



VOICE OF THE ILWU

HONOLULU HAWAII
LOCAL 142

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The VOICE of the ILWU—Published by Local 142, International Longshore & Warehouse Union

January 2006

Are You a New Member? Then this is for you . . .

Are you a new employee, hired within the last twelve months?

If so, this issue of the Voice of the ILWU was prepared especially for you. As a union member, you are entitled to many rights and benefits and some responsibilities. This issue will help get you started with the essential information you need as a member of the ILWU. (Even longtime members may find the information useful.)

First of all, the Voice of the ILWU is the official newspaper of the ILWU Local 142. You are receiving the newspaper because you are now a member of the ILWU. Your membership in the ILWU started when you were hired into your job. At the time you were hired, you signed a form which allows for the automatic payment of union dues by payroll deduction. This form also serves as an application for membership in the union.

—more on pages 2, 3, 6 and 7



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Call your Division Office for more information

Next Local Executive Board Meeting scheduled for March 16-17, 2006 • 10:00 am • 451 Atkinson Drive, Honolulu

IMPORTANT INFORMATION CONCERNING YOUR OPPORTUNITY TO BECOME ACTIVE MEMBERS OF INTERNATIONAL LONGSHORE AND WAREHOUSE UNION, LOCAL 142, AFL-CIO, AND YOUR RIGHTS UNDER LAW

As a result of your current employment, you are eligible for membership in the International Longshore and Warehouse Union, Local 142, AFL-CIO. Union membership is a right and privilege to be proud of.

As an active member of ILWU Local 142 you have the right to participate in the affairs of the Union. Your participation includes involvement in the formulation of proposals for contract negotiations, voting on proposed changes to your collective bargaining agreement, attending and participating in regular and special Union meetings, Union elections, and other affairs of the Union as provided in the ILWU Local 142 Constitution and By-laws.

We believe that most people would want to become active members of the ILWU Local 142, and desire to fully participate in the affairs of their Union. Strong, active and informed members are essential to the strength of your Union. Your participation will benefit both you and your co-workers by helping the Union gain improved wages, benefits and working conditions.

The right, by law, to belong to the Union and to participate in its affairs is a very important right. Currently, by law, you also have the right to refrain from becoming an active member of the Union and you may elect to satisfy the requirements of a contractual union security provision by paying monthly dues and fees to the Union which reflect the representational expenditures of the ILWU Local 142. Please be advised: That 2.69% of funds were spent in our most recent accounting year (2005) for nonrepresentational activities; that nonmembers can object to having their union security payments spent on such activities; that those who object will be charged only for representational activities; and that if a nonmember objects, the Union will provide detailed information concerning the breakdown between representational and nonrepresentational expenditures. Any objections by a nonmember shall be filed within 30 days and sent to ILWU Local 142 at 451 Atkinson Drive, Honolulu, Hawaii 96814.

Please be advised that nonmember status constitutes a full waiver of the rights and benefits of ILWU Local 142 membership. More specifically, this means you would not be allowed to vote on contract modifications or new contracts; would be ineligible to hold Union office or participate in Union elections; and all other rights, privileges and benefits established for and provided for ILWU Local 142 members by its Constitution and By-laws.

We are confident that after considering your options, you will conclude that the right to participate in the decision making process of your Union is of vital importance to you, your family, and your co-workers, and you will complete and transmit your application for membership in ILWU Local 142. Thank you.

A Guide to the ILWU: what every member should know

Welcome to the ILWU!

As a member of ILWU Local 142, you are part of a long and proud tradition where workers join or form organizations for their mutual benefit and to promote fairness and justice on the job. These organizations are called labor unions, trade unions, or just unions.

In Hawaii, one out of every four workers are members of a labor union. The most common kind of union is based on the job the worker does. For example, there are unions of airline pilots, firefighters, bricklayers, teachers, and nurses, and only workers who do those jobs are members of those unions. Another kind of union is

based on an entire industry—such as hotel workers, government employees, or postal workers. A third kind of union, like the ILWU, organizes and includes workers from many different industries. This kind of unionism brings the highest level of unity to workers.

There are 22,000 ILWU members on all major islands in Hawaii, which makes the ILWU one of the largest unions in Hawaii. ILWU members work in every major industry including: tourism, longshore, sugar, pineapple, manufacturing,

transportation, and hospitals. ILWU members hold diverse jobs—they include mechanics, drivers, cooks, hotel housekeepers, store cashiers, computer clerks, hospital technicians, and more. ♦



Organization for mutual benefit

A third and very important benefit of union membership goes far beyond your job. You are now a member of a workers' organization—dedicated to defend your interests as a worker and to promote the general welfare of you and your family.

