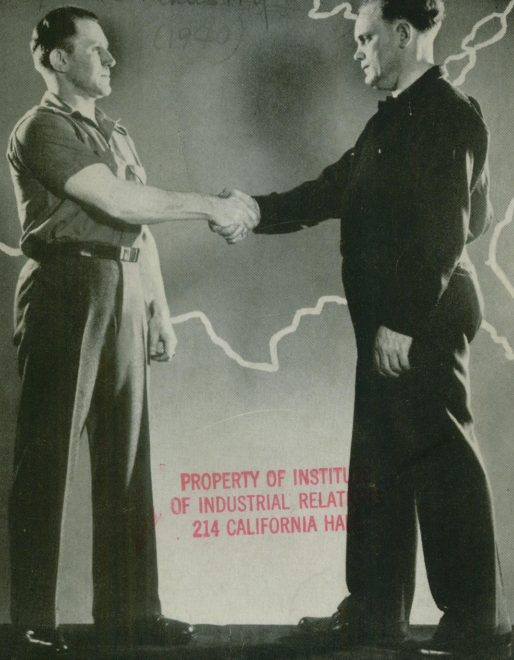


Longshoremen

Longshore Industry
(1940)



PACIFIC and ATLANTIC

Longshore Industry

Longshoremen

PACIFIC AND ATLANTIC



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**International Longshoremen's & Warehousemen's Union
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Acknowledgment

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And finally, special thanks are due all those members of the ILWU locals who cooperated by supplying the facts about their own lives and working conditions of today and before the 1934 strike.

PUBLICITY COMMITTEE,
International Longshoremen's and
Warehousemen's Union (CIO)

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Longshoremen

PACIFIC AND ATLANTIC



Meet Steve Longshoreman... Good Neighbor and Citizen

THIS little book aims to give you the facts. It's written for our East Coast brothers. It tells what we have, how we got it, how it works. We're not doing it to blow our own horn—we still have a long way to go. We're getting this to you so that you can find out for yourself why the big difference in conditions on the different coasts, so that you can take matters into your own hands and do something about improving your own conditions.

You're over a hundred thousand strong in the United States of America. Together with your families you're over a half million people. On your jobs depend hundreds of thousands of industrial workers, waiting to work over the materials you load and unload; on your spending depend tens of thousands of storekeepers, landlords, doctors and others. You're an important factor in American life, brother. You're Mr. Longshoreman—good neighbor, citizen, Man of Labor.

Nobody dares ask you, "Are you Man or Mouse?" You've got to be a Man to be able to take it at back-breaking work! That kind of Man has the right to hold his head high and look anybody straight in the eye. That kind of Man, like all men of labor, has the right to decent living and working conditions, to wages that can bring within his reach the American Standard of Living.

He has that right. But has he actually got the conditions? Well, some have and some haven't. The average West Coast longshoreman has something that's very close to it. The average East Coast and Gulf man is still far from it.

HALF WORKING—AND HALF UNEMPLOYED

This was the average longshoreman on the West Coast before 1934. This is still the average longshoreman on the East and Gulf coasts today.

The factory worker is insecure enough in his job and has little or no certainty how long his job will last. But the factory worker can know that his job will last a week, a few months or even a year, while the average East Coast longshoreman seldom knows from day to day if he'll be working tomorrow.

While he's working, the shop worker at least knows he'll get a definite amount of money each week. The average Eastern longshoreman may make \$10 one week, absolutely nothing the next, and maybe \$35 the following week. Not only is his work indefinite and unorganized, but likewise, his personal and home life is affected. He and his family might eat well one week and go without the next. He can't plan ahead, he has no credit standing. Up and down—with and without. This is the life and work of Eastern and Gulf longshoremen. Uncertainty and insecurity dog his steps every day of the year.

1934—THE GREAT YEAR

And this is the way it used to be on the West Coast, brother—before 1934. But in 1934, a strike took place. It was a long and hard battle. The longshoremen finally won out. And they came out of it with something that wasn't exactly new—it had been tried in other ports and failed—but this time it worked—a centralized hiring hall, with rotation of hiring and equalization of wages. It worked because this time the men fought for and won the right of union control of the hiring hall.

And that made all the difference in the world. 1934 is a big year in the history of the West Coast men. "Before 1934—"After 1934"—that's the way the men talk. Before 1934—that's the past, and West Coast men have to look at the East Coast to remember it. After 1934—that's the new, that's what longshoremen want—and East Coast men have to look at the West Coast to see their future.

Mr. West Coast Longshoreman not only knows he's got the **right** to be a good neighbor and citizen—he's actually it! Here's to the day when our East Coast and Gulf brothers are the same. So we give you this handbook of facts, knowing that we place it in good hands. And we dedicate it to the job of welding all of us—no matter on what coast—into an unbreakable fraternal cooperation that will improve the conditions of all American longshoremen—Men of Labor!

