegal. It has not been seen in government since the *Pendleton Civil Service Reform Act (Spoils Act)* was passed by Congress and signed by President Chester Arthur in 1883. The *Spoils Act* prevented new administrations from firing experienced government staff and replacing them with inexperienced political loyalists.

Whether you believe in less government or not, there are processes in place to eliminate agencies and funding – and this only happens with the approval of Congress.

The ILWU will continue to put our policy and jobs before political parties or politicians and we will work with anyone who supports our policies. Similarly, we will not stand by and watch the dismantling of our democracy. Our voices will not be silenced.

The ILWU will continue to advocate for workers' rights, the livelihood of our members, and most of all, protect democracy at all costs.

– Alexa Jurczak



Left to right: ILWU Hawaii Director of Operations and Legislative Liaison Brenson Wailehua, Rep. Jill Tokuda (HI), and ILWU International Vice President (Hawaii) Brandon Wolff.



We are the ILWU



Robin Leake Local 13 Area Welfare Director

I began my Longshore career in 1997 when my sister-in-law, Michele, encouraged me to get an application from the unemployment office. I eventually became a casual in 2001.

My first job on the waterfront was as a clerk working the out gate and I was excited to learn this job. But my second job was as a UTR driver on the night side. I was new and a terrible UTR driver and the dock boss had a lot of choice words for me all night. I cried a lot but was determined not to let him see me cry. I eventually got better and became a really good driver.

As a Class B, I was active in the union, volunteering and attending meetings. As a Class A, I still attended meetings but was not as active because I had young children. A few years ago, I decided I wanted to run for office. With my children grown, I felt that I could truly dedicate myself to the responsibilities of a leadership role and contribute to our union differently. I ran for Health Benefits Representative and I lost. A few months later I ran for Membership Committee and was elected to serve. I was able to participate in Labor Relations Committee (LRC) hearings for the Class B members and the casuals, representing and advocating for them as well as educating them on following the rules and being a good union member. It was very fulfilling.

I ran for Health Benefits Representative again and I was elected. I was honored to step up to this union officer position and respectfully serve our members. Before I ran for this position, a new position for a 2nd Area Welfare Director was created. This position was very closely aligned with my previous career in Benefits Management so I submitted my resume and was eventually appointed to the position.

Being in a leadership role takes integrity, respect, and a deep commitment to our union. As the first elected African American officer in Local 13 and now serving as Area Welfare Director, I take this responsibility seriously. Not just for myself, but for every member, especially our younger members who need to see that leadership can and should reflect the diversity of our union. It sends a powerful message of belonging and that their voices matter.

I have had truly amazing experiences and opportunities in my 24 years in this industry and my hope is that my journey inspires others to step up. Leadership isn't just about titles. It is about service, accountability, and paving the way for those who come next. I am honored to serve and I remain committed to representing the possibilities for all of us. Because when we lift each other up, we all move forward together.

Rodney Rhymes Local 23 Pensioner



I started on April 12, 1980, in Portland, Oregon. I was in a group of 100 B men. I was the youngest Black B person. On May 17, 1980, I was in Longview working when Mount St. Helens blew up. It changed my whole career because I thought I was going to be working in Portland as a longshoreman with my dad, my father-in-law, and all the guys I grew up with. I ended up having to travel a lot—Coos Bay, L.A., Vancouver, Longview. An opportunity came up in 1986 to transfer. I had never heard of Tacoma. I'd been up to Seattle but I didn't know where Tacoma was. I did a week in Tacoma, kind of like a probationary period, and decided to transfer up there.

When I left Portland, the guys down there brought us up to speed as far as driving forklifts, a little bit of driving winch. We had skills. I got to a point like anybody and wanted to move up the ladder. You have dreams and aspirations. Tacoma had a lot of work and you didn't have to be an old timer to drive equipment. I applied to be a foreman and I didn't make it. One of the guys said to me, "Maybe next time. You could be the first foreman in the family." The guy didn't know my father-in-law was the first Black foreman in Portland.

I set my sights on driving crane. The training system wasn't contractual then. You had to get somebody to take you up there and teach you. Guys were trying to help me. It became a big thing trying to get training. Training wasn't something that always came about easily.