This is spelled out in the ILWU Declaration of Principles:

We, the men and women working under the jurisdiction of ILWU Local 142 Hawaii, in order to build and maintain a strong local organization and provide for the defense of our common interests, promote the general welfare of our members, their families and other wage earners in the community, and uphold the rights and dignity of our labor and its organized expression, have determined that we shall be guided by the following principles . . .

One of the most important way the union defends our interests is through Union Political Action. The legal system is extremely important to working people. Laws can be passed to give additional rights and protection to workers or, just as easily, take away workers' rights and protections. The story on page 3, "What Is At Will Employment?" clearly shows how laws affect your job security.

In our country, the U.S. Congress and our State Legislature

have the power to make new laws and change old laws. Every year in Hawaii, our State Legislature considers thousands of bills that propose changes in our laws—some of these proposals benefit workers and some take away rights and benefits. For this reason, the ILWU and other unions must be actively involved in the legislative process, monitoring all of the bills, stopping legislation that would hurt working families, and urging legislators to pass legislation that benefit workers.

The success or failure of union political action depends on numbers—it takes a majority of legislators to pass a piece of legislation. This is why the ILWU and other unions endorse certain candidates over others during the elections. In the last election in 2002, the ILWU Political Action Committee interviewed dozens of candidates and questioned them on issues important to workers.

Union members were then urged to vote for only those candidates who would support working families. ♦

“Every year in Hawaii, our State Legislature considers thousands of bills that propose changes in our laws—some of these proposals benefit workers and some take away rights and benefits.”



ILWU members like the Foodland statewide negotiating committee pictured above join together to negotiate collective bargaining agreements that give them fair pay, benefits, and protection on the job.

Changed your address? Let us know!

Did you know members have a duty to keep us informed of your latest home address?

The US Post Office will only forward mail for 60 days, so send us a card to let us know you moved. We need your name, old address, and new address. Send the card to: Mailroom, ILWU, 451 Atkinson Drive, Honolulu HI 96814

A Guide to the ILWU: what every member should know

Dignity and Respect in Unions

Believe it or not, most workers organize into unions because of bad working conditions and poor treatment by management and not for higher wages and benefits. When workers are organized into unions, they gain the power to change their working conditions and demand respect and fair treatment from management.

With a union, workers have job security and can no longer be fired, transferred, or demoted at the whim of their bosses. In the United States, workers are hired “at-will.” This is a term which means workers are not slaves and can quit their job at their choice—or at their will. **It also means an employer can fire a worker for any or no reason**—or at the employer’s will. U.S. and Hawaii law only protects a worker from being fired for an illegal reason—such as discrimination by race, sex, age, religion, sexual orientation, ancestry, disability, marital status, or arrest and court record. However, unionized workers have a **written contract which gives them additional protection** against unjust or unfair firing or treatment on their job.

With a union, workers gain the power to meet with management on equal terms and bargain collectively to improve their wages and benefits. Union workers no longer have to go to their boss as individuals and beg for an increase in wages. With a union, workers have a voice on the job because management is required to negotiate with them on any changes in the terms and conditions of employment. With no union, management can take back benefits and change things on the job at anytime with no notice and no need to consult with workers.

Unions give workers dignity, respect, and a voice on the job. Many workers consider these to be the most valuable benefit of having a union. ♦

Get involved in your union!

Know your rights. Read and understand your rights and benefits under the union contract and the ILWU Constitution. You can get copies from your union representative. **Take an active part in shaping your working life.** Get to know your union stewards and get involved with union activities. The union is only as strong as its members.

Come to union meetings. You’ll learn about your rights as a working person. It’s an educa-

tion that will make you a better person and your employment at your company more rewarding and enjoyable. Your participation in the union is always welcome and you will be glad you got involved. Meeting notices are posted on the union bulletin board, along with other important announcements. **Make it a practice to regularly read the notices on the union bulletin board.** ♦

“What does labor want? We want more schoolhouses and less jails; more books and less arsenals; more learning and less vice; more leisure and less greed; more justice and less revenge; in fact, more of the opportunities to cultivate our better natures.”

*Samuel Gompers
American labor leader
1850-1924*



You have rights on the job

As a member of a union, you have rights on the job. With the ILWU you have the combined strength and experience of the union on your side.