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“What are You Making, Steve?”

WAGES OF LONGSHOREMEN

PACIFIC COAST longshoremen earn from \$400 to \$800 more a year than East Coast and Gulf longshoremen! Pacific Coast longshoremen are closer to having the minimum **budget** that is needed by the average family to live decently for a year. That's the first important fact that strikes you in comparing what Steve East and Steve West make.

It's not enough to know how much a longshoreman makes an hour if you want to know his earnings for a month or for a year. That might be O.K. if you ask an auto or steel worker who puts in 40 hours a week as long as he's working.

But to get a real idea of longshoremen's wages you have to know how much of a chance they've had to work in the week, the month or for the whole year. Some East Coast longshoremen can tell you they can make \$1.10 an hour, straight time,* and still, when they figure what they've made over the year, they will tell you they are lucky if they make over \$1000.

A CHANCE TO WORK

A high hourly rate should be paid for the back-breaking work of longshoring. However, the important point is that every longshoreman should have the opportunity to work enough hours so that his average income will be sufficient for a decent standard of living.

On the West Coast each longshoreman has as much chance to get work as the next one. At the end of the year the total number of hours worked is pretty much the same for all of them.

On the East Coast a small number work steadily and put in a great deal of time. These are not the average

* There are many ports on the South Atlantic and Gulf where longshoremen still receive less than 60c an hour.

men. Most Eastern and Gulf longshoremen work less often than the average Pacific Coast men. There is a big difference among Eastern longshoremen in the total amount of hours each works in the year.

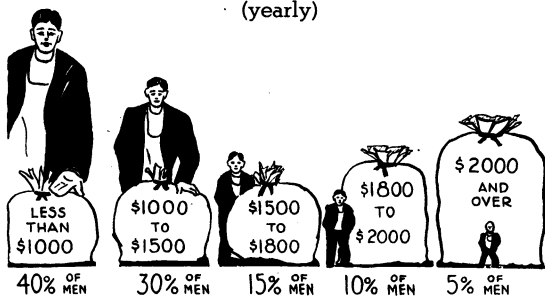
The average annual wage of West Coast longshoremen is between \$1700 and \$1800, usually over \$1750. This is easy to establish as a fact due to the records of earnings kept by the Central Dispatching Halls in West Coast ports. (See Charts Next Pages.)

Steve on the East Coast and Gulf makes on the average of from less than \$800 to less than \$1500. The only complete source of exact figures on East and Gulf Coast wages is to be found in the books of the waterfront employers who, of course, don't give this information to the general public. But enough information is at hand to give you this picture. (Chart below.)

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DISTRIBUTION of EARNINGS

Atlantic and Gulf Longshoremen
(yearly)



**EARNINGS OF GANGS WORKING OUT OF LONGSHORE HALL AT SEATTLE, WASHINGTON,
DURING THE THIRTEENTH PERIOD† OF 1939**

Gang No.	Straight Time, Hours	Overtime, Hours	Total Hours	Amount Earned	Total, Year 1939	Total, Year 1939
1.....	81½	42½	123¾	\$136.85	\$1,888.06	\$1,647.28
3.....	68¾	39¾	108½	130.12	1,877.31	1,670.34
4.....	69	59¾	128¾	150.35	1,896.45	1,675.76
5.....	78	43	121	138.66	1,871.22	1,671.37
6.....	79	49	128	144.35	1,896.91	1,684.86
8.....	79	39¾	118½	130.16	1,861.94	1,681.10
9.....	58¾	60¾	119½	141.32	1,887.70	1,670.85
10.....	81½	40	121¼	133.18	1,896.12	1,658.11
11.....	42¾	64	106¾	130.55	1,192.64	1,676.31
12.....	64	63¾	127¼	149.87	606.18
13.....	44½	71	115½	143.43	1,904.57	1,669.43
14.....	72¾	65	137¾	160.27	1,854.01	1,667.91
15.....	21	62½	123½	146.15	1,865.14	1,677.80
16.....	77¼	38	115¼	126.58	1,899.90	1,663.71
17.....	66¼	55½	121¾	140.63	1,895.11	1,658.46
18.....	69½	67	136½	151.99	1,874.42	1,666.73
19.....	93¾	44½	138¾	151.35	1,893.12	1,672.03
20.....	55¼	63¾	119	142.77	1,560.41	1,645.18
21.....	63	57¼	120¼	140.85	1,894.08	1,650.17
22.....	51½	65¾	117¼	141.49	1,088.16	1,641.30
23.....	89¾	43¾	133¾	146.16	1,905.38	1,673.78
24.....	63¾	56¾	119½	135.90	1,891.60	798.31
25.....	80¾	43¾	124	138.49	1,888.68	1,669.19
26.....	79¾	46¾	126¼	140.86	823.72	1,673.25
27.....	63¾	50	113¾	130.56	1,883.68	375.89

