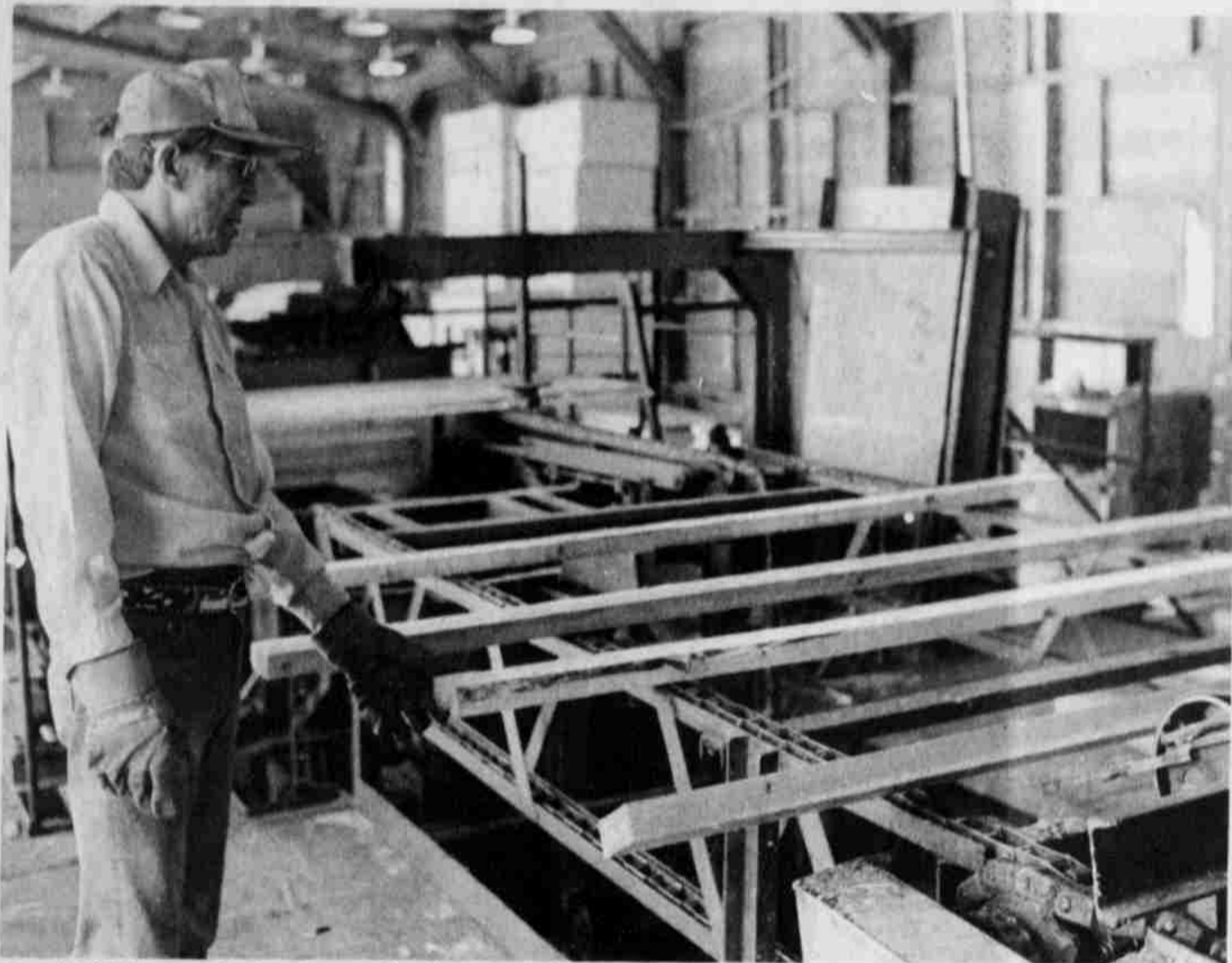


WSFPI resumes operation one week after shutdown

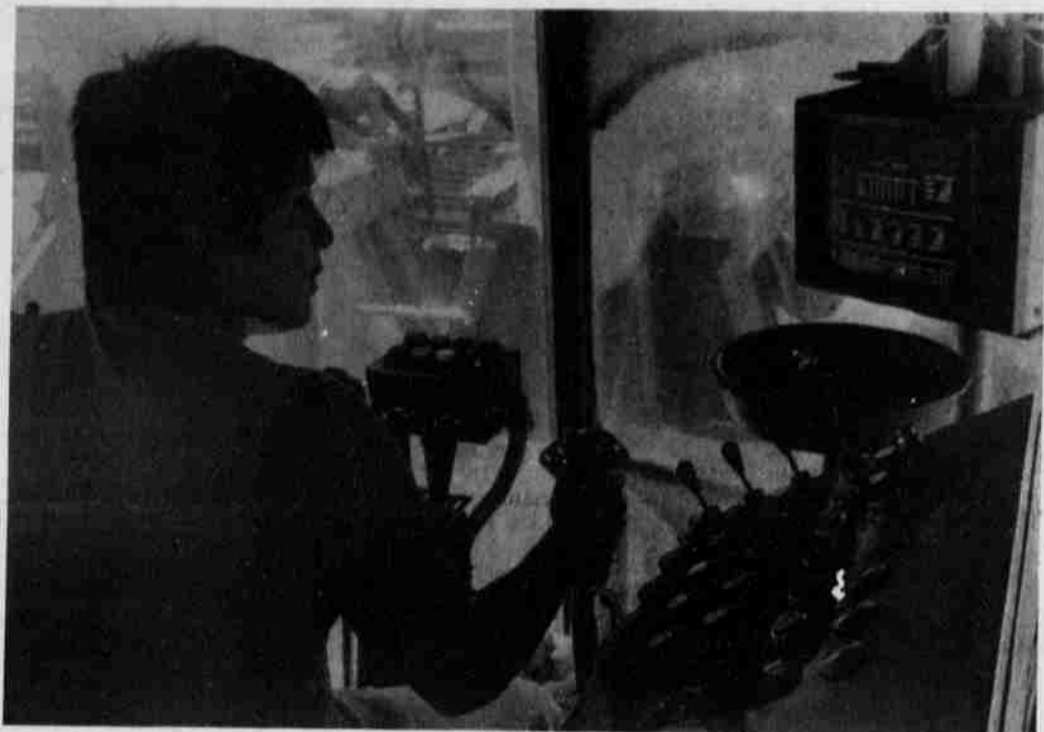


Ben Holliday worked at the stud mill as a stacker.

