

Judge orders end to Sea-Land strike

By STEVE SEPLOCHA
Daily News business editor

U.S. District Judge James Fitzgerald Friday ordered striking Teamsters union members to return to work at Sea-Land Service Inc. operations in Anchorage and Seattle.

The order is temporary and could be lifted after an injunction hearing the judge set for Thursday.

Pickets at the port were removed by the union within an hour of the decision and

Teamsters win victory in labor board ruling

Teamsters Union Local 959 this week won what could prove to be a major victory in its 15-month strike against Anchorage Cold Storage.

The National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) in Washington, D.C., ruled a union certification vote held in June was valid,

thus clearing the way for tabulation of the ballots as early as next week.

Teamsters had asked for the election to preserve their right to represent employees of Anchorage Cold Storage, a wholesaler

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employees began reporting to their stations.

Work should return to nor-

mal by 7 a.m. today when the next ship, the Galveston, is scheduled to dock, according

to Tom Coburn, Sea-Land's port manager.

Fitzgerald acted after the

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Sea-Land, however, said it had no control over pay and benefits provided by other companies and, since Sea-Land had no trucking operations of its own, that the strike was an illegal secondary boycott.

The NLRB agreed with the company and issued a formal unfair labor practice complaint against the union two hours after the strike began. It then sought the restraining order claiming the company was losing money and faced potentially serious losses of perishable commodities.

The NLRB further said the public was being hurt because of shipping delays to private industry and the military.

Meanwhile, management

personnel in Anchorage completed unloading the 525-foot vessel Newark during the night Thursday.

All of the approximately 300 containers aboard the ship had been delivered or were en route to customers Friday, according to Jim Davis, Sea-Land's Alaska general manager.

Davis said the customers suffered because of delays, but that deliveries were made and no perishables were lost.

He added that financial loss to the company during the 50-hour shutdown would be in the thousands of dollars and that serious losses would have been felt had the matter not been resolved before the arrival of the Galveston.

In Seattle, the company's problems were less severe

than here. Longshoremen at that port returned to work after a dockside arbitrator ruled the strike illegal. Delays were caused by Teamsters drivers who got out of their trucks at the picket line and management personnel then drove the vehicles through the line.

About 20 pickets marched during the day Friday at the Seattle port. The pickets said they had been hired by the Teamsters but would not reveal who had done the hiring.

The injunction process that will begin next week is aimed at stopping the strike until an expected union appeal of the secondary boycott finding is heard.

The hearing will be before an administrative law judge and will require several

Seattle federal court transferred the request for a restraining order sought by the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) to the Anchorage jurisdiction.

Teamsters Local 959 struck Sea-Land Wednesday afternoon because it said the company had violated a 2-year-old agreement to subcontract its hauling to firms with Teamster scale pay and benefits.

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months for preparation, testimony and deliberations.

Underlying the current dispute is an allegation by the company that the strike is the union's way of getting back at Sea-Land because the company recently began handling cargo for strike-bound Anchorage Cold Storage, a wholesaler and distributor of food and beverages.

Jesse Carr, Teamsters secretary/treasurer, threatened to shut down Sea-Land when a member complained about the cargo arrangement at a union meeting two weeks ago.

Union officials, however, deny any connection between the two disputes and maintain that the dispute with Sea-Land was long-standing and had reached a critical point before Carr's remarks.

The Anchorage Times Friday, October 15, 1982



Mike Dinneen of The Times

A Teamster picketer talks with a trucker at the Port of Anchorage after the union shut down Sea-Land operations

Teamsters strike reduces cargo on Sea-Land ships

by Jeff Berliner
Times Writer

Sea-Land vessels traveling between Anchorage and Seattle are half-empty because of a Teamster strike which has tied up traffic at both ports.

Freight is not making its way into Sea-Land docks for shipment to Alaska, because two big Seattle-area Teamsters unions are honoring picket lines thrown up by Alaska Teamsters Local 959.

And because of that, said National Labor Relations Board lawyer James Sand, the big shipping firm is putting its vessels to sea less than full.

Most of the freight on board is what Sand described as "low priority" freight which had been sitting in the Sea-Land yard at Seattle awaiting boat space.

Although an arbitrator ruled that Longshore Local 19 and Clerks Local 52 in Seattle had to cross a Teamsters picket line and return to work — they had earlier walked off the job — the arbitrator's ruling has had no practical effect since there is little work to do

as long as Teamster truckers refuse to haul freight in or out for Sea-Land, Sand said.

The NLRB cannot force the Teamster drivers to work without a court order, Sand said.

Chief U.S. District Court Judge Walter McGovern of Seattle transferred the case to Anchorage

today. The NLRB will attempt to get one of the two federal judges here to make a ruling this afternoon on the NLRB's request for a temporary restraining order against the striking Teamsters.

Teamster Local 174 is the biggest local in the Northwest, Sand

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said, and its local delivery truck drivers won't cross Alaska Teamster picket lines. Neither will Seattle Teamsters Local 741 allow its "over the road" drivers to bring freight in to the Sea-Land yard.

Honoring Teamsters picket lines here are the Anchorage Longshore Local 1 and the International Union of Operating Engineers Local 302.

Teamsters here brought Sea-Land operations to a halt because of a dispute centering around the trucking firms Sea-Land has hired to haul its goods from the port to various Alaska locations.

The union claims Sea-Land violated an agreement to use drivers getting only Teamster-scale wages and working under union hours and conditions. In other words, the union wants Sea-Land to give all its work to trucking firms affiliated with the Teamsters, according to NLRB officials.

Because the Teamsters targeted Sea-Land, the NLRB found the union action to be an illegal secondary boycott and charged the union with engaging in unfair labor practices.

Teamster officials have refused comment on their grievance with Sea-Land but said the company is the true target of the strike because it failed to live up to an agreement setting the standards for trucking firms it would use when it phased out its own trucking operation two years ago.

The union cited six Alaska trucking firms used by Sea-Land in violation of the agreement between the union and the company: Peninsula Shippers, Keystone

Trucking, Ocean Dock, Alaska Logistics, Air Logistics and Alltrans Alaