

MINUTES

ILWU LOCAL 142
2nd BIENNIAL LOCAL CONVENTION
HILO ARMORY, HILO, HAWAII
September 21-24, 1955

OPENING SESSION--SEPTEMBER 21, 1955 (Open to the Press)

CALL TO ORDER

The convention was called to order at 12:31 p. m. by President Antonio Rania.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA (attached)

The Chair announced several changes to the Agenda:

1. After Item IV, insert PRESENTATION OF LEIS
2. After VI, Change Greetings by County Chairman James Kealoha to GREETINGS BY COUNTY ATTORNEY YOSHITO TANAKA
3. After Item VI, Greetings by County Attorney, insert JACKSON AH CHIN, PRESIDENT, UNITED PUBLIC WORKERS
4. VII. Address by International Officer: add HARRY BRIDGES
5. X. Committee Assignments - add BY: NEWTON MIYAGI
6. XI. Delete ADDRESS BY REGIONAL DIRECTOR JACK W. HALL

M/S/C (B. Fuertes/T. Tuzon) to approve the agenda as amended.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

Reverend Emilio C. Yadao led the Convention in the singing of the National Anthem.

INVOCATION BY REVEREND YADAO

A PRAYER

O God, our heavenly Father, we come to Thee for divine aid and guidance.

We realize that during this convention, there will be differences of opinion and there will be attempts on the part of those who are selfish men, to try to maneuver for personal gain rather than to strive diligently toward that which is right and just for all.

In Thy power and direction let these men and women do work on the convention

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NO. 1

RESOLUTION ON WORLD PEACE

We are proud that ILWU had the courage to speak out for peace at the time when the ^{war} war danger was greatest and the campaign of intimidation against peace-loving people was the greatest. In our 1953 convention we made the following recommendations for establishing a stable and secure peace:

- "1. An immediate cease-fire in Korea with negotiations following to resolve the unsettled issue of the exchange of war prisoners.
- "2. An immediate cease-fire in the wars in Indo-China, Malaya and Africa, with the issues in dispute in those wars to be negotiated. The results of such negotiations, whatever they may be, to be submitted to a plebiscite of the people, conducted by the United Nations.
- "3. The President of the United States to sit down with the Premier of the USSR and start talks aimed at resolving the differences between these two powerful states.
- "4. Reduce armaments. We hail and support the recent proposal of the U. S. to the United Nations for a top level conference on world armament reduction.
- "5. Outlaw, through United Nations action, the use by any nation of the atom bomb, the H-bomb and germ warfare.
- "6. > Reverse the vote cast by the U. S. in the UN Assembly against independence for colonial nations and the right of colonial countries to own and exploit their own natural resources.
- > "7. End the economic blockades and establish free trade throughout the world.
- "8. Promote a free exchange of information and delegations between all countries of the world.
- "9. We urge our country to abandon the restrictions and prohibitions against travel and entry into the communist countries, and likewise insist that similar restrictions by all other countries be dropped.
- "10. Give Labor and the common soldier a seat at the international negotiating table."

Resolution on World Peace

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Time and the march of events are proving that we were right in 1953, just as Harry Bridges was right in 1949 when he called for a Korean cease fire -- an act for which he was thrown in jail.

Today the killing has stopped in Korea and Indo-China as a result of cease fires and negotiations. The prisoners have been exchanged. The President of the United States and the Premier of the U. S. S. R. have met at the summit at Geneva and more meetings are planned for the purpose of resolving our differences. Scientists from the East and West have exchanged information in the Atoms for Peace Conference. Delegations of farmers from the United States and the Soviet Union have exchanged visits. There has been a slight relaxation of trade barriers. And all of these steps toward peace have been welcomed with great joy and relief by the people of our country and the world as rays of hope, long awaited and overdue.

However, none of these things mean that the war danger has passed. They represent only possibilities for the achievement of peaceful relations, little rays of light in what had been an almost unrelieved totally black atmosphere of war scares and war preparation. There are still powerful forces who stand to profit from the war danger, and these forces include individuals high in the national administration like Senator Knowland, Secretary of State Dulles, and Admiral Radford, who are doing all they can to check and counteract all of these moves toward peace.

If we value our lives and those of our children, we must realize that the fight for peace is not won, but only just begun; and we must do all that we can to help win this fight, by explaining to our neighbors how we view the great issue which faces mankind. Our International convention last April framed these issues correctly when it stated:

"Bertrand Russell, the eminent philosopher and historian, recently warned that the world has reached a point of no-return. The peoples and nations of the world are either going to go forward in coexistence or disappear in coextinction.

"There is not a scientist familiar with the new atomic discoveries who has not warned that today two great powers -- the US and the USSR -- have the power to unleash thermo-nuclear weapons capable of destroying people, cities, animals, plants, and even of poisoning the atmosphere itself for centuries.

