

San Francisco Labor Council Resolution – Adopted Jan. 9, 2012 by unanimous vote
Condemn Use of U.S. Military to Escort Scab Grain Ship in Longview WA

Whereas, EGT, a joint venture led by multinational grain giant Bunge, agreed to hire union Longshoremen when accepting millions in taxpayer funds to build a huge new grain exporting terminal at the Port of Longview WA, but once the terminal was built has tried to void its contract and refused to hire ILWU labor. With the use of brutal police and courts and 220 arrests in the 225 member ILWU Local 21, EGT has managed to get enough scab grain across picket lines into the new terminal that EGT appears poised to load a ship soon in violation of their agreement with the port; and

Whereas, a solidarity caravan of thousands of union members and community activists – endorsed by ILWU Locals 10 and 21, the S.F. and Cowlitz County (Longview) labor councils and many others – is being organized to support our brothers and sisters in Longview, for an emergency mass protest when requested to do so, to confront union-busting by Wall Street on the Waterfront; and

Whereas, according to Longshore & Shipping News, within a month, the empty grain ship will be escorted by armed U.S. Coast Guard vessels and helicopters, from the mouth of the Columbia River to the EGT facility. The Coast Guard is an integral part of the US Armed Forces, operating under the Department of Homeland Security (except when engaged in combat operations abroad, as it did in Iraq, when it operates under the Navy); and

Whereas, this is the **first known use of the US military to intervene in a labor dispute on the side of management in 40 years** – not since the Great 1970 Postal Strike when President Nixon called out the Army and National Guard in an (unsuccessful) attempt to break the strike. The use of the Armed Forces against labor unions is something you expect to see in a police state. This is part of a disturbing trend where the US military, acting as enforcers for the 1%, is poised to be used against our own people, as exemplified by the new law allowing the military to imprison US citizens indefinitely without trial; and

Whereas, now the US military, which has been oppressing, bombing and threatening other nations [a military that's paid for with the workers' taxes] is now being used against **us**, against American working people and our unions. To quote ILWU international President McEllrath: "ILWU's labor dispute with EGT is symbolic of what is wrong in the United States today. Corporations, no matter how harmful the conduct to society, enjoy full state and federal protection while workers and the middle class get treated as criminals for trying to protect their jobs and communities."

Therefore be it Resolved, that the San Francisco Labor Council condemn in the strongest terms the announced use of US Armed Forces (Coast Guard) to provide an armed sea and air escort for the empty grain ship, which is due to call at the new EGT grain terminal, Port of Longview, Washington, to load scab grain for export to Asia. We condemn this use of the military as part of a union-busting campaign to lower the cost of labor on the waterfront and destroy the union;

And be it further Resolved, that the San Francisco Labor Council join with allies in other cities on the West Coast to participate in any press conferences and demonstrations that are organized to denounce this use of the military to intervene in a labor dispute on the side of Wall Street on the Waterfront;

And be it finally Resolved, that the Council circulate this resolution to affiliated unions, Bay Area labor councils, the California Labor Federation, as well as labor bodies in Oregon and Washington, for concurrence and action, and urge labor leaders including Richard Trumka and Mary Kay Henry to take a strong stand against this brazen assault on our labor rights and civil liberties.

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