

...Solidarity with Occupy

(From Page 1)

berlain said.

There are dangerous times ahead, Chamberlain said, as was seen in Oakland and Atlanta, where police moved in forcibly to displace occupiers.

"The corporatists and the corporate media are going to push back. We're not going to be violent, but by God, we're going to stand our ground.... We are the 99 percent and we're not going to take it any more, we're not going to go away. We built this damn country. These are our streets. This is our city. This is our state. This is our nation."



Union members gather with their signs at Director Park in downtown Portland in a show of solidarity with Occupy Portland.

First Mexican trucking firm allowed on U.S. roads flunks

TIJUANA, Mexico (PAI) — The first Mexican trucking firm given tentative approval to have its trucks travel throughout the United States — allowed under NAFTA and done via a controversial Obama Administration pilot program — has flunked.

One of Grupo Behr de Baja California's rigs was so creaky it failed inspection at the Tijuana border station.

The U.S. would have passed the

company's trucks in anyway, but the Teamsters, who have opposed letting unsafe Mexican rigs roam U.S. roads, blew the whistle on the semi truck's failures. According to Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration data, Grupo Mexico trucks have a failure rate of 28.6 percent.

"We will continue our fight to keep our borders closed to unsafe Mexican trucks," Teamsters President James

Hoffa said. He called letting Mexican trucks roll over all U.S. roads "reckless."

"The fly-by-night Tijuana operator passed a preliminary inspection last month," even though the flunking semi was a "gross polluter," Hoffa said. "If this is the cream of the crop of Mexican operators, we can only imagine what will be crossing our border in the future."

Hoffa said opening the border will

Xerox strike averted

Workers at the Xerox printer head manufacturing plant in Wilsonville, Oregon, voted Oct. 25 to approve a new two-year contract — putting to rest earlier plans for a strike.

Xerox and Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 49 reached a tentative agreement Oct. 20 — one week after over 80 percent of the workers voted to authorize a strike. The agreement then went to a vote among the bargaining unit's 183 members, with the union bargaining team recommending approval. The vote was 92 percent to approve, said Local 49 Internal Organizer Casey Filice.

Overall, workers made concessions in the contract, despite Xerox' profitability. The union bargaining team had previously agreed to less generous retirement benefits, while Xerox agreed to let workers enroll in Local 49's superior health plan — at no extra cost to the company.

The sticking point which led to the strike vote was a demand by Xerox to reduce workers' short-term disability insurance benefit. The current benefit pays out 80 percent of pay for six months in the event of a serious illness or accident. Xerox wanted to cut that to 60 percent of pay, for five months, with a one-week waiting period before the benefit begins. In the end, the workers agreed to accept

the company's proposed benefit cut, but not until the contract expires Aug. 1, 2013. And at that time, workers would be allowed to offset the cuts by using one day of accrued vacation pay per week of disability leave. The one-week waiting period requirement and the shortening to five months begin Jan. 1, 2013, but workers will be able to use vacation days for the first week of disability also.

During bargaining, Xerox said it's making the disability benefit cuts company-wide. But the union negotiators didn't want to be the first. When the contract comes up again in 2013, it will be clear whether Xerox imposed the cuts on non-represented workers and managers.

SEIU Local 49 member Brian Wood, president of the Xerox Wilsonville bargaining unit, said he had mixed feelings about the contract settlement.

"I'm glad we can put it behind us," Wood said. "It's just frustrating that the company is making money and this is what they choose to offer. It's hard to stomach that they can pay the CEO \$13 million and yet they're going to freeze our pension."

"We're hopeful that in the next contract we can get some of it back," Wood said.

The same day workers approved the new contract, Xerox reported a 28 per-



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