"This is the fact of war in the world in which we live.

"There is no defense from the new weapons. Nor is there any point in building more of them or in making them more destructive.

"What will we have accomplished if between these two great powers we can destroy each other and the rest of the world too, in two hours instead of four?

"Even the further testing of new weapons, some scientists warn, should be halted at once because of the radioactive poisoning of the atmosphere.

"The ILWU is not interested in testing any theories to find out who can and who can not survive an H-Bomb war. We are satisfied that the only way we can carry out our responsibilities to our people and our country is by doing everything possible to prevent the outbreak of war.

"We have concluded that --

- "(1) No existing differences including those between capitalism, socialism and communism can be resolved by world war. Wars no longer can be won.
- "(2) No people want war. And war can be prevented by ordinary people everywhere speaking out for the negotiation of outstanding differences and the disarmament of the great powers.
- "(3) Proposals from anywhere -- whether from religious leaders, the White House, or the Kremlin -- or whether from a William Hearst calling for a council of competitive coexistence or from a Harold Stassen, in his post as cabinet officer, for disarmament and peace -- if they contribute to the preservation of peace, the lessening of tensions and the improvement of relations in the world, are welcomed by the ILWU. And we intend to do everything possible to put these proposals into effect -- no matter who or where they come from or what motive is attributed to them.
- "(4) Just as the ILWU threw itself into World War II without qualification and without stint until victory had been won, so we must throw our resources into the fight for peace today -- for the duration and until peace has been achieved."

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NO. 2

STATEMENT OF POLICY ON WORLD TRADE

We reaffirm the statement of the 11th ILWU Convention:

"The ILWU reiterates its traditional support for a free and expanded world trade without political barriers. Healthy and growing commerce means jobs for our members and higher living standards for everyone.

"We support extension of the Reciprocal Trade Agreements Act and other measures which reduce trade barriers. We welcome the substantial relaxation of restrictions on the export of non-strategic items to the Soviet Union which took place last year. And we hope that the relaxation of international tensions in the Far East may soon permit similar lifting of the trade barriers which now prevent legal trade between the US and China.

"As a result of the trade barriers and embargoes now hampering world trade, the countries with the greatest potential for trade with the US have been forced to trade elsewhere or to become increasingly self-sufficient. Either way, their need for goods from the US has inevitably declined.

"Only a reduction in trade barriers and a relaxation of international tensions will stimulate the free flow of goods again. As many American businessmen have anxiously pointed out, unless such a change takes place pretty quickly their leading world competitors -- West Germany, Japan and others -- will have staked out all of the open markets for themselves.

"Last July the Soviet Union asked that the United Nations sponsor a world conference on trade. We think such a conference would be in the best interests of the United States in helping to relax world tensions, as well as directly in the interests of our own membership in promoting trade and commerce. We therefore call upon the US State Department and upon our delegates to the United Nations to propose a similar conference to be held at the earliest possible time.

"Copies of this statement shall be sent to the Secretary of State, to the US delegation to the United Nations, to the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions and to the World Federation of Trade Unions. Copies shall also be sent to State and territorial legislators, in states where legislatures are in session, urging that the legislatures memorialize Congress to relax trade restrictions along the lines of this statement."

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No. 3

RESOLUTION IN OPPOSITION TO
CAPITAL PUNISHMENT

We reaffirm the statement of our 1953 convention:

"For many years there has been a growing sentiment against the infliction of capital punishment as the penalty for crime. Foremost in the fight to prohibit the death sentence have been members of the clergy of all faiths. It is a horrible thing for men to take the life of a human being in cold and calculated premeditation. Even in the case of absolute proof of calculated and pre-planned murder, what man can say in his own conscience the crime is properly punished when he himself participates in the same crime.

"Here in Hawaii, the death penalty has been accompanied by strong overtones of racial discrimination. The case of Majors and Palakiko is an obvious example. We believe the taking of life in this fashion cannot be justified by conscience.

"Therefore, be it resolved that we go on record opposing capital punishment, and that we urge upon the Legislature amendment of existing criminal law to remove the death sentence as a penalty for crime.

"And that copies be sent to the Territorial Legislature, the Governor of Hawaii, the Republican Party, and the Democratic Party."

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No. 4

RESOLUTION ON STATEHOOD FOR HAWAII

We reaffirm our position on Statehood for Hawaii and deem it a shame and disgrace that years continue to pass without the granting of statehood.

We particularly condemn the arrogant racial prejudice which has been established by Southern Congressmen in this respect.

We recommend to our union brothers in the various states and districts disciplinary action at the polls against those members of Congress who continue by filibuster threats and other means to deny the right of democratic self-government to the people of Hawaii, and to deny them their just share of participation in the national government.

That copies of this resolution be sent to the Territorial Legislature.

bsh