No. Gang	Time, Hours Straight	Hours Overtime,	Total Hours	Amount Earned	Total, Year 1939	Total, Year 1938
28.....	42	58%	100%	124.94	1,875.78	1,683.68
30.....	81%	42 1/4	124	136.81	1,894.40	1,664.74
31.....	79 1/2	54 1/2	134	152.52	1,894.03	1,666.68
32.....	95%	34%	130 1/2	139.61	1,858.19	1,689.62
33.....	70%	52 1/2	123 1/4	141.25	1,894.19	1,661.27
34.....	56	58%	114%	136.14	1,893.79	1,667.62
35.....	70 1/2	41 1/2	112	125.54	1,448.36	1,667.59
36.....	64 1/2	45	109 1/2	124.44	1,866.37	1,669.64
37.....	66 1/2	52%	119 1/4	137.01	1,892.38	1,660.68
38.....	87	46 1/2	133 1/2	147.74	1,862.07	1,395.13
39*.....	24	17 1/2	41 1/2	47.47	1,820.31	1,673.64
40.....	75	53 1/4	128 1/4	147.36	1,914.27	1,666.85
41.....	68 1/4	58	126 1/4	146.20	1,891.58	375.17
42.....	42%	69 1/2	112 1/4	138.43	1,878.10	1,669.13
43.....	69%	60 1/2	130 1/4	151.30	1,900.35	1,525.37
44.....	80%	38 1/2	119 1/4	130.95	1,878.32	1,664.27
45.....	74 1/2	49%	124 1/4	140.42	1,882.45	1,680.81
46.....	56	53%	109 1/2	128.27	1,901.96	1,646.04
47.....	69 1/2	56 1/4	125%	146.02	1,909.19	1,666.83
48.....	70 1/2	66 1/2	137	161.29	1,899.49	1,691.28
49.....	80 1/2	39 1/4	119%	131.42	1,021.51	1,639.66
50.....	55 1/4	67%	123	148.03	1,892.99	1,676.66
51.....	80 1/4	39 1/2	119%	131.53	1,815.06
52.....	62	48 1/2	110 1/2	127.49	1,887.29	1,666.45
53.....	70 1/4	47%	118	134.13	1,888.97	1,669.84
54.....	92 1/4	33 1/4	125 1/2	134.54	1,891.07	1,657.63
55.....	32	73	105	133.45	1,887.49	1,675.93
56.....	71 1/2	36%	108 1/4	120.06	1,860.99	1,672.23

* Disbanded 12/14/39. Not included in gang averages.

† A period consists of four weeks.

In other words, over 80% of Eastern longshoremen earn less than the average longshoreman on the Pacific Coast—less than \$1750. Less than 20% earn more than that, and these are men who are employed in permanent gangs with definite companies or men who have to pay a high amount of bribes and tribute to foremen or ILA officials for the privilege of getting more work than the average man.

THE NEW YORK SURVEY

Greenwich House in New York conducted a housing survey among 217 longshoremen living on New York's West Side between 14th and Desbrosses streets and the Hudson River east to Sixth Avenue and West Broadway. Their investigators found that most of the men (68.6%) made between four and twelve hundred dollars in the year; 12½% made between \$1200 and \$1600; 9½% made between \$1600 and \$2000; and 2.3% made over \$2000.

THE SEATTLE-PORTLAND SURVEY

The International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union made a similar survey among 217 longshoremen of Seattle and Portland picked at random. (See Chart opposite for comparison of the two surveys.)

While 7.4% of the New York longshoremen made only up to \$400 for the year, no Western man made less than \$700. Here are the facts: most of the Pacific Coast men earned between \$1200 and \$2000 (85.6%); only 5.2% earned between \$400 and \$1200 (these were men who were sick over a period of time or who in other ways could not or did not take full advantage of their work opportunities); and 9.2% made \$2000 or over (winch-drivers, etc.).

The average yearly wage for the 217 New York longshoremen was \$900. For the 217 Portland-Seattle men it was \$1750.

And that, brother, is how Steve's wages stand on America's different coasts.

ANNUAL INCOMES of 217 LONGSHOREMEN



3 hooks 7.4%



13 hooks 31.3%
2 hooks 3.4%



11 hooks 1.8%
12 hooks 37.3%



5 hooks 12.5%
15 hooks 37.3%



4 hooks 9.5%
18 hooks 48.3%



1 hook 1.8%
3 hooks 7.4%



1 hook .5%
1 hook 1.8%

hook - NEW YORK CITY hook - SEATTLE, PORTLAND

EACH HOOK REPRESENTS 5 LONGSHOREMEN

WORKING CONDITIONS

Let's look at working conditions for a minute. Not only are Eastern and Gulf longshoremen receiving smaller incomes than Pacific Coast men, but they have worse working conditions as well.

