

Bush halts ports' lockout of workers

David E. Sanger and Steven Greenhouse
New York Times

WASHINGTON (U-WIRE) — President Bush on Tuesday intervened in the 11-day shutdown of 29 West Coast ports, successfully seeking a court order to halt the employers' lockout of 10,500 longshoremen because the operation of the ports is "vital to our economy and to our military."

Judge William Alsup of U.S. District Court in San Francisco issued a temporary injunction Tuesday night ordering longshoremen to report to work immediately.

In seeking to suspend the shutdown for 80 days, Bush became the first president to invoke the Taft-Hartley Act's emergency provisions since President Nixon sought to stop a longshoremen's strike in 1971.

Alsup said he would conduct a hearing in a week on whether to grant a full 80-day injunction. If he grants it, the labor dispute would be

pushed past the Nov. 5 election, past the Christmas buying season, and perhaps past the start of military action against Iraq.

Bush said he was worried about the movement of military supplies. The Pentagon often uses commercial shipping lines to send supplies and equipment overseas.

The president sought the court order after Labor Secretary Elaine Chao was unable to negotiate a 30-day contract extension to reopen the ports. The International Longshore and Warehouse Union agreed to a 30-day extension, but the employers' group acknowledged it had rejected an extension, saying it feared that the longshoremen would engage in a renewed work slowdown.

Bush's aides said he was reluctant to act, but feared that a continuation of the lockout would undermine a sputtering economic recovery.

"This dispute between management and labor cannot be allowed to further harm the economy and

force thousands of working Americans from their jobs," Bush said in a hastily-called announcement to reporters in the Rose Garden.

On Sept. 29, the Pacific Maritime Association, a group of port operators and shipping lines, shut the ports and locked out the longshoremen, accusing the workers of engaging in a job slowdown. Union officials said the workers were merely observing safety precautions because five longshoremen died on the job this year.

For the White House, Tuesday's decision was a difficult political calculation. With union leaders opposed to a cooling-off period, some of Bush's political advisers feared that the move might mobilize union members against Republican candidates, less than a month from midterm elections. Several unions that Bush has courted say that such injunctions undercut labor's power in contract disputes.

"We're extremely disappointed," said Bret Caldwell, spokesman for the International Brotherhood of

Teamsters, the union wooed most vigorously by Bush. "The whole strategy of locking out the workers and urging the president to invoke Taft-Hartley was clearly an employer strategy to get around negotiating a contract with these workers. It's a bad precedent. It gives management the upper hand."

But some White House officials said that labor itself was divided on how to deal with the issue. "With every passing day, as the harm to the economy increased, the president leaned more and more in this direction," one senior administration official said. "It buys some time, it gets us past Christmas."

Moreover, there is a chance Bush may reap some political benefit. Many business groups lobbied for the president to seek an injunction, and they have sounded the alarm about the shutdown's potential to damage the economy.

Tracy Mullin, president of the National Retail Federation, said, "The president has shown political courage and leadership. He has

put national security and the economy first."

Bush's announcement came just one day after he appointed a board of inquiry, led by former Labor Secretary Bill Brock, to report to him about the damage caused by a shutdown of ports that handle \$300 billion in cargo each year. Administration officials said it was important for the president to move quickly to prevent further economic damage — they cited economists who say the port shutdown is costing the economy \$1 billion to \$2 billion a day.

Administration, management and union officials said Eugene Scalia, the Labor Department's solicitor, contacted the heads of the union and the Pacific Maritime Association, the port operators' group, on Tuesday morning to propose a 30-day extension. Several union leaders praised that approach because it showed the administration was seeking to heed union concerns and avoid invoking Taft-Hartley.

Sniper has affluent Maryland County on edge

Blaine Harden
New York Times

SILVER SPRING, Md. (U-WIRE) — For seven strange days, each more jittery than the last, a macabre lottery has been playing in Washington and its well-groomed suburbs.

It affords everyone who dares leave the house a chance — an infinitesimal chance, but a chance — of being murdered by an excellent marksman.

"You don't even have to play to lose," said Byrne Peake, 42, a building contractor here in Silver Spring, where last week a nanny was shot in the head while sitting on a park bench. "All you have to do is have a pulse."

And yet — with six dead, two seriously wounded, including a 13-year-old boy shot on Monday on his way to school, and the sniper still out

there somewhere — the quotidian pulse of suburban life thumps on.

The Beltway, which slices through neighborhoods where seven of the shootings occurred, remains jammed and manic. School attendance has not swooned, although children sit in classrooms behind drawn shades, recess has been put on indefinite hold and police officers with rifles patrol schoolyard perimeters.

People here are carefully carrying on with the tasks that keep them alive — and make them targets.

"If you let this sniper run your life, you may as well hide in the back hall closet," said Peake, who was out this crisp autumn afternoon at Sligo Creek Golf Course. The course lies 10 minutes from the Kensington Shell Station, where last Thursday a

woman was killed while vacuuming her minivan.

While Peake was willing to play golf on a thickly wooded course where he conceded he was fair game for a sniper, he has reined in his family. His 3-year-old daughter is not allowed out of doors.

This combination of annoyed bravura and calibrated retreat has begun to define the daily lives of residents of Montgomery County. Before five people were shot to death here in the past week, this sprawling suburb of Washington was known primarily for the extraordinarily high percentage of its residents who are well-off, well-educated and live in big houses.

Now it is a place where going to school requires tactical planning.

Nicholas Shann, 11, is a sixth-

grader at Julius West Middle School in Rockville, Md., about five miles from where a man was shot to death last Thursday while mowing a lawn.

Nicholas lives three blocks from the school and normally walks home by himself. But his mother, Allegra Shann, an interior decorator, has canceled those walks for the foreseeable future.

As has been the case since late last week, the shades at his school were drawn shut Tuesday, the doors were locked, all physical education class were confined to the gym and no one was allowed to go outside until buses and parents showed up to take children home. All after-school activities were canceled.

Teachers and students agreed that was it hard to concentrate in class on Tuesday. An unusually high per-

centage of the students who did show up Tuesday, Green said, ask to see the school nurse. They complained of stomachaches and several demanded that they be taken home, she said.

"I had a dream last night that the shooter guy was in my school," said Monica Kellem, 12, a seventh-grader from Rockville, before jumping on a bus home Tuesday afternoon. "Now, I am going home and I am staying home."

In nearby Kensington, Margaret Upton, 36, was asked by a reporter outside a children's library if she would talk about the shooting.

"Not out here," she said, as she pulled her baby from the back seat and grabbed her older son by the hand. "But after we get inside, I'd be happy to."

AUTHOR EVENTS

Oct. 10 • 7:30pm
University of Oregon
Knight Library Browsing Room

Author Kim Stafford
"Early Morning: Remembering My Father"



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The Testing Office is located on the 2nd floor (Rm. 238) of the University Health and Counseling Center, 1590 E. 13th Ave., Eugene OR.

The period of greatest demand is usually Sept. through March, so it makes sense to **plan ahead**.

For more information visit the Testing Office web site at <http://www.uoregon.edu/~testing/>

AUTHOR EVENTS

Oct. 9 • 7pm
100 Willamette Hall
University of Oregon

Author Tim Palmer
"Pacific High"



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