One thing I've learned in this union is that you don't put another person down because you don't want them to succeed. In the ILWU everybody gets a slice of the pie. Some people may only need the crumbs to survive. But when they come to get their slice and they want it, it's their slice. You don't get two slices. Equality—keeping the playing field level—is what makes it work. Some people don't understand that it's not all about them. They get blinded by the money and blame someone else for their problems. Fairness is what the ILWU is supposed to be about.

One of the things I am most proud of is being a part of the African American Longshore Coalition. When the number of Black workers on the waterfront started declining, we organized. We called Local 10—a majority of the Black members in the union are there. They came and helped us. We all came together from different ports. We had our own conferences in Seattle, Tacoma, Portland, and San Francisco. A lot of people were concerned because our numbers were shrinking. We weren't getting the training, and we were getting dispatched over. A lot of people were frustrated. Women were being harassed and being treated unfairly. We all joined together for a common cause to help everybody. I am proud that I was a part of that.



Darron Whitaker Local 26

I've been at Ryerson Steel for almost 20 years. Before that, I worked in the industry at a non-union steel company for about nine years. It was the best transition I've ever made in my life. Ryerson is a very good company, and the union helped it become what it is today.

The union is for people who want a voice on the job. It's hard when a company has all the authority over you and doesn't give you a voice. Especially with today's corporations, they are taking over everything. To have a voice in this corporate world today is everything.

I was a chief steward for seven years. I had an opportunity to interact with the guys, win their trust, and show them that if we stick together, we can have a voice. Throughout my years of being a chief steward, I gained a lot of good trust. It's easy once you show them that our union is our livelihood, and what it would be like if the union wasn't here.

You have to keep the union going and give everyone an understanding of the importance of our collective bargaining agreement (CBA), which



is our contract with the company. Every time new management comes in, they come with a big stick, ready to make changes. The older guys taught me that when new management comes here, just keep what we're doing on the floor. Keep that in order. We're the ones out in the heat; we're the ones in the cold; we're the ones putting the hours on the concrete. We're the ones doing the work and making this place run smoothly. Make them respect that. The way to get that respect is to come together as a union. Showing people their rights within our CBA builds confidence. They can read it for themselves, understand it, and that builds confidence within them. When you've got 50 workers with confidence, you have an army. You can talk with management with intelligence—understanding that yes, we respect you as managers, but we also have a voice.

I have a physical contract book that I can read and say, "Hey, no, this is out of order; this is not safe; you can't talk to us that way." I'm proud of that, and I'm proud to pass that on to the other members who are coming up. I really am.

I'm proud of fighting for diversity at Ryerson and proud of being part of Local 26. I'm glad that I've had a chance to experience being a part of this union and pass it on to others.

I know we are a part of a bigger union. I don't know the longshoremen; I just want to let them know that we really appreciate them. I know the rest of our union would have our back if we ever had a problem. We need unions.

Trent Willis ILWU Local 10 International Executive Board

I became a member of the ILWU Local 10 roughly 29 years ago as a third-generation longshore worker. My family's roots on the waterfront trace back to my great uncle, AC Young. He was a longshoreman from the ILA Local in Galveston, Texas. He and many other black descendants of slaves migrated to San Francisco in the 1940s during World War II to join this great West Coast Longshore Union that they heard advocated vigorously for working people of the world, equal human rights for all races, and African American membership as equals.



My family history with the ILWU has shaped almost everything that I am today. My great uncle was close friends with brother William "Bill" Chester, the first Black International officer of the ILWU. I remember being very young, listening in on their discussions at my uncle's dinner table and having no idea what they were talking about but somehow knowing it was important. The legacy left to us by Brother William "Bill" Chester, my uncle, father, and many other Black members throughout our history impressed me to the point that I wanted to follow in their footsteps. I wanted to be a part of this great institution for the same reasons they did. I wanted to make my own contributions as a proud African American Trade Unionist in the ILWU. I remember being with my father and meeting Harry Bridges at 9 years old. My dad explained to me how Harry was quoted as saying that if there came a time when there were just two jobs left on the waterfront, one would go to a Black man, the other to a white man. I also remember how proud I felt when I learned that the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr had been made an honorary member of Local 10 in 1967 before his assassination. And how Paul Robeson was an honorary member of our International. I am proud that during my time as President of Local 10, I had the honor of swearing Sister Angela Davis in 2021 as well as, Brother Danny Glover in 2022 into Local 10 as honorary members.