You have the right to have a union steward or business agent help you with any problem on the job. You have the right to ask for a union representative if the company calls you into a meeting which may lead to disciplinary action.

You put yourself at a disadvantage when you try to settle a problem by yourself, or when you fail to let your union know of problems you and your fellow workers have.

If you have a question or problem on the job, the first thing you should do is talk to your on-the-job union steward.

Your company is called a “unit” within the ILWU structure. Each unit has its own elected officers and union stewards, who serve as volunteers. They get no special treatment or privileges from the company or from the union, but they are ready to help you and your fellow workers. ♦



Involved ILWU members don’t just work together on contracts, grievances and union political action—they socialize and enjoy union-sponsored activities. These Oahu Division longshore members and family are enjoying Unit 4201’s Labor Day celebration. (L-r) Doreen Wong, Royipo Lopez (Hawaii Stevedores), Leonard Grace (McCabe, Hamilton & Renny), Judy Grace, Tiarae Kelly, and Brandon Kelly (MHR).

Need a copy of your contract? Contact your Business Agent.

Hilo: (808) 935-3727 • Waimea: (808) 885-6136
Kona: (808) 329-2070 • Lihue: (808) 245-3374
Wailuku: (808) 244-9191 • Honolulu: (808) 949-4161



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ILWU History: Jack Hall

When Jack Hall died, flags were flown at half-staff throughout Hawaii, longshoremen closed the ports of San Francisco, Los Angeles and San Diego for 24 hours, and thousands of other workers in Hawaii and along the west coast of the United States and Canada also stopped work to show their respect. For, though largely unheralded now, Jack Hall was one of America's greatest labor leaders.

He was director of organization for the International Longshore and Warehouse Union and one of its two vice presidents when a stroke killed him in 1971 at the age of 55 in San Francisco. But it was not what he had done during the previous 18 months in the drafty, run-down headquarters presided over by the legendary Harry Bridges that made Hall extraordinary.

Rather, it was what he had done before that in Hawaii where he served for more than a quarter-century as the ILWU's regional director — the key leader in bringing industrial democracy to Hawaii, in transforming Hawaii from virtually a feudalistic territory controlled by a few huge financial interests into a modern pluralistic state in which workers and their unions have a major voice.

"I don't think there has been any single individual in the last 30 years who has made a more substantial contribution to our political, social and economic life," then-Gov. John Burns of Hawaii said on learning of Hall's death. He credited Hall "for the full flowering of democracy in our islands."

Hall's career closely paralleled the development of U.S. unions during his lifetime. Like the unions, Hall started out during the Great Depression of the 1930s as a powerless outsider, but ended up just three decades later as a powerful member of the Establishment. He became an insider who could draw praise, not only from union members and working people generally, but also from some of the same employers who once attacked him as a "communist agitator," while at the same time arousing the suspicions of young people and others who felt he might have moved too close to his former enemies.

Landing in Hawaii

Hall, the son of a miner, had signed on as a merchant seaman — the only job he could find — immediately after graduating from a Southern California high school in 1932. He landed in Hawaii four years later, a tall, skinny 22-year-old whose glimpses of incredible poverty in the Far East had sickened and angered him and, he later recalled, "determined which side of the fence I was on." Striking longshoremen at Port Allen had asked the Sailors Union for help, and the union sent Hall.

He applied lessons he had learned while taking part in the waterfront strike led three years earlier in San Francisco by Bridges, quickly emerging as a leader in getting the Hawaiian longshoremen at least some measure of the union recognition that had been won in San Francisco and other West Coast ports in 1934. He was a principal leader, too, in the later attempts by the ILWU to organize the sugar and pineapple plantations that dominated Hawaii's economy.

The odds were heavily against the organizers. Virtually all phases of life in what was then the Territory of Hawaii were controlled by five extremely powerful holding companies, popularly known as "the Big Five," that owned most of the territory's arable land. As the ILWU's official history notes, they "followed policies designed to keep labor as powerless - economically and politically - as the serfs on medieval feudal baronies."

Divide and rule

Workers, carefully segregated by racial and ethnic groups, lived in company housing on the big sugar and pineapple plantations where they worked, bought their food and

clothing in company stores there, and had little choice but to do exactly what the boss told them to do, at pay of less than 50 cents an hour.

The tightly unified employers crushed organizing efforts by pitting worker against worker. They purposely employed workers of as many different nationalities as possible on each plantation — Japanese, Filipinos, Chinese, Portuguese, Spanish, Puerto Rican and others — and, the ILWU said, "by unequal treatment, discriminatory pay scales, separate housing areas and subtle propaganda they stimulated racial suspicion." Thus when workers "were finally forced by their misery to organize into unions, they made the tragic mistake of following racial lines."

