

# Nabisco

From Page 1

standards of most production workers. For example, there's no premium, deductible or co-pay for the health insurance that covers workers and their families.

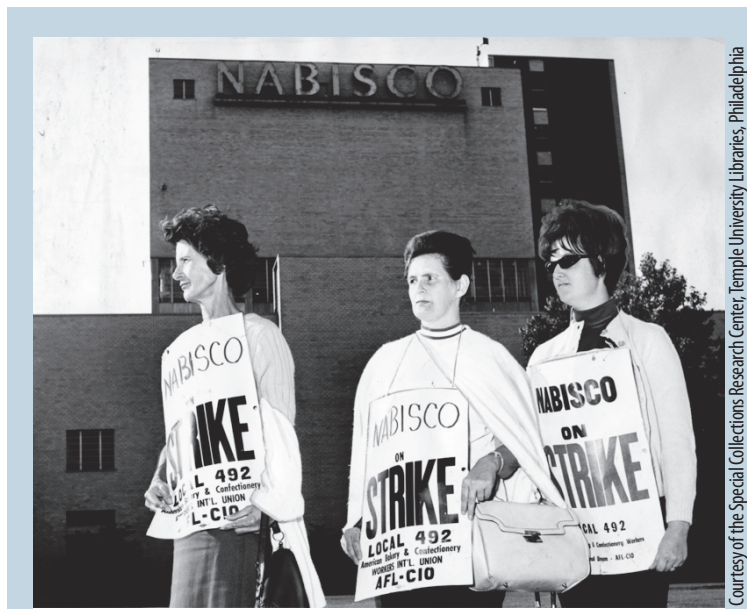
BCTGM mixed ballots from all locations before counting them, but strike leaders in Portland's Local 364 think the tentative agreement would have been rejected if only Portland voted.

Local 364 President Jesus Martinez says the compromise on weekend work was what members objected to most. The new contract allows Mondelez to operate up to four production lines per bakery with crews in which up to half the workers have voluntarily agreed to work fixed weekend schedules of three 12-hour shifts, either Friday-Saturday-Sunday or Saturday-Sunday-Monday, and be paid 40 hours for 36 hours of work. That allows the company to pay close to straight time for weekend work, but only for those workers. The rest of the weekend crews would continue to be paid at overtime rates of about \$45 and \$60 an hour respectively. Weekend work isn't

very family-friendly, but at least those who work it have felt well-compensated under that fiercely defended union contract clause. Before the strike, many were working lots of overtime and weekends: "12-2" schedules in which they'd work 12 days in a row followed by two days off.

Martinez and others say they doubt existing workers will volunteer for the weekend schedules, meaning the company would have to staff with new hires. And those new hires can't be forced to stay on the weekend shifts after one year, the contract says. Given those limitations, union leaders say the company may not be able to make much use of the weekend schedule compromise.

But even those who voted against the agreement count the strike as a success. Nabisco hired temporary replacements, but wasn't able to operate successfully. One reason is the know-how members took with them when they walked off. Local 364 Vice President Mike Burlingham says Mondelez has for years underinvested in maintaining and upgrading its machines, and workers have learned all kinds of tricks and hacks to keep them operating smoothly. Though it's hard for strikers to know exactly what went on



**FIGHTING FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS** Althea McAnulty, Mary Wilkinson, and Maryann Wingert picket the Nabisco plant in Philadelphia in this photo from the last Nabisco strike—September and October 1969. About 8,900 workers at 12 Nabisco plants took part in that strike, according to accounts in the Labor Press at the time. The 1969 strike was the third in four years, after 30 years of labor peace. The paper that published the photo, Philadelphia Evening Bulletin, ceased publication in 1982. The plant in the photo was shut down by Nabisco in 2016 and is now being redeveloped as a golf entertainment complex. But the Bakers union, and its national contract, live on.

Courtesy of the Special Collections Research Center, Temple University Libraries, Philadelphia

while they were out, there were signs it was a fiasco. Product that fails quality standards is collected and sold as animal feed, and Portland strikers observed twice as many truckloads of that waste leaving the plant in the first weeks of the scab operation, even though the plant was oper-

ating a fraction of its normal production lines.

Meanwhile, Nabisco as a brand faced a run of copious bad publicity: For the company to ask workers for concessions amid record profits made it seem like a corporate villain.

Strikers say solidarity from

non-strikers also played a big role in the strike's success. In Portland, Nabisco maintenance mechanics and electricians represented by Machinists Lodge 63 and IBEW Local 48 honored strike picket lines throughout. Truck drivers and train operators refused to make deliveries. And a determined core of community supporters used their bodies and vehicles as blockades to slow and frustrate the arrival and departure of replacement workers. Near the end of the strike, security guards and scabs were increasingly engaging in shoving matches and throwing punches at strike supporters, some captured on video.

Before strikers went back in, company managers held several days of back-to-work meetings in part to discourage potential harassment of the handful of workers who had crossed the picket line. But Burlingham says the managers also did something seldom seen: They said they were sorry.

"The strike was completely necessary, in my eyes," Burlingham said. "It's what got the company to the table to negotiate for the first time in its nine year existence. That was something that I don't think they would have done had we not gone on strike."

## UNION DEMOCRACY

### Teamster Tully elected as Second VP at NOLC

Dave Tully, Teamsters Local 223 president and union rep, was elected second vice president of Northwest Oregon Labor Council (NOLC) in a contested roll call vote at the Sept. 27 delegate meeting, outpolling American Federation of Teachers-Oregon president Jaime Rodriguez. The election was held to fill the vacancy under NOLC's rules, no affiliated international union is allowed to have more than one top officer spot, so longtime second vice president Ed Barnes stepped down when Scott Zadow was elected president. The cascade of vacancies was set in motion when UFCW Local 555 withdrew from NOLC in March, and it continues: Tully's election creates a vacancy on the NOLC Board, and nominations will be taken at the council's Oct. 25 delegate meeting.



Dave Tully

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