My father, Adgie Willis, Jr. 6345 (Buster Sr.), and Mother Barbara Jean Willis had the biggest influence on me. I was fortunate to have been brought up in a household where I was taught quite a bit about the union, social justice, and the Civil Rights movements before I joined Local 10 in my early 20s. That made it very easy for me to transition into the Local 10 social justice culture. I was also heavily influenced by the tragic murder of my older brother, Todd Leonard Willis (20 years old) by the police in 1983 when I was 17 years old. Brother Henry "Hammerin Hank" Graham mentored me in Labor Relations, Contract, and Grievance Procedures to become a Union Representative. Brother Leo Robinson was my main mentor who introduced me to the African American Longshore Coalition in 1999 along with brothers Lawrence Thibeaux and Clarence Thomas. This gave me the opportunity to work with

the AALC on organizing inside and outside of the union. I was exposed to so much solidarity while working on organizing efforts such as the Million Worker March, the reclaiming of May Day, the recognition of Juneteenth as a holiday, and the anti-war movements to name a few. It also gave me a platform to directly challenge racism, inequality, and police brutality. Brother Jack Heyman was also influential early on in my career by exposing me to the social justice struggles and Anti-War campaigns affecting the working class.

We can learn a lot from the past. I believe we're unfortunately living in times where it seems that the past is trying to repeat itself. The continued rise of fascism, racism, income inequality, genocide, division, war, and oppression are all familiar threats to the survival of the ILWU and the labor movement's efforts to organize workers throughout the world. We faced these same threats in 1934. This means the organizing strategies and mechanisms put in place by the ILWU to combat these threats back then need to be applied now. This is why it is important to recognize the contributions of African American union leaders during the inception of the ILWU in the 1930's and throughout our history. Contributions of African Americans who formed Black groups and organizations within the ILWU meant to keep us organized and educated against all forms of discrimination and intolerance. Groups such as the Frontiersmen/Black Caucus, the African American Leadership Conference, and most recent the African American Longshore Coalition (AALC). These internal organizations and others played significant roles in shaping our principles and strategies to combat the oppression of working people everywhere. Organizing directives adopted by our past Convention Delegates such as Resolutions 14 & 51 adopted at the First Annual Convention in 1938 and Resolution 52 adopted at the 7th Biennial Convention in 1947, outline the strategies that need to be applied today. As stated in the ILWU Story, the ILWU has also experienced internal racial and discrimination issues of its own in the past. Black organizations such as those previously mentioned also helped protect the union internally by making sure issues were immediately addressed and resolved. This significantly reduces the union's exposure to harmful outside litigation in the courts. I consider racism and greed to be the most destructive union-busting tools. Only the Employers and other enemies of labor benefit from it.

At the 2024 Convention, it was unfortunate that by majority, the Convention delegates voted against the resolution submitted by Local 10 to support the First ILWU African American Longshore Coalition, Three Day Diversity Conference in San Francisco on Juneteenth 2025. I believe the intent of the resolution was diluted during the debate and resulted in many not understanding that it was intended to reignite the badly needed internal and community organizing outlined in Convention Resolution 52 in 1947. However, I still left the convention feeling encouraged because that debate triggered a response from incoming President Bobby Olvera, Jr. and the Convention body to create the International Executive Board's (IEB) new Programs and Policies committee to address issues of diversity and inclusion which I am currently on as well as the IEB Education Committee. I am hopeful that the policies and strategies that come out of those committees guide the ILWU in the fight against the oppression of people in all forms. I encourage everyone to read Resolution 52 to educate yourself on its true meaning and directive.

The exploitation and oppression of the Black worker throughout the history of America is the prime example of how much damage corporate greed can do if left unchecked. This country's first longshore workers were brutally exploited Black slaves and indentured servants. Black people were both exploited workers as well as cargo. To educate oneself on the plight of the Black Worker past and present and the direct results of oppressive capitalistic policies meant to oppress them as a people will help all workers understand how important racial solidarity truly is to the labor movement. When fighting for equality for African Americans and other minority groups, you're automatically fighting against the oppression of the entire working class. The current divisive racial climate in this country coupled with a consistent decline of union membership is making it more difficult for the few surviving strong unions left to combat. Absolute unity of working people no matter what race, religion, and gender must be the prevailing organizing message to our membership.