The strike was the only weapon available to the workers. But when workers of a particular nationality struck to demand union rights, they'd be replaced immediately with workers of another nationality.

Hall talked with the workers endlessly about the obvious need to bring them together in a single union, often in meetings that were held in secret, outside the closely guarded plantations. He stressed the basic message of working class solidarity, telling the workers over and over that they could not achieve the unified strength necessary to combat exploitation by employers if they continued to remain apart because of racial and ethnic differences.

"Know your class," Hall told them, "and be loyal to it."

Racial unity

Hall proved his case in a strike by Filipino longshoremen at the port of Ahukoni in 1938. The ships the Filipinos normally loaded and unloaded were diverted to Port Allen, where most of the longshoremen were Japanese, on the assumption that the Japanese would work on the ships. But they didn't. They became the first racial group in Hawaii to support strikers of another race.

It was a very important start, but only a start. Most workers remained skeptical. It was no great chore to persuade workers who did onerous hand labor for so little pay that they were being mistreated, but convincing them to trust the organizers who insisted that they cross the racial and ethnic lines that had long divided them was extremely difficult. But Hall, a tough, plainspoken, hard-drinking man who made his rounds of the plantations in an ancient beat-up sedan, eventually won them over with his simple and direct approach and an obvious honesty that was to have as great an impression on employers and politicians in later years.

Even one of Hall's chief enemies in those days, the Honolulu Advertiser, acknowledged after his death, "There was no sham or pretense in him. He was absolutely honest. He never lied. He never slanted things. He never shaded the truth."

Jack Hall

by Dick

January 2, Jack Wayne Hall D
many ILWU contracts to hono
Director and later ILWU Intern
died on Jan. 2, 1971. Other IL
28, Hall's birthday, as a paid h
was 55 years old when he die



Regional Director Jack Hall chats with rank-and-file members of Sugar (HC&S) Unit 30 in Puunene just before his death at Baldwin Park on February 7, 1963. (L-r) R. Deluiz, and Hall.

The ILWU won its first victory in 1938 - a union contract at a pineapple plantation on Kauai. But the crucial breakthrough came later that year when the ILWU formed a political organization, the Kauai Progressive League, to elect a pro-labor candidate to the Territorial Senate against an incumbent who also happened to manage a sugar plantation.

Victories in other elections followed, and by 1944 the League became so strong Hall was able to write and lobby through the Legislature a "Little Wagner Act." It granted Hawaii's farmworkers the formal rights to unionization that are guaranteed most non-agricultural workers under the federal Wagner Act but still denied most farmworkers outside the islands.

Organizing

The ILWU followed the victory with a massive organizing drive, but was tested almost immediately, in 1946, when it waged a 79-day strike to demand union contracts from sugar plantation owners. Similar showdowns came in 1947 for pineapple workers and in 1949 for



A very young Jack Hall (left) and ILWU leaders meet in Honolulu, c. 1940-41.

ILWU History: Jack Hall

all Day

Meister

Day, is a paid holiday under the former Hawaii Regional Union contracts recognize Feb. 25 as a holiday. Hall, born in 1915, died in 1981.



Hand-file members of Hawaiian Commercial & Sugar Company during a sugar negotiations stopwork meeting held on February 25, 1953. From left: Raymond Pacheco, J. Vierra, C. Vargas, Tony

longshoremen. The struggle was often brutal. Several organizers were beaten by thugs presumably hired by employer interests, and there was an attempt on Hall's life. But the ILWU came through it all intact and strengthened.

The union's political muscles also grew — so much so that, in 1946, Hall and his colleagues led an election campaign that broke 50 consecutive years of Republican control in Hawaii's legislature.

The plantation owners and their Republican allies struck back by labeling Hall and other ILWU leaders as subversive radicals. The Federal Government backed them by attempting to convict Hall of conspiring with six officers of the tiny Hawaiian Communist Party to violate the Smith Act by advocating, in that familiar phrase of the McCarthyite 1950s, "the overthrow of the government by force and violence."

Hall refused to answer specific questions about Communist Party membership, spoke proudly of his youthful radicalism, discussed his later belief that "socialism isn't practical" - and was found guilty

along with the six others in 1953, fined \$5,000 and sentenced to five years' imprisonment, the maximum penalty under the law. Hall remained free while ILWU members conducted an intensive — and expensive — campaign to overturn the conviction. Finally, five years later, the U.S. Supreme Court granted their appeal, agreeing that Hall's constitutional rights had been violated.