In most East Coast and Gulf ports, there is no written agreement on load limits in wage and hour contracts, whereas Pacific Coast longshoremen are protected by specified load limits listed in the agreement arrived at with the employers.

SPEED-UP

While the West Coast men are effectively resisting efforts to increase speed-up, their Eastern brothers have been speeded up at a terrific rate. In ten years, from 1928 to 1938, speed-up has increased:

Discharging coffee	66%
Handling paper (Clyde longshoremen)	50%
Handling steel pipe (Morgan)	200%
Discharging bananas	300%
Discharging canned goods	50%
Loading copper	80%

The Department of Commerce shows a country-wide decrease in costs under the ILA and Blue Book unions of handling material by longshoremen from 1928 to 1934 of about 33%. At \$1.05 an hour in 1938, general cargo was handled in the East at 45 cents a ton, whereas at 70 cents an hour in 1928, the average cost was 71 cents!*

The waterfront employers are working East Coast men harder and faster than ever before.

Hand in hand with the increase in speed-up goes an increase in accidents. On the Pacific Coast, the number of accidents has decreased. They have increased on the Atlantic and Gulf coasts. One big insurance company expert says the East Coast pays 37c out of each payroll dollar for accidents!

* Information gathered by Waterfront Research Committee, New York City.

"What Do You Get for Your Money, Steve?"

THE HOMES OF LONGSHOREMEN AND THEIR FAMILIES

THE AVERAGE Pacific Coast longshoreman can afford a decent home or apartment, with some elbow room, adequate heating, private bathroom, away from the docks; many of them own their own cars. The average Atlantic and Gulf longshoreman has to live near the docks, in a crowded tenement or shack, often without private bathroom and adequate heating; owning a car is out of the question for the vast majority.

Steve Longshoreman isn't breaking his back longshoring because he loves it; he does it to make a living for himself, his family, take care of a home, bring up his children, send them to school and give them a decent start in life.

Well, let's see what Steve gets for his money. Let's take a look into his home. That ought to be a pretty good way of finding out. In the East, in New York City, Greenwich House looked into 217 homes. In the West, the ILWU also looked into 217 homes. Here are the results. (See Chart on next page.)

RENTERS AND OWNERS

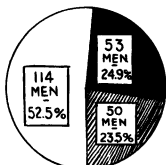
When it comes to owning a home, the average Eastern longshoreman might very well have as his theme song, "I Can Dream, Can't I?" There wasn't a single homeowner among the 217 men interviewed in the East!

The possibility of owning a home is a real one for Western longshoremen—since the 1934 strike. Of the 217 men canvassed, almost half of them are buying their homes; and nearly 25% (53 men) owned them outright!

In comparing the cost of maintaining their homes or the amount of rent paid, we find that almost one out of five New York men paid over \$35 a month for rent, while only one out of every hundred Western men paid that much. About 75% of the Seattle-Portland men paid be-

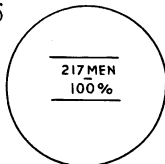
HOMES of 217 LONGSHOREMEN

RENTERS AND OWNERS



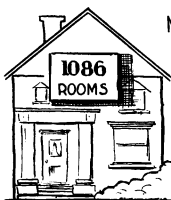
SEATTLE & PORTLAND

- RENTERS
- OWN HOMES BUT NOT OUTRIGHT
- OWN HOMES OUTRIGHT



NEW YORK CITY

NUMBER OF ROOMS AND PERSONS IN 217 FAMILIES



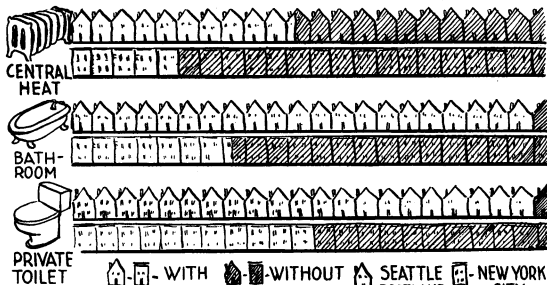
SEATTLE AND PORTLAND



NEW YORK CITY



IMPROVEMENTS IN LONGSHOREMEN'S HOMES



EACH HOUSE REPRESENTS TEN HOMES

tween \$15 and \$25 a month for rent; less than half of the New York men could rent their homes for that figure.

Let's see what they get for their money.