Along with the mentors I previously mentioned, I want to specially recognize Brother Gabriel Prawl of Local 52 (AALC Co-Chairman), Sister Vanetta Hamlin of Local 10, Sister Brandi Good of Local 13, Brother Leith Jasinowski-Kahl Local 19 and all other AALC Members coastwise for all of their work supporting the AALC.

Finally, I would like to thank the *Dispatcher* for shining a light upon Black History Month and giving me this opportunity to express my views.

Trump's dismissal of NLRB member hamstrings Labor Board

One week after being sworn in as president, Donald Trump removed National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) Member Gwynne Wilcox and NLRB General Counsel Jennifer Abruzzo. Both were appointed by former President Joe Biden. Abruzzo's removal was expected and follows a precedent set by Biden's dismissal of former NLRB general counsel Peter Robb.

Wilcox described her dismissal as "unprecedented and illegal," and has challenged the firing in court. The courts upheld the president's authority to remove the NLRB's general counsel, but the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA) states that Board members can be removed "for neglect of duty or malfeasance in office, but for no other cause."

This statutory protection of NLRB members—and NLRB's administrative law judges—is one of the issues in a lawsuit (SpaceX v. NLRB) filed by Elon Musk's SpaceX that is challenging the constitutionality of the NLRB. The case is part of a broad assault on the NLRB by anti-union businesses including SpaceX, Starbucks, and Trader Joe's

that are seeking to have the Supreme Court declare the NLRB unconstitutional. Such a ruling would radically change the way labor disputes are handled to the detriment of workers. After the firing of Wilcox, the NLRB filed a letter with the Fifth Circuit dropping their opposition to SpaceX's arguments of the constitutionality of the NLRB.

Wilcox's dismissal leaves the Board without a quorum and limits the ability of the Board to do its work. The work of regional offices will continue as will the daily work of the agency such as holding union elections but without a quorum, the Board won't be able to compel parties to do things like bargain with employees.

Trump appointed William Cowen, Regional Director in the NLRB's Los Angeles Regional Office, as Acting General Counsel of the NLRB to replace Abruzzo.

As the agency's general counsel, Abruzzo was known as a fierce advocate for workers. She worked to remove barriers to organizing, including winning a board ruling that mandatory "captive audience" meetings where employers try to dissuade workers from unionizing infringe upon employees' rights under the NLRA.



Cartoon from the May 28, 1978 issue of the Dispatcher

Alcatraz Cruises workers ratify first contract

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from Supervisor Dean Preston who walked the picket lines with workers multiple times. The International Indian Treaty Council supported workers during their Thanksgiving Sunrise Gathering on Alcatraz Island.

"We are very pleased with this long-awaited and hard-won outcome," said IBU President Robert Estrada. "These



Captain Ian Tucker said he appreciated the stability, power, and voice that union brings.

workers have taken hold of their future, gaining strong wages, improved benefits, far better conditions, and a livable schedule as a reward for unwavering tenacity and ultimate solidarity. I couldn't be more proud of them. International Organizer, Evan McLaughlin and IBU Regional Director Marina Secchitano were an amazing leadership team to have at my side throughout. It was a long road."

Workers will receive wage increases of up to 35 percent over the life of the contract. The wage package achieves parity with the other union ferry workers working in the San Francisco Bay at Blue and Gold Fleet and Golden Gate Ferry.

"I've been on the negotiating committee for the past two years," said Brain Dobruck a captain who has been with Alcatraz Cruises for 10 years. "It was a lot of work to make this union a reality. I am glad we were able to win a pension for all of the workers and also win significant wage increases. It was a

hard road to get here but good things don't come easy."

