

TRANSPORT WORKERS

SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE



In 2012, the Transport Workers Solidarity Committee presented Howard Keylor with a commemorative red banner of the Russian battleship Aurora in recognition for his contribution to international working class struggles, especially in maritime. Keylor introduced the resolution in 1984 to ILWU Local 10 that initiated the longshore anti-apartheid cargo boycott in the port of San Francisco of the ship Nedlloyd Kimberley from South Africa. The historic protest not only solidarized with the black South African workers who were fighting brutal apartheid capitalism but bolstered them in their struggle. Nelson Mandela credited the longshore union's action with sparking the anti-apartheid struggle in this country, part of a worldwide movement which eventually toppled the racist apartheid regime. Keylor actively continues to defend workers struggles internationally such as the striking Marikana miners in South Africa who were massacred by police in 2012 at the behest of Cyril Ramaphosa, former miners' leader turned mine owner. He is now president of the ANC/SACP government.

Historical note*

The crew of the cruiser Aurora sided with the Russian revolution in February 1917. Because the overwhelming majority of the crew were Bolsheviks the Kerensky government ordered the ship to sea in October. The sailors defied Kerensky's orders and fired the shot which signaled the assault on the Winter Palace, the start of the first successful workers revolution.