Over half of the New York longshoremen (53%) live in a four-room flat. Over half of the Seattle-Portland men (59.3%) live in a five- or six-room house! Here's the way it stacks up:

NUMBER OF ROOMS PER FAMILY

Number of Rooms	Percentage of 217 Families	
	New York City	Seattle-Portland
3 or less	19.9	17.9
4	53.0	10.5
5	18.4	39.1
6	6.9	20.2
7 or more.....	1.9	12.3

And how much room has the longshoremen's family in his home? This gives you a pretty good idea:

	Rooms	Persons
Seattle-Portland	1086	704
New York City.....	908	956

While longshoremen's homes in New York are overcrowded (less than a room for each person), there's some elbow room for his family in Seattle and Portland (about a room and a half for each person).

Look at the bottom of chart on Page 16 and you get the story on "improvements" in their homes: central heating, bathrooms and private toilets, which are considered necessities nowadays.

All but fifteen of the 217 Pacific Coast families interviewed had private bathrooms and toilet facilities, while only 35% of the New York families had a separate bathroom. Almost half (47%) had to share toilet facilities with other families in the tenement.

Someone once said that a car in the garage is a sign of security. Well, less than 5% of New York longshoremen have cars. On the other hand, at least 50% of the Pacific

Coast men own cars to take them to and from work and for pleasure.

SLUMS *VERSUS* HEALTH

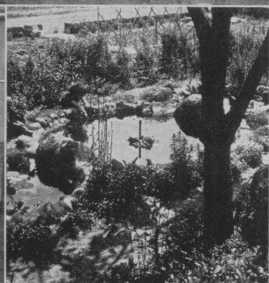
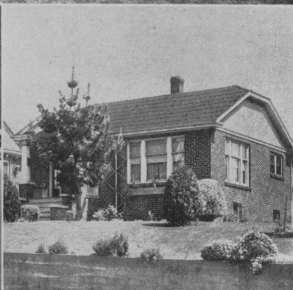
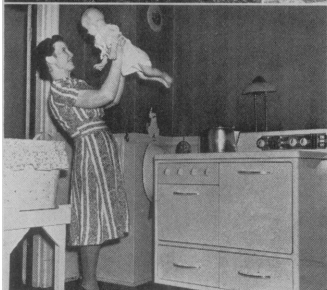
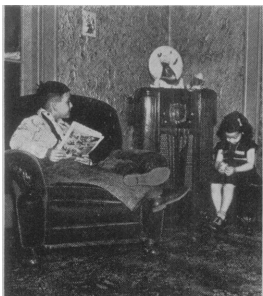
Which brings up the matter of where longshoremen live—in what part of town are they to be found? Most Eastern longshoremen are forced to live near the docks so they can get as much of a chance as possible to squeeze out some work under the shape-up. Everyone knows that as a general rule homes near the docks are the worst. Usually the poorest homes are to be found there—the slums, Hell's Kitchens, and Hoovervilles.

Overcrowding in slums, a 50-50 chance at a private bath and toilet, poor ventilation, inadequate heating and lots of noise. That's the kind of home the New York longshoreman has to live in. This is also true for the larger shipping centers of the East and Gulf coasts.

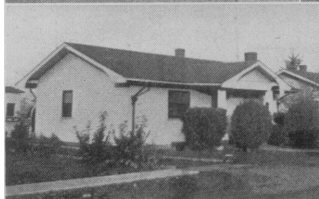
On the other hand, the average Pacific Coast longshoreman has no need to live near the docks; if he wants to (and who doesn't), he can live uptown or in the suburbs, where better homes are to be found, with some fresh air and plenty of room and a chance for the children to play and grow healthy. Note the pictures on Pages 19 and 20.

Draw your own conclusions about what kind of chance those children have to get a better start in life, in health, study, play and spirit!





Radios, electric ranges and refrigerators, even garden pools, are the result of a living wage to ALL members of the locals.



Comfortable homes, even small farms close to the city, can be owned by prudent use of longshoremen's incomes.

How Come, Steve?

THE REASON FOR THE DIFFERENCE

LET'S come right to the point. The reason for the difference is to be found in answering the question: HOW MUCH OF A CHANCE DOES THE AVERAGE LONGSHOREMAN HAVE TO WORK ENOUGH TO EARN A DECENT INCOME FOR HIMSELF AND FAMILY?

And that brings you right up against the matter of hiring and how it's done. In a nutshell, on the East and Gulf Coasts, you've got the **shape-up**; on the West Coast, you have **union-controlled hiring halls** which dispatch longshoremen in rotation, on the basis of their earnings, and which thereby place right into the hands of the union membership the equalization of earnings of all the men!

That, Brother Steve, is your rock-bottom reason for the difference. Let's see how it works out.

THE SHAPE-UP

Look at the picture on Page 24. East Coast and Gulf men will quickly recognize it. That picture can't be found on any Western waterfront today. It's a picture of the shape-up. Men pleading, begging—"Please give me the job, Mr. Boss!"