In 2006, Hornblower was awarded the contract to operate the ferries to Alcatraz Island by the Bush Administration's National Park Service. The contract had previously been held by the union company, Blue and Gold Fleet. Starting in 1973 when Alcatraz first opened to tourists until 2006, the ferries taking tourists to Alcatraz had been staffed by union deckhands represented by the IBU. Two attempts to organize deckhands on the ferry service in 2007 and 2010 fell short. As a result of this organizing victory, the ferry service to Alcatraz Island will once again be staffed by union workers.

"It's important for us to have a seat at the table. Having a union enables us to get a little more control over our lives and schedules," said deckhand and negotiating committee member Jack Calvin. "Helping to organize this union has been one of the most rewarding things I have done in my life and I



Deckhand Jack Calvin said organizing a union at Alcatraz Cruises was one of the "most rewarding things I have done in my life."

am incredibly proud of what we have done here. My advice to anyone who wants to organize a union is to stay in the fight and don't be discouraged. You will have setbacks and it will be difficult but in the end, it's incredibly rewarding."

Unions push back Trump administration

continued from page 2

Arielle Pines worked at the Department of Veterans Affairs for 15 years, in that time she has had five probationary periods. Her husband is a senior enlisted airman in the Air Force. When their family moved from New Mexico to Virginia in November, she transferred between human resources offices at the VA, where she once again became a probationary employee until she was recently fired by Trump.

Arielle, whose father is a disabled veteran, said she believed deeply in the

mission of the VA and is devastated about losing a job that allowed her to give back to veterans.

"[My father] has permanent back pain. It taught me to give back to those who have given their all to us. It's something I have always wanted to do," she said in an interview with CNN.

Hassett Wohl, another federal worker, received a termination letter from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services saying she was being terminated because her performance was inadequate to justify

further employment, despite having received outstanding performance evaluations that put her in the top category of employees in the agency.

She worked for almost two years in public affairs for a small division called the Administration for Community Living which helps older adults and people with disabilities live independently instead of in nursing homes.

"I have a teenager who has Down syndrome. I was a caregiver for my parents who both had dementia. And so, the mission of this agency was sort

of a dream come true to work there," she said in an interview with WBUR radio. "I'm devastated because I loved working there. I went there specifically because I had such a deep personal connection to the work."

Unintended consequences

Another consequence of Trump's attack on the federal workforce is that there has been a surge of workers joining federal unions. Over 14,000 workers have joined the AFGE in the past five weeks—about as many as have joined in the previous 12 months.

NOTICE TO ALL ILWU-REPRESENTED WORKERS, ILWU MEMBERS, FINANCIAL CORE NON-MEMBERS AND NEW HIRES

This notice applies to all ILWU-represented workers, ILWU members, nonmembers and new hires working in the private sector in an ILWU bargaining unit, including members and individuals who happen at any time to become financial core non-members by any means, including by choice, suspension or expulsion from union membership in any local or division affiliated with the ILWU, for the one year period following the date of this notice or until such time covered by a later notice of similar kind.

The information contained herein applies to ILWU International per capita and, for those working within the Coast Longshore Division, also to the ILWU Coast Longshore Division Pro Rata fees or payments of any kind under the Coast Longshore Division collective bargaining agreements. This notice also applies to local dues and fees paid to any affiliated ILWU locals or divisions, except those affiliates who have chosen not to be covered by this notice because they have issued their own separate notice under their own separate policies and procedures. (Accordingly, this notice shall be superseded by any notice issued by any affiliated ILWU local or division with respect to its dues and fees.)

Please be advised that individuals working under a union security clause contained in a collective bargaining agreement, notwithstanding the specific provisions of such clause, are only required as a condition of employment under such clause to pay uniform dues and any required initiation fees and may, by writing to the ILWU International Secretary-Treasurer, resign or decline union membership and choose to become a financial core non-member at any time. Such "financial core non-members" are deemed to be in compliance with any union security clause in a collective bargaining agreement, regardless of any specific wording to the contrary, so long as they timely pay all regular and periodic financial core dues or fees properly charged by their bargaining representative as explained herein.

Please be advised, however, that financial core non-members deprive themselves of the valuable rights of union membership in the ILWU and their ILWU local or division. Financial core non-members do not have the right to vote, nominate for office, hold office, or be a candidate for office in the ILWU; nor may they participate in or even attend ILWU meetings or any functions of the union that are limited to union members. In addition, financial core non-members have no right to vote on dues increases or on contracts submitted to the membership for ratification. These rights and privileges of union membership are accorded only to union members in good standing.