Political action

There were strikes and other disputes after that, but never again was Hall's standing or that of the union seriously challenged. The ILWU assumed a commanding position in Hawaii's economic life. And it became the most important political force in the islands, forming a coalition with the Democratic Party that gave the union as much influence as the employers' Big Five had exerted previously through the Republican Party.

It was a rare politician who was elected without ILWU backing and, as a consequence, the government and legislative programs in Hawaii became among the most worker-oriented and progressive anywhere in the fields of health, education, welfare, labor and social services. The state's political leadership became the most racially and ethnically mixed in the world.

Hall became a highly prominent figure in civic as well as economic and political affairs. He was appointed to the Honolulu Police Commission and other mayoral and gubernatorial bodies and led Community Chest, United Fund and similar decidedly non-radical activities. Hall even won praise from the business community, editorial writers and other conservative interests for what one management spokesman called "highly responsible leadership and unquestioned integrity," while getting his usual praise from workers who cited the same traits.



Work stoppage held on January 7, 1971 at Islesways docks, Honolulu, in remembrance of Jack Hall.



Jack Hall (left) is interviewed by NBC-TV for a film it was preparing to release after Hawaii became the 50th state. March 25, 1959.

Mechanization

Hall's ability to please both sides was perhaps best shown in his approach to mechanization. The ILWU, in a decision later made by the union in all West Coast ports as well, decided after World War II that it would not fight the introduction of job-stealing machinery in Hawaii. Hall and his members, longshoremen and plantation workers alike, reasoned that work should be as easy and efficient as possible - as long as there were special benefits for workers who might have to step aside for streamlined equipment that could do their jobs faster and better.

Increased pensions were offered workers who would take early retirement, but the major tool was an employer-financed "repatriation fund" that paid older workers - most of them Filipinos - up to \$2,500 plus transportation costs if they would choose to return home. Many had

long wanted to return, but had never made enough money to do so.

By 1960, the plantation workforce was cut to 9,000, about half its pre-war size. At the same time, hand labor was virtually eliminated. No longer were there gangs of workers wielding machetes and carrying loads of sugarcane and pineapples on their backs. Specially designed bulldozers and cranes were brought in to do the heavy work. Because there were fewer of them and because the machinery enabled them to produce more, Hawaii's farmworkers became - and remain - far and away the country's most highly compensated. Other farmworkers continue to toil in poverty, while the Hawaiian workers earn wages comparable to those of non-farm workers and benefits unknown on most farms - medical and dental care, sick leave, paid holidays and vacations, pensions, overtime and severance pay, unemployment insurance and even, in some cases, a 40-hour workweek.

Plantation and longshore workers still are the backbone of the ILWU in Hawaii, but Hall long ago led the union into just about every industry in the islands. Bakers, factory workers, automobile salesmen, supermarket clerks and a wide variety of other workers, especially including hotel workers and others in Hawaii's ever-expanding tourist industry - all carry union cards. It's their guarantee of economic and political rights and rewards, of dignity and self-respect and the chance to determine their own destinies, of an effective voice on the job and in their communities, of fair and equal treatment their forebears could only dream of.

Jack Hall left a truly remarkable legacy. ♦

To read more about Jack Hall, borrow a copy of *A Spark is Struck!* by Sanford Zalburg, available at your public library.

A Guide to the ILWU: what every member should know

Your union contract—what is it?

Your union contract is a written agreement with your employer. It defines your wages, benefits, conditions of employment, and rights on the job. It is enforceable through a grievance procedure and ultimately in a court of law.

Most union contracts are renegotiated every three years, although some contracts run for only one year and others run for as long as six years. How long the contract runs is up to you and your negotiating committee. **The ILWU is a democratic union and members are involved in every step of the negotiation process.**

Before the old contract expires, the union members at your company (which we call a Unit in the ILWU) will be asked for their input and ideas on what to change in the contract. This is usually done at a membership meeting, called by the officers of your Unit. **This is one good reason why you should attend union meetings—it's your chance to improve your union contract.**

Your unit will also select a committee to represent them in negotiations with management. This committee is usually composed of your elected unit officers, but many units will expand the committee to make sure different parts of your unit are represented. A hotel unit, for example, might select a committee with members from different departments like housekeeping, food and beverage, maintenance, and front desk.