Miss Elizabeth Ogg, in her booklet, "Longshoremen and Their Homes," describes it very well:

"Down by the yawning entrance of a Chelsea Pier on West Street we can meet a group of longshoremen any day of the week. Clad in brown lumber jackets in winter, colored shirts in summer, they gather before the pier gates just before eight in the morning—often several thousand of them. They are there to shift cargo, if they can get the chance—to unload and load the vessel which has already docked or may be due to dock in a few hours at that pier.

"But between the longshoremen and the job he is so eager to get stands another character, not to be confused with the longshoreman—the stevedore. Promptly

at five minutes before eight the stevedore (or his foreman) strides out from the pier office to the great entrance doors, blowing a whistle. The huddle of expectant men shifts, takes on the shape of a horseshoe, three and four men deep, facing the doors. Then the stevedore begins to shout, "Number three! Number seven! Number ten!" and so on. As he calls each number a group of twenty men breaks away from the horseshoe and shuffles off on to the pier. Each group of twenty is a regular gang, men who always work together—eight in the hold, three on deck working the winches, eight on the pier, and one foreman or "hatch boss," as a rule. . . . After he has selected the gangs, the stevedore goes round the horseshoe, nodding here and there to a man an "extra" who is being taken on to help the regular gangs. All of these men, whether regular gangs or extras, are hired by the hour and paid by the hour. And they are never sure that their work will last longer than two hours.

"Such is the shape-up system of hiring the men needed to load and unload a ship. It is a hangover from times gone by when ships were loaded entirely by hand. In those days the stevedore wanted to hire the biggest and strongest men he could find. He therefore grouped them in a semi-circle so that he could look them over and pick them by their build. Longshoremen still need stout hearts and strong muscles, for a bag of Cuban sugar weighs 330 pounds and a bale of American cotton 500 pounds. And they sometimes have to shift such loads by hand. But with the many mechanical aids to longshoring in use today, unusual physical strength is no longer a necessity. Nevertheless the old-fashioned system of hiring goes on—to the shipping companies a convenience but to the longshoremen a curse."

And the lady is absolutely right—"To the shipping companies a convenience, but to the longshoremen a curse!" That's the shape-up.

✓ For the employers the shape-up is a convenience because it enables them to play off one group of men against another; to build up a core of stooges who, because they are given a corner on the work, try to be company stool-pigeons among the men; to keep the men disorganized even when they belong to the union, because, played one against another, it is impossible to get any sort of unified action to improve the lot of all of them, thereby reducing the union itself to a money-collection agency.

This system is a curse to the longshoremen because,

while a select number can make a decent wage, the average longshoreman doesn't know when he'll be working from day to day; a curse because his work and life are made uncertain and insecure; because he is preyed upon by a bunch of bribe-takers who take advantage of his insecurity to force tribute from him in return for "special consideration"; a curse because he can't uphold human dignity and self-respect; a curse because it cripples his union and he can't feel its strength; a curse because he must plead and beg, pay bribes and give tribute to some petty ILA racketeer for what should rightfully and freely be his—a chance to work.

SHAPE-UP AND BRIBERY TWO OF A KIND

The shape-up brings bribery with it. Everybody knows it exists. The stench of waterfront bribery has come to the nostrils of many authors who have written about longshoremen. (See "Longshoremen and Their Homes," by Elizabeth Ogg, Greenwich House, 1939; also "The Waterfront Labor Problem," by Edward E. Swanstrom, Ph.D., Associate Director of Catholic Charities, Diocese of Brooklyn, Fordham University Press, 1938, pages 27, 28 and 29.)

It is a well known fact that the kick-back exists extensively on the East and Gulf coasts. It is further known that ILA business agents, some ILA union delegates and hiring foremen take a very liberal part in maintaining this "system." **One thing is clear. The reason such graft and corruption can exist is due to the existence of the shape-up and the complete lack of protection it offers the men. Get rid of the shape-up and you get rid of the conditions that breed the kick-back!**

MORE LONGSHOREMEN THAN JOBS!

That is another evil the shape-up brings with it. With no effort to restrict the number of longshoremen, the ILA has taken into it any man willing and able to pay his initiation fee and dues, without any regard as to



East Coast system of hiring—the “shape-up.” Courtesy “Friday”

whether he'll ever get a chance to work. Cases are known where business agents of individual locals have arbitrarily raised or lowered initiation fees, and at times a very exorbitant fee has been taken from new members, with no guarantee of their work prospects. The result is that there are more longshoremen than jobs; consequently, the competition between all of them for the fewer jobs becomes keener and the men become split up even more; and, of course, the more jobless longshoremen hungering for a job, the greater the "take" in bribes and graft for the petty racketeers.