Nevertheless, financial core non-members are still legally required under a valid union security clause to pay their union for the costs related to collective bargaining, contract administration, grievance adjustment, and other activities and expenses reasonably related to the effectuation of the union's representational duties (hereinafter collectively called "chargeable activities"). However, union expenditures for non-representational activities such as political activities and government lobbying (hereinafter collectively called "nonchargeable activities") - activities which most workers know help build a better climate for us all in bargaining with employers and in securing fundamental worker rights - may not be charged to financial core non-members who file timely objections pursuant to this Notice.

For calendar year 2023 (which is the most recent audited year), the financial review has confirmed that no more than 5.93% of all of ILWU International's expenditures were for nonchargeable activities.

With respect to ILWU locals and divisions that are outside the ILWU Coast Longshore Division, while they may have different percentages of non-chargeable expenditures, financial reviews and practical experience confirm that their nonchargeable percentage is significantly lower than that for the ILWU International. Nevertheless, those ILWU locals and divisions outside the ILWU Coast Longshore Division who are covered by this notice will reduce or rebate in advance their local dues and fees as to financial core non-union objectors in the amount of 5.93% based on the nonchargeable percentage stated above for the ILWU International, including the International per capita attributed to them, for the applicable collection period herein or until such time as such local issues a separate notice. In cases of objections, such locals and divisions covered by this notice will be required to provide legally sufficient financial proof to confirm that their nonchargeable percentage is no greater than that stated for the International.

With respect to individuals working within the ILWU Coast Longshore Division, please note that for calendar year 2023 (which is the most recent audited year), financial review has confirmed that no more than 6.44% of all ILWU Coast Longshore Division expenditures were for nonchargeable activities. Please further note that while each ILWU local within the ILWU Coast Longshore Division may have different percentages of nonchargeable expenditures, financial reviews and practical experience confirm that the nonchargeable percentage of expenditures for such ILWU locals is significantly lower than that for the ILWU Coast Longshore Division. Nevertheless, those ILWU locals within the Coast Longshore Division who are covered by this notice will reduce or rebate in advance their local dues and fees as to financial core non-union objectors in the amount of 6.44% of their local dues less the International per capita based on the nonchargeable percentage stated above for the ILWU Coast Longshore Division and will also reduce or rebate in advance for such objectors 5.93% of the International per capita attributed to them, based on the International's 5.93% nonchargeable expense figure, for the applicable collection period herein or until such time as such local issues a separate notice. In cases of objections, such Coast Longshore Division locals covered by this notice will be required to provide legally sufficient financial proof to confirm that their nonchargeable percentage is no greater than that stated for the ILWU Coast Longshore Division.

The ILWU International Executive Board and the ILWU Coast Longshore Division have adopted the following Procedures on Financial Core Non-Members Objecting to Nonchargeable Expenditures (hereinafter called the "Procedures"). Under the Procedures, a financial core non-member of any affiliated ILWU local and division has the right within a specified 30 day period of time to object to paying for the nonchargeable activities and expenses' portion of his or her local dues or fees paid to his/her ILWU local, the per capita fee, which the local pays to the ILWU International, as well as any Coast pro rata fees paid to the ILWU Coast Longshore Division. In the event a financial core non-member employed outside the ILWU Coast Longshore Division properly makes such objection, they shall receive either the appropriate monthly reduction or an advance rebate of a portion of local dues or local fees, and per capita fees equal to the ILWU International's nonchargeable percentage of 5.93% stated above. In the event a financial core non-member working within the ILWU Coast Longshore Division properly makes such objection, they shall receive either the appropriate monthly reduction or an advance rebate of a portion of local dues or local fees and of the Coast pro rata fees equal to the ILWU Coast Longshore Division's nonchargeable percentage of 6.44% stated above. In addition, such individual will also receive a reduction or an advance rebate of 5.93% of the per capita that is paid to the ILWU International.