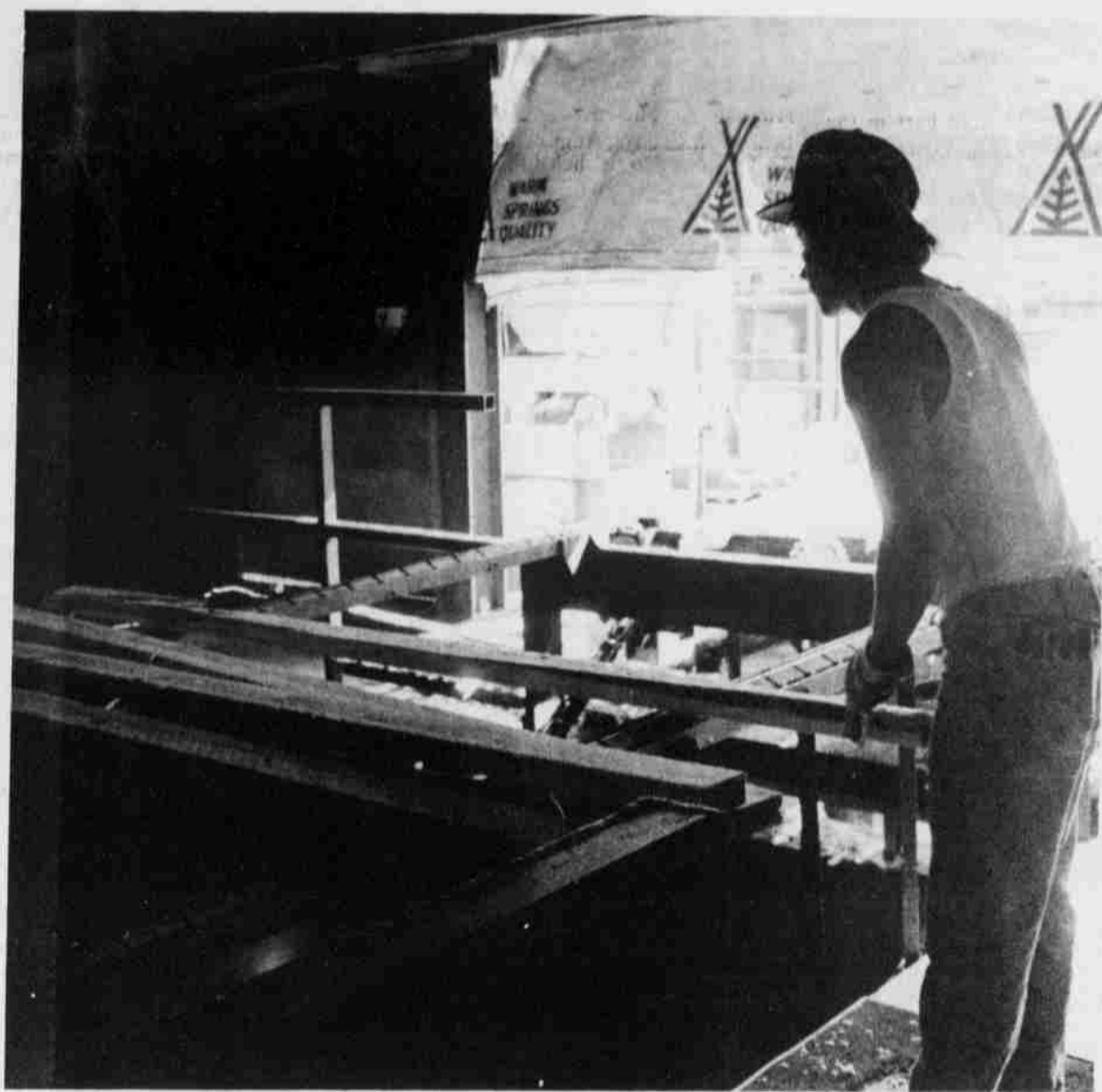
Work at Warm Springs Forest Products Industries was halted August 8 after union employees voted to strike. In the aftermath of that decision, some employees chose to return to work, getting the