It is at once easy to see that the leadership of the ILA, operating with the shape-up and supporting it, is not at all interested in the welfare of the average run of longshoremen, but is interested, first and foremost in making as much out of it for itself while the making's good!

This setup means that the rank-and-file Eastern longshoreman has no say in the affairs of his union; that his union means little to him since it can't protect him. This setup means that a bureaucratic clique of self-seeking misleaders, working in cahoots with the employers, is riding high and mighty in the saddle of the ILA, running the whole shebang like a bunch of vest-pocket dictators. That, Brother Steve, is the shape-up and its results on your life.

THE WEST COAST SET-UP

Look at the pictures on Pages 26 and 28. These pictures were taken in the Central Longshore Dispatching Hall in Portland. They show the posting of gang-hours, the peg-board for extra men, the warm and roomy hall for awaiting calls. All up and down the West Coast, wherever the ILWU is to be found in a port, you can see the same thing. The pictures themselves nearly explain the West Coast setup.

So successful is the West Coast setup that the National Research Project of the WPA made a special study of it in San Francisco, biggest Pacific Coast shipping center and published a book on their findings called "Decasual-



The West Coast system of hiring—"The Hiring Hall."

ization* of Longshore Work in San Francisco." This is what the "San Francisco News" said about this study on April 24, 1939:

**"DOCK WORK PLAN PRAISED; ROTATION SYSTEM
DECLARED BEST IN THE UNITED STATES**

"Washington, April 24.—The work-rotation system set up for longshoremen in San Francisco in 1935 has proved the most successful of any attempt ever made in this country, according to a study just published by the WPA National Research Project.

"... The San Francisco work-rotation scheme is thus a share-the-work plan without the usual implications of underemployment—a plan operating within the framework of controls, which, in fact, tend to insure adequate employment to the registered labor force.

"Although no data are available on earnings of longshoremen in San Francisco before the inauguration of work-rotation, the relative degree of security before and after its initiation is indicated by the fact that in 1933 there were about 3000 regular workers and 4800 casuals, compared with 4600 regulars and 3800 casuals in 1937."

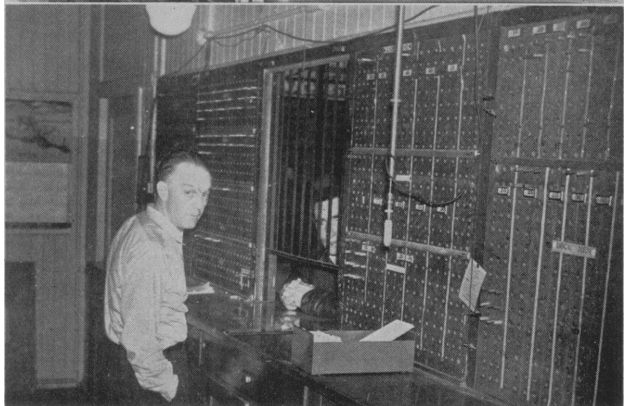
In other words, Brother Steve, the West Coast set-up which replaced the shape-up, not only gave more jobs to longshoremen but also gave more steady work, and thus a higher income. (See chart, Pages 10 and 11.)

HOW IT WORKS

A Centralized Dispatching Hall is maintained in each port jointly by the longshoremen and the employers. All longshoremen are registered at this hall. Dispatchers, elected and chosen by the rank-and-file longshoremen, are stationed here to receive the phone calls of the companies for men.

A huge blackboard, visible to all, lists all the gangs, and the dispatchers chalk up the time the gangs are to report to work alongside the gang number. The gangs are dispatched in rotation; that is, they are given turns to work, thus equalizing the earnings of all gangs. (See Chart on pages 10 and 11.)

* Decasualization. The term "casual work" is another way of saying unsteady and uncertain work. Decasualization is the effort to get rid of that uncertainty and to make it more steady.



Longshoremen's cars line the curb outside the hiring hall. The "board" is operated from inside the office—men can check their positions from the hall.

For permit men, a special peg-board is set up, at which these men check in, and which records their earnings and makes it possible to dispatch them with an eye to evening up their earnings.

Dispatchers report regularly to the union membership meeting and are completely under the control of the rank and file, to whom they answer for all their union and dispatching activities. Elections of dispatchers take place every six months or year, according to the rules of the given ILWU local.

MAINLY AS A RESULT OF THIS SET-UP, EMPLOYMENT OF LONGSHOREMEN HAS INCREASED MORE THAN 30% OVER 1933!

As long as Pacific Coast longshoremen retain and strengthen their rank-and-file control over their union and follow the militant policies of the ILWU, they need have no fear of the shape-up, bribery and kick-backs, poor wages and deplorable working conditions. These evils of the past have been relegated to the Museum of Ancient History by the ILWU longshoremen. The days of a few men cornering the work and reaping high wages, while the majority catch the crumbs, are gone forever from the West Coast. It is the rightfully proud boast of all West Coast longshoremen that since the 1934 strike and the beginning of the present set-up, they have not had to turn to relief as a means of making up for meager earnings.