The Local or Division office will also assign a full-time business agent or officer to work with your negotiating committee as your spokesperson. **During negotiations, unit members may be asked to support their committee by wearing union buttons, attending rallies, and mobilizing in other activities.**

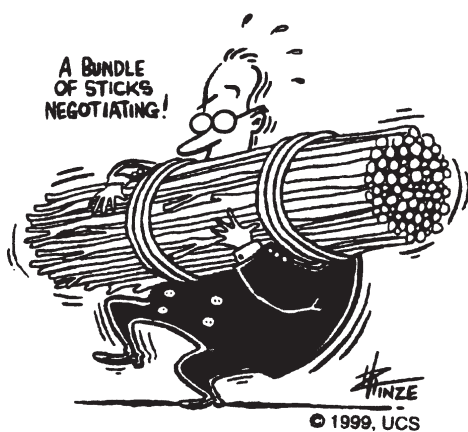
When your committee thinks a fair settlement with management has been reached, they must get your vote of approval before the new contract can be finalized. This happens at a membership

meeting where your committee will report on the settlement and where your unit members can vote to accept or reject the settlement. This is another part of ILWU democracy which requires membership approval for all contract settlements.

In rare cases, management may refuse to agree to a fair settlement and your committee may ask you to authorize a strike. Again, ILWU democracy requires membership approval for a strike.

Your union contract is a very important document. You should read the contract and be familiar with its terms. You should challenge management whenever they violate the contract. You can get a copy from your unit officers. ♦

WHICH IS STRONGER?



ILWU retirees are an important part of the union family, helping with political action and educating new members about the history of the ILWU. (Above) Oahu pensioners enjoy their monthly BINGO activity.



Education is an important part ILWU democracy. In order to win good contracts, protect their working conditions, and vote wisely, ILWU members need information and education about union democracy, labor issues, economics, and their rights on the job. (Above) ILWU rank-and-file members participate in the 7th ILWU Labor Institute, an intensive, week-long series of classes.

What to do if you need help

If you are given an oral or written warning or are disciplined by management, you should contact your union representative immediately. You have a right to ask for a union representative, if you are called into a meeting with management and you believe the meeting may result in disciplinary action.

The company may have House Rules, Standards of Conduct, Dress Codes and work policies that are separate from the union contract. These are the company's rules, however, the union may get involved if you are disciplined as a result of any of these rules or if these rules are unfairly applied, are unreasonable, or unrelated to the business objectives of the company.

The company may not discipline or discharge any employee, except for just and proper cause. Just and proper cause involves the following principles:

1. **The company must give the employee forewarning** or foreknowledge of the possible or probable disciplinary action as the result of the employee's conduct.
2. **The company's rule must be reasonably related to the orderly efficient and safe operation** of the employer's business, and the performance that the company might properly expect of the employee.
3. **Before administering discipline to an employee, the company must make an effort to discover** whether the employee did

in fact violate or disobey a rule or order of management.

4. **The company's investigation must be conducted fairly** and objectively.

5. **When the company conducts its investigation it must obtain substantial evidence** or proof that the employee was guilty as charged.

6. **The company must apply its rules, orders and penalties evenhandedly** and without discrimination to all employees.

7. **In determining the degree of discipline the company must show that the penalty is reasonably related** to the seriousness of the employee's proven offense and shall consider the employee's record of service and length of employment with the company.

The union will work on your behalf to investigate if the company acted properly in taking disciplinary action against you. If you are disciplined, there is a time limit within which to contact the union and have the union file a grievance. Because of this time limit, do not delay. Contact the union representative as soon as you can. ♦

“Labor is prior to, and independent of, capital. Capital is only the fruit of labor, and could never have existed if labor had not first existed. Labor is the superior of capital, and deserves much the higher consideration.”

Abraham Lincoln
First Annual Message to Congress
December 3, 1861.

A Guide to the ILWU: what every member should know

The benefits of union political action

A single worker is powerless to bargain with his employer for good wages and conditions. In the same way, a single voter can't do much to influence the legislature.

Workers join unions so they can bargain as an organized group, and this pays off in better wages, working conditions, and job security. Likewise, unionized workers can organize their votes, which gives them the power to get laws passed that benefit workers and their families.

Through Union Political Action, working people in Hawaii have

passed many good laws that have improved the conditions for all working people. Four examples of these laws are: 1) Workers Compensation Insurance; 2) Temporary Disability Insurance; 3) the Minimum Wage; and 4) the Pre-paid Health Care Act which requires employers to provide medical plans to covered workers. ♦



Not registered to vote?
 Stop by the your union office—let us help you!
 (See addresses below)

The VOICE of the ILWU welcomes letters, photographs and other submissions from members.