mill back in operation. The team effort on their part may play an important role in improved production, self-esteem and well-being.



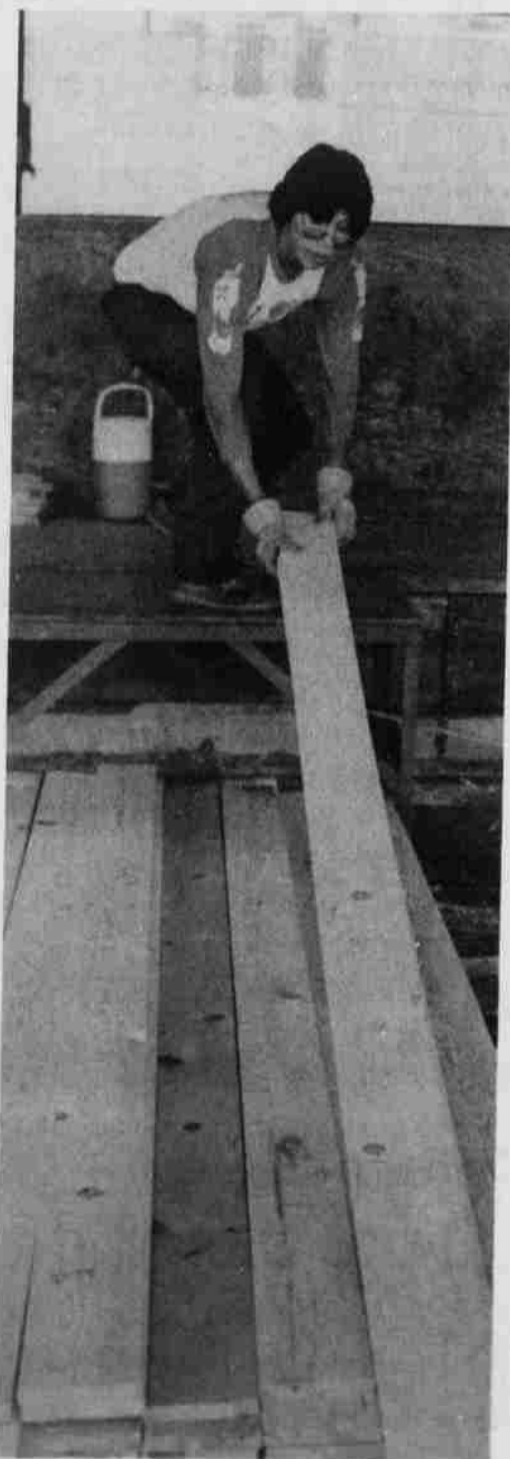
Julian Smith graded lumber as it came through the planer.