But, if this is true for the West Coast, it is, unfortunately, not the case on the Atlantic and Gulf coasts.

Today the tremendous power and strength that is the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union (CIO) is in a position to negotiate with the employers for a five-year contract to maintain present basic working conditions, such as the six-hour day, the hiring hall, standard load limits, and the right to discipline their own members.

What Can You Do About It, Steve?

A PROGRAM OF RANK-AND-FILE ACTION

HOW can East Coast and Gulf longshoremen improve their lot so that they have conditions equal to those on the West Coast? That's the big question before ALL American longshoremen—East and West coasts both. For the Western longshoremen know only too well that as long as conditions of their East Coast fellowmen are bad, just so long will the shipowners and waterfront employers try to bring back "the good old days" of the shape-up; just so long is their Central Hiring Hall in danger; just so long is it difficult to make further gains in the common effort to improve their conditions.

It is therefore of the greatest interest to West Coast longshoremen that matters improve in the East and on the Gulf.

HOW IT CAN BE DONE

The solution, a Centralized Hiring Hall under union control, with rotation of work and equalization of earnings, sounds pretty simple, doesn't it? Commonsense and fair enough, one would think! Yet the waterfront employers fought long and hard to prevent it! And no wonder! Bringing it about meant that they could no longer play off one group against another; they couldn't be the absolute and undisputed dictators of the lives of longshoremen much longer! Yes, it was a long and bitter fight, but it was worth it, and the longshoremen won.

It's not easy to get rid of the shape-up and the dictators who live off it and run it to the detriment of the rank and file! But there's only one way to do it—for the rank and file of the International Longshoremen's Association to take matters into their own hands and run the union and its affairs and their own lives **THEMSELVES!**

Only in this way can you throw off the shackles of uncertainty and the insecurity of the shape-up.

To do this, the rank and file must rise up and seize control of their union, put in a rank-and-file leadership and get rid of the shape-up, putting in its place a set-up like that on the West Coast!

What must it mean to rank-and-file Eastern longshoremen when the price of food, clothing and rent start zooming sky-high, especially in these war times (remember the first World War!), while your yearly average remains the same or advances very little? It can only mean one thing: You must have such direct control over your union, its leadership and its policies, so that you can meet all and any emergencies and sharp changes in your living and working conditions.

THE ANTI-UNION WAR DRIVE

With another war for profits raging in Europe, and with the growing danger of our country becoming involved, there opens up before the employers the enticing vision of making fabulous fortunes through a heyday in profits and profiteering. To do this, they have begun a vicious and sweeping union-busting drive.

Taking advantage of the weakness in the ILA and the bad practices of some of its leaders, the Federal Government has begun a drive, under the guise of enforcing the anti-trust laws, to break up and destroy the ILA! This is part of a drive to destroy all unionism in the longshoring industry, in all trades and industries!

DON'T BE LEFT OUT IN THE COLD!

By maintaining the strictest vigilance, strengthening their rank-and-file union and holding firmly onto their gains, the members of the West Coast ILWU can and will meet and defeat the attacks of the union-busting open-shoppers and their henchmen in the Federal Government.

But where does the rank-and-file longshoreman on the East Coast and Gulf stand? Like living in a home without a roof overhead in the midst of a thunderstorm, members of the ILA stand unprotected and without means to

defend themselves against the terrific onslaught of the employers which has just begun!

IT'S NOT TOO LATE!

But it's not too late! NOW is the time when the rank and file of the ILA must rise to the defense of their right to organize in the union of their choice. This can best be done by taking into their own hands the fate and destiny of their organization. **They must establish rank-and-file control and leadership!** That's the only way to save their union for themselves!

This is a most crucial moment in the lives of East Coast and Gulf longshoremen and their families! Only a rank-and-file union can save the day! Now is the time to do it!

NOW IS THE TIME!

The 100% organized and fighting longshoremen of the West Coast are with you to a man in your struggle to better your working and living conditions and are prepared to lend you every assistance in making it possible for you to control your own lives and destinies!

By your united rank-and-file action you can hasten the great day when there will be rank-and-file-controlled hiring halls in all American ports, when all American longshoremen can be brothers in a mighty national rank-and-file union with one unified policy and one great goal—**A BETTER AND HAPPIER LIFE FOR ALL LONG-SHOREMEN AND THEIR FAMILIES**, respected members of the mighty Family of Labor!

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• Comments and queries concerning the contents of this booklet will be welcomed from our Eastern and Gulf brother longshoremen. Further information or definite assistance will be gladly given by application to either the San Francisco or Seattle district offices of the ILWU.



International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union

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