Under the Procedures, an objection by a financial core non-member must be made in writing and post-marked within 30 days from the date of this notice or, alternatively, the date of becoming a new hire or becoming a financial core non-member under an ILWU union security clause and receipt of this notice, whichever is later, and addressed to the ILWU International Secretary-Treasurer, 1188 Franklin Street, 4th Floor, San Francisco, CA 94109. To be valid, the written objection must specify the objector's name, address, the name of his or her employer, and the name of the local union or division which represents the objector. A written objection must be timely in order to be valid. Without waiving the 30-day filing period with respect to other notices of this type, please be advised that under this notice only, objections filed by current financial core non-members will be deemed timely if post-marked on or before April 14, 2025. Individuals who after the date of this notice become new hires or financial core non-members may file an objection within 30 days of the date they become a new hire or financial core non-member or the date they receive this notice, whichever is later.

Unless changed by a later notice, those financial core non-members and new hires who file timely objections will not be charged from the date they file a timely objection through December 31, 2025 for expenditures related to nonchargeable activities based on the applicable percentages noted above and also will be provided detailed, independently verified financial information concerning the breakdown between chargeable and nonchargeable expenditures of the ILWU International, the ILWU Coast Longshore Division (if the objector works within the Coast Longshore Division), and of their ILWU local. Objectors will also be given an opportunity to file, within 30 days of receipt of such financial information, a challenge to the amount and calculation of any such nonchargeable expenditures and percentages, as well as an opportunity to have such a challenge resolved, if not voluntarily settled, through expeditious arbitration before a neutral arbitrator selected by the American Arbitration Association (AAA) in proceedings conducted under AAA Rules applicable to objections to agency fees. Please also note that the amount or portion of financial core fees following the filing of any objection and challenge as well as the amount reasonably in dispute pursuant to any challenge will be kept in an interest bearing escrow account pending resolution of such challenge. Objectors who file a timely challenge to the amounts or calculations of fees will receive the amount that may be determined by the Arbitrator to be owed them, if any, plus accrued interest, pursuant to these Procedures.

It is important to know that the vast majority of ILWU represented workers believe that the little extra in dues is quite a bargain for maintaining union membership and enjoying all the valuable benefits of full participation in the governing of the ILWU, and the negotiation of working conditions. For a few cents more each week, union members enjoy all the benefits of membership in the ILWU. We sincerely believe that after careful consideration, new hires and financial core non-members will agree that becoming and remaining a union member makes the most financial sense. If you are not a union member already but are eligible for membership under your Local's constitution and rules, please contact your ILWU local to join the ILWU.

This notice may be superseded or amended by later notices as issued by the ILWU, the Coast Longshore Division, or affiliated locals and divisions of the ILWU. (rev. February 2025)



Politics in action: Local 13 member Vivian Malauulu was sworn in at the Long Beach City College Board of Trustees on December 18, 2024, while her daughter, Thessa, holds the family Bible. Malauulu represents Area 2 of the LBCC District and serves as the Board President. She was first elected to the LBCC Board in 2016. This is her third term on the Board.

LETTERS TO THE DISPATCHER

Dear Editor,

I wanted to share some memories of Don Liddle whose obituary appeared in the January 2025 issue of the Dispatcher.

I met Don Liddle in 1979. I was a ticket agent at Golden Gate Ferry. Our contract was up and I wanted to get involved. There was this atmosphere of hope and change around him. We just had a leadership change in the union and my colleagues did not like the previous officers.

I remember the first time I talked to him thinking how great he was welcoming me into the IBU and encouraging me to get involved. I got on the negotiating committee and loved every minute of it. We ended up on strike for 104 days because Golden Gate Ferry wanted split shifts and the IBU was not going give it to them. Don's leadership and innovation to come up with a solution that the member would accept and that's how he was to all the conflict he faced. He was innovative and he was a "can-do, will-do" guy, as my friend and former member, Molly Hassler, pointed out. He did not shy away from a challenge, whether it was from the employer or our own members, he was a straight shooter.

He was driven by the plight of the working man, and he never forgot it. He led us to safety in the ILWU after the SIU cannibalized 200 of our jobs in LA. He created our National pension, one of the best pensions around and he created our national healthcare plan from scratch because our smaller plans were going bankrupt.

He rescued ILWU Local 37 from disaster bringing them into the IBU and created a health plan for the Alaska longshore and more. We are the union we are today because of Don. He was truly my hero. He was a taskmaster. He didn't suffer fools, but he had a great sense of humor and a love of life!

