

Longshoremen - Stop Loading Scab Boron Cargo! For Solidarity Actions to Defend ILWU Miners!

May 14, 2010

ILWU Local 30 miners have been locked out for over 100 days by global mining giant Rio Tinto. We should be supporting them by refusing to handle scab borax containers. Our longshore union, has a long history of having led important working class struggles going back to the Big Strike of 1934. But, the present International Officers – President Bob McEllrath, Vice President Ray Familathe and Secretary-Treasurer Willie Adams and Local 30 President Dave Liebengood – are reversing that legacy. We can no longer remain silent. They are knowingly allowing thousands of scab containers stuffed by scabs in Boron, California to be loaded onto ships in the port of Los Angeles! Furthermore, these officials are opposing Local 30 members from defending their jobs by picketing in LA, as we did in 2002 during our lockout by PMA. They are dragging our union banner, “An injury to one is an injury to all,” through the mud. And they are keeping ILWU members in the dark by not mentioning a word of this betrayal in the pages of *The Dispatcher*. But it’s no secret in the labor movement.

#4 of “The Ten Guiding Principles of the ILWU” states: “To help any worker in distress must be a daily guide in the life of every trade union and its individual members. Labor solidarity means just that. Unions have to accept the fact that the solidarity of labor stands above all else, including even the so-called sanctity of the contract.” It is our own ILWU Local 30 that’s locked out. Even if it were another union or even non-union port truckers every workers’ struggle against employers must be supported!

At the General Assembly of the International Dockworkers Council held in Charleston, South Carolina in February, ILWU had an opportunity to call for international labor solidarity. But ILWU President McEllrath didn’t even mention the Rio Tinto lockout of ILWU miners in his West Coast report. In Local 10’s resolution he deleted any reference to picketing and refusing to handle scab cargo in support of the Boron miners. During the April Longshore Caucus, three major ports-Portland, San Francisco and Seattle had motions or resolutions backing the miners, but when it came time for resolutions for the Boron miners only Portland Local 8 stood firm. They and their solidarity resolution to not handle scab cargo were attacked by the Titled Officers and went down to a resounding and embarrassing defeat. The officers took it as a sharp criticism of their bankrupt public relations campaign to appeal to Rio Tinto’s shareholders’ “morality” and to rally at the British Consulate (The mining company is British owned). This failed strategy hasn’t hit Rio Tinto in the pocketbook like job actions to show union power. If there’s no good faith bargaining, how can you expect a decent contract? ***Rio Tinto’s demand for their “Matrix System” would eliminate union seniority without which there is no union!***

We, the undersigned, have initiated, organized, participated in or supported many of the ILWU solidarity actions of the last 32 years. We call on the International Officers to stop turning a blind eye to loading scab cargo in LA and to stop opposing the right of Local 30 members to picket. Let the ILWU rank and file be free to show solidarity with our locked out brothers and sisters.

Leo Robinson #6461 (Local 10 retired), Howard Keylor #20447 (Local 10 retired), Larry Wright #8534 (Local 10 & 91 retired), Anthony Leviege #9576 (Local 10), Jack Heyman #8780 (Local 10), Richard Washington #9402 (Local 10), Clarence Thomas #8718 (Local 10), Jack Mulcahy #82013 (Local 8), Jerry Lawrence #81878 (Local 8), Debby Stringfellow #82031 (Local 8), Robert Irminger (San Francisco IBU), Bob Gregg (San Francisco IBU), Gabriel Prawl #57304 (Local 19), Mark Downs #55118 (Local 19 retired), Steve Ongerth (SF IBU)

ILWU LONGSHORE SOLIDARITY ACTIONS OF LAST 32 YEARS

1978- Local 10's refusal to load bombs to the military dictatorship in Chile
1984- Local 10's anti-apartheid action against a ship from South Africa
1987- IBU strike and mass picket that stopped scabbing in Redwood City
1996-98- ILWU and Local 10's solidarity actions for the Liverpool dockers
1999- Coastwide stopwork meetings/action in defense of Mumia Abu-Jamal
1999- Seattle anti-WTO protests with unions, environmentalists, and youth
2000-01 ILWU's solidarity actions for the Charleston 5 longshore campaign
2002- Organized pickets, rallies and marches to protest PMA lockout
2004- Organized the Million Worker March on Washington
2008- Initiated ILWU's May Day anti-war shutdown of all West Coast ports

Solidarity action is the only way to win this one!

While the Longshore Caucus was discussing support for locked out Local 30, scab containers were being loaded in LA! This must stop! According to locked out ILWU miners, scabs have stuffed thousands of containers which have been hauled by truck to terminals in Los Angeles and Long Beach. Borax miners have been writing the numbers of the scab containers and passing on this information to longshore officials. Below is a current list of scab containers. Go to the website www.track-trace.com, hit "container" on the top of the page, then put in a container number from below. It gives you the terminal and the ship to be loaded. Go to <http://marinetraffic.com/ais/> for ship location. For longshore gangs dispatched go to <http://www.pmanet.org/>, then hit "Dispatch Summaries". PMA and Rio Tinto have this information and it should be available to ILWU longshore members.

THESE SCAB CONTAINERS WERE NOTED BY A BORON MINER ON GATE DUTY ON 5/11/10, FROM 12:30PM THRU 5:30PM, OUTBOUND FROM U.S. BORAX: 42 CONTAINERS IN 5 HOURS.

PONU0140672	OOLU7733584	CLHU4539883	SUDU1871443
TRLU6473163	HJCU4094124	MSKU4436174	HJCU4379410
OOLU1654328	SUDU1866719	HJCU4372478	POCU0519960
HJCU7635433	HJCU4948964	CMAU9005250	ECMU4548767
SUDU1890910	OOCL1562709	MSKU5626409	CIXU7236590
HJCU2070669	SUDU1991140	MSKU4000257	HJCU8496944
MSKU4050704	OOLU7731489	OOLU7786769	POCU0475179
MSKU3056797	MSKU5187815	MSKU2357672	HJCU2085680
INBU5132729	MSKU5508345	MSKU3197645	APZU4432444
OOLU7494617	MSKU5290593	HJCU4712227	SEAU2217175
OOLU7731489	MSKU3274443		

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