Write to: Editor, VOICE of the ILWU, 451 Atkinson Drive. Honolulu, HI 96814, or e-mail: ilwuvoice@hawaii.rr.com

Contacting the Union

If you cannot reach a unit officer or steward you can call your business agent at the ILWU Office on your island. Regular office hours are from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

- Hilo PH: 935-3727 FAX: 961-2490
- Waimea PH: 885-6136 FAX: 885-0450
- Kona PH: 329-2070 FAX: 329-2070*01
- Wailuku PH: 244-9191 FAX: 244-7870
- Lihue PH: 245-3374 FAX: 246-9508
- Honolulu PH: 949-4161 FAX: 941-5867

If your business agent is not in the office, you should leave a message, a phone number and a time when you can be reached. If you have a serious problem, you should contact the union as soon as possible. There is a time limit on reporting any problem.

HAWAII DIVISION — Phone: 935-3727

HILO: 100 W. Lanikaula St., Hilo HI 96720

WAIMEA: Uilani Plaza, Suite F, 64-1035 Mamalahoa Hwy., Kamuela HI 96743

- Richard Baker, Jr. Division Director
- Isaac Fiesta Jr. Business Agent
- Greg Gauthier Business Agent
- Elmer Gorospe Business Agent
- Wallace Ishibashi Jr. Business Agent
- Richard Kaniho Business Agent
- George Martin Business Agent
- Ann Chong Hawaii Division Clerk
- Sui Sin Coloma Hawaii Division Clerk

MAUI DIVISION — Phone: 244-9191

WAILUKU: 896 Lower Main St., Wailuku, HI 96793

- William Kennison Division Director
- Robert "Bobby" Andrión Business Agent
- Steve Castro Business Agent
- Jerrybeth DeMello Business Agent
- Delbert DeRego Business Agent
- Teddy Espeleta Business Agent
- Joseph Franco, Jr. Business Agent
- Claro Romero Business Agent
- Wayne Takehara Business Agent
- Jocelyn Victorino Maui Division Clerk
- Joyce Naruse Maui Division Clerk

KAUAI DIVISION — Phone: 245-3374

LIHUE: 4154 Hardy St., Lihue, HI 96766

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ILWU History: Filipino Sakada

Honoring the Filipino Sakada, Part I

Hawaii will be celebrating the 100 year anniversary since December 20, 1906, when the first group of 15 men from the Philippines arrived in Honolulu aboard the S.S. Doric. They were dispatched the following day to work for the Ola'a Plantation on the Big Island, a new and very large plantation that needed all the laborers it could get.

Over the next forty years, until 1946, a total of 125,917 Filipinos were brought to Hawaii by the Hawaii Sugar Planters' Association (HSPA) to work on the sugar plantations that were expanding on every island and in every area where land and water could be found. The Filipinos were called Sakada, the Visayan word for seasonal farm worker, and their story is truly remarkable.

The Sakada braved unknown conditions and hardship to take jobs in a foreign country, thousands of miles away from their birthplace in the Philippines. They endured long hours of backbreaking work, so they could send a little money home to help support the families they left behind.

From the beginning, the Sakadas stood up against injustice by joining with other plantation workers to improve their wages and working conditions. They joined and organized labor unions. Many rose to positions of top leadership within the unions. All six presidents of the ILWU Local 142 were Sakadas or their descendants: Antonio Rania, Calixto "Carl" Damaso, Erinio "Eddie" Lapa, Eusebio "Bo" Lapenia, Jr., and Fred Galdones.

Thanks to higher wages and better conditions brought about by unionization, Sakadas were able to send substantial sums of money to their families in the Philippines. With better retirement benefits, many Sakadas were able to return to the Philippines and live a very comfortable life.

More than half of the Sakada returned to the Philippines or moved on to find work on the Mainland. Those who stayed became part of the multi-ethnic community that makes Hawaii unique in the world. The

2000 Census counted 170,635 Filipinos and another 105,728 part-Filipinos in Hawaii.

The Sakadas can be proud of their accomplishments in making a living for themselves and the tremendous contributions they made to improve life for their families in the Philippines and in Hawaii.

