

ILWU Local 10 Pays Tribute to Howard Keylor Longshore Veteran of Bay Area Labor Struggles



Local 10 of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union in San Francisco is holding a public event to honor Howard Keylor. A veteran of the Battle of Okinawa, Howard opposed the atomic bombing of Japan, an experience that led him to become anti-militarist, anti-racist and anti-imperialist. He quit college to support Filipino farm workers in the 1948 asparagus strike and became a labor activist during the McCarthy period, joining the longshore union in Stockton in 1953.

Like the core founders of the ILWU, Howard seeks to replace capitalism with socialism. During his decades on the waterfront, he initiated, organized and participated in many picket lines and demonstrations, including the longshore strike of 1971-1972, the ILWU's 1974 KNC Warehouse strike of Mexican American workers in Union City, the historic 11-day 1984 boycott of South African cargo to protest Apartheid, the 1999 coastwide shutdown and march of 25,000 in San Francisco to demand freedom for Mumia Abu-Jamal, the most prominent political prisoner in the U.S., the 2008 May Day anti-imperialist war shutdown of all West Coast ports, the blockades of Israeli ships to protest the war on Gaza, the 2011 ILWU struggle against the grain monopolies in Longview, Occupy Oakland's march of 40,000 to the port and countless other militant job actions and protests.

Howard Keylor is a veteran of the militant labor history of the Bay Area.

Please join Local 10 in honoring Howard on his 93rd birthday:

Sunday, December 9th 2018, 2 - 4pm

**ILWU Local 10, 400 North Point St., San Francisco
Henry Schmidt Room (near Fisherman's Wharf)**

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An army veteran of the Pacific Theater in World War Two, Brother Keylor became a longshore worker in Stockton in 1953 and later transferred to the San Francisco local. In 1971 he, along with Brothers Herb Mills and Leo Robinson, and a majority of the Local 10 membership, opposed the proposed 1971 contract which codified the 9.43 steadyman system. This led to the longshore strike of 1971-1972, which shut down 56 West Coast ports and lasted 130 days. It was the longest strike in the ILWU's history.



Brothers Howard Keylor, Larry Wright and Jack Heyman at the community picket of the ZIM Shenzhen, June 20th 2010

Like the founders of the ILWU, Brother Keylor seeks to replace capitalism with socialism, a commitment he maintained all his life. He served on the Local 10 Executive Board and was frequently an elected Caucus and Convention delegate. Brother Keylor was a member of the Militant Caucus, a class struggle rank-and-file ILWU group which published a regular newsletter, the "Longshore Militant". He later split from the Militant Caucus and published a separate newsletter on his own, the "Militant Longshoreman." Both called for breaking with the Democratic and Republican Parties, and building a Worker's Party to Fight for a Worker's Government.

Brother Keylor has always worked to extend Local 10's solidarity to other unions and locals. In 1974, he supported the ILWU Local 6 strike at KNC Glass in Union City, in which a mass picket line defeated the police and scabs, resulting in a contract for a workforce composed primarily of Mexican-American immigrants. Keylor advocated deliberate defiance of the "slave-labor" Taft-Hartley law through illegal secondary boycotts and pickets by workers.

He worked tirelessly to uphold the ILWU's proud tradition of international labor solidarity by participating in protests and boycotts of military cargo bound for the military dictatorship in Chile in 1975 and 1978 and again in 1980 to the military dictatorship in El Salvador.

In 1984, Brother Keylor made the motion, amended by Brother Leo Robinson, which led to the eleven-day longshore boycott of South African cargo on the Nedlloyd Kimberley. In 1986, he supported the Campaign Against Apartheid's community picket line against the Nedlloyd Kemba. When Nelson Mandela spoke at the Oakland Coliseum in 1990 after his release from prison, he credited Local 10's actions with re-igniting the anti-Apartheid movement here.

Throughout his life, Brother Keylor extended solidarity where it was needed, including taking action against racist police murders and fascist terror, defending abortion clinics, and defending survivors of psychiatric abuse. Having grown up in Appalachia, he has always been an environmentalist, and in recent years helped shut down a Monsanto facility in Davis in 2012, as well as fighting pesticide use and deforestation in the East Bay.

In light of his contributions to the international labor movement, Local 10 voted the following resolution to honor Brother Keylor for his years of service to the working class and the oppressed:

"Therefore it is fitting for Local 10 to honor our oldest living veteran of these ILWU struggles, Howard Keylor (#20447), with a plaque and an event on his 93rd birthday in December in the Henry Schmidt room honoring his contributions to the workers movement in the best tradition of the ILWU."