Easton Aguilar is learning to operate the bucking saw in the log center. He would not have had the opportunity to learn the skill had it not been for the strike.



Maury Rhoan worked as an edger off bearer in the stud mill.



Joe Winishut stacked planed lumber as it came off the line.

Photos and text
by
Donna Behrend

Strike continues; union, management at odds

While work at Warm Springs Forest Products Industries resumed last week, picketers across the Deschutes River continued their protest of "unfair labor practices." With the strike in its third week, the strikers and management are as adamant now as they were on the first day of the strike August 8.

Three days after the walkout, union officials filed a complaint against the Confederated Tribes stating their constitutional rights had been violated when the Warm Springs Tribal Council had excluded the picketers from reservation lands. The Tribe, based upon their treaty, have the right to exclude non-members of the tribe from the reservation.

Three Indian picketers, including one tribal member and 12 non-member picketers were either arrested or cited by Warm Springs police officers. Those cases cited into Jefferson County District court

were dismissed.

According to local union president Dave Coe, the charges in the original complaint against the tribe were amended by the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) a few days later, adding that the company (WSFPI) was coercing employees by informing them that the union had been eliminated from the mill. "We're waiting for a ruling from the NLRB," Coe said.

Approximately five union employees crossed the line earlier this week and some tribal member and affiliates had resigned from the union and returned to work. There are currently about 150 involved in the pickets. Coe added that some have gone to work in full-time positions. Others have found part-time jobs and continue to picket four hours a day, two days a week.

Coe said that "it's hard to say" how long the strike will continue. "It's in the company's court now,"

he said.

The Western Council of Industrial Workers sent a telegram last week "demanding" that negotiations resume.

"There has been no response on the company's part" to open the negotiations, said Coe.

WSFPI general manager Bob Macy, Sr. stated that at the last negotiations meeting August 5, an "offer was made to open the books for an audit" by union auditors. Union officials did not take advantage of that offer. Mill management was not formally notified that employees would walk out August 8. "At the conclusion of the meeting," said Macy, "we had the impression that negotiations would continue."

In a letter to employees, Macy stated that "commencing August 22, the company will begin filling vacancies created by the work stoppage." Because of that dead-

line, pickets walked across the Deschutes bridge at 6 a.m. August 22 and gathered at the entrance to the mill. According to Coe, "we felt we had the right to see who was crossing the line and betraying us." Eleven federal and tribal law enforcement officers were at the mill entrance and met the picketers. Less than an hour later, the picketers returned to the other side of the river. "We did not intimidate anyone and we made no gestures. We had no problems. We were showing our strength and that we're still holding together."

When and how the strike will end is unknown. However, in an effort to clarify misunderstandings and miscommunication, a special strike bulletin will be published next week. A comprehensive look at mill operations, employee relations and union regulations will be available Friday.