Labor Shortage

As early as 1901, Hawaii sugar planters were looking to the Philippines for the thousands of laborers the industry needed to expand production to meet the increasing demand for sugar. US laws prohibited any further importation of Chinese laborers, and the Japanese were leaving the plantations by the thousands. Those who stayed were getting more aggressive in demanding better housing and higher wages. In 1900 alone, there were 20 strikes involving 8,000 workers. These early efforts were spontaneous and unorganized—workers did not try to form any kind of permanent organization.

To keep their workers, plantations increased wages from \$12.50 a month to \$15 a month, and as high as \$22 a month in remote areas. Because of the severe labor shortage, some plantations would try to entice workers away from neighboring plantations by offering a slightly higher wage. The Hawaii Sugar Planters' Association (HSPA) put a stop to this practice in 1901 by setting a maximum wage plantations could pay workers of \$18 a month in most areas and \$24 a month in remote areas.

In July 1906, the HSPA was granted special permission from the Philippine Commission (the colonial governing body appointed by the US president) to recruit laborers and to land ships in various ports to take or



The *sakada* played a critical role in winning the 1946 sugar strike—a strike in which the power of unionization changed the lives of 75,000 Hawaii sugar workers and their families. (Above) Signing the agreement after the 1946 sugar strike in Kekaha: Shigeyoshi Agena, Prudencio Dela Cruz, Kenjo Kimoto, a plantation manager, Constancio Alesna, Fred Taniguchi.

return the laborers. As both Hawaii and the Philippines were territories of the United States, there were no restrictions on the number of Filipinos who could be brought to Hawaii.

By 1910, the HSPA had recruiting centers in Manila, Cebu, Iloilo and Bohol and was sending 3,000 workers a year to Hawaii. The sugar planters had just defeated a strike of 7,000 Japanese workers on Oahu by hiring other ethnic groups to replace the Japanese. The Japanese made up 71 percent of the plantation workforce and were getting better organized. By importing large numbers of Filipinos, the planters could create a divided and more controllable workforce.

Mostly Visayans

The early recruits came mostly from the Visayan Islands, where the population was poor and farmed land as tenants or found work as sakada on huge sugar haciendas. Like Hawaii, a small and wealthy elite class and their descendants controlled the wealth and owned most of the land in the Philippines.

The Visayan sakadas had a three-year contract with the HSPA where they agreed to work 10 hours a day and 26 days a month. In return, they would be paid \$16 a month and receive free transportation to Hawaii, housing; water, fuel, medicine and health care. Their pay would increase to \$17 a month in the second year and to \$18 a month in the third year. A total of \$72 was deducted, \$2 a month, to pay for their return fare to the Philippines.

In the 1920s, the HSPA shifted their recruiting to the Ilocos area on the northwestern coast of the Luzon Islands. In Hawaii, the Visayans were organizing unions and demanding better conditions. In 1920 they

formed the Filipino Labor Union and coordinated their protests with Japanese workers organized in the Japanese Labor Federation. Visayans were also getting harder to recruit, because homesteads were opening up in Mindanao, and word was getting out that Hawaii was not the "Land of Gloriosa" described by HSPA recruiters. The planters also saw an advantage in dividing Filipinos by language, since the Ilocanos and Visayans spoke different dialects.

Ilocano majority

Recruitment of Ilocano sakadas increased and sometimes exceeded 10,000 workers a year. By 1932, the plantation workforce of 50,000 was 70 percent Filipino and mostly Ilocano. The next largest group was the Japanese (9,395 workers), followed by the Portuguese (2,022). The rest were Caucasians, Puerto Ricans, Chinese, Hawaiians, and Koreans.

In 1934, the US granted the Philippines a degree of independence and Filipino immigration was limited to 50 a year. This was not a problem for the sugar industry as nearly all the available land in Hawaii had been turned into sugar and pineapple fields, and there was no need for additional workers.

There were no further recruitment of sakada until 1946, when the sugar industry, now controlled by five giant corporations, claimed there was a labor shortage and got an exemption to bring 7,361 Ilocanos to Hawaii—6000 men and 1361 women and children. It was a deliberate move to break the growing union movement in the sugar industry. ♦

Next month:
Honoring the Sakada, Part II
Racial unity and the 1946 strike

Know non-union workers who need help organizing?

The ILWU represents workers in the following industries: transportation, agriculture, tourism, automotive, retail, healthcare, and more!

If you know workers at a non-union company who need help securing their jobs and making improvements at their workplace, let your union representative know! Call the ILWU and ask for the Organizing Dept. at your Division Office:

Hawaii: (808) 935-3727 • Maui County: (808) 244-9191
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