Marina Secchitano

Northern California Regional Director, Inlandboatmen's Union of the Pacific

Send your letters to the editor to: *The Dispatcher*, 1188 Franklin St., San Francisco, CA 94109-6800 or email to editor@ilwu.org

TRANSITIONS

NEW PENSIONERS:

Local 8: Leal A. Sundet; **Local 10:** Mark A. Foreman; Lehandy Pickett; **Local 13:** Jose E. Aguilar; Kenneth T. Alva; Adrienne D. Bowman; John D. Crittle; Mary Escobar; John Garcia; Joseph M. Janisse; Steven D. Lawrence; Jadran Pletkovic; Tedd F. Thangen; Roger R. Working; **Local 19:** Michael D. Binford; Daniel R. Kuntz; **Local 23:** Kristie J. Burr; Marian I. Kennedy; **Local 26:** Warren Rice, Jr.; **Local 29:** Marci L. Castillo; Denise Vinole; **Local 46:** Jose F. Del Toro; **Local 54:** Gary S. Burchard; **Local 63:** Felicia E. Smith; **Local 63 OCU:** Teresa Kuhia; Jacqueline Sunara; Yolanda Bravo; Rosa Carrillo; Jihshyan Chu; Gina Degaetano; Angelica Escarciga; Moonika Lago; Tanya Petrie; Felix Rodriguez; Adriana Romero; Noel Serrano; Micheal Whitlock; **Local 91:** Joseph W. Elder; George H. Ozene; **Local 98:** John M. Haley; Alan Lee Smith;

DECEASED ACTIVE MEMBERS:

Local 4: Corey J. Schwehr; **Local 10:** Charles Lynch; **Local 13:** Richard H. Underwood; Reynold R. Custodio; Michael R. Morash; **Local 19:** Mike Gowdy; **Local 23:** Brandie A. Davidson; **Local 29:** Raymond S. Esquivel;

DECEASED PENSIONERS:

Local 4: Leonard Knopp; **Local 10:** Ernest Evans; George E. Hunter; Ralph J. Quintana; Richard Tomassini; **Local 12:** Jerry Daughtery; **Local 13:** James M. Bixler; Michele A. Cahill; Joseph Calise; Felix Cardenas; Dale A. Mc Connachie; Stanton R. Molton; Roger Scocchio; Jerry Skillman; **Local 19:** William L. Brown; **Local 21:** Frank J Reynolds; **Local 23:** Garry L. Mc Neill; **Local 63:** Walter Chong; Frank S. Gladich; **Local 91:** Joaquin Costa; **Local 94:** Tanya D. Brown;

DECEASED SURVIVORS:

Local 10: Mary L. Ball; Elsie C. Goncalves; Josephine Henderson; Revell Porter; Nair Valigni; **Local 12:** Doris J Willis; **Local 13:** Michele A. Cahill; Joann Callas; Mariann Dulcich; Monica Fernandez; Yong Hiser; Judith Leon; Nancy L. Mason; Brenda McGuire; Mary A. Vaona; **Local 19:** Marine A. Beattie; **Local 23:** Patricia Lewis; **Local 50:** Vera J. Haglund; Wilma Hayne; **Local 52:** Wilma Black; **Local 63:** Lola Bonfield; Cristina B. Smith; **Local 94:** Rachel Meraz; Tanya D. Brown;

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ILWU LONGSHORE DIVISION

ADRP—Southern California
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Rancho Palos Verdes, CA 90275
(310) 547-9966

ADRP—Oregon
Brian Harvey
5201 SW Westgate Dr. #207
Portland, OR 97221
(503) 231-4882

ADRP—Northern California
Hunny Powell
HPowell@benefitplans.org
400 North Point
San Francisco, CA 94133
(415) 776-8363

ADRP—Washington
Donnie Schwendeman
3600 Port of Tacoma Rd. #503
Tacoma, WA 98424
(253) 922-8913

ILWU WAREHOUSE DIVISION

DARE—Northern California
Teamsters Assistance Program
300 Pendleton Way
Oakland, CA 94621
(510) 562-3600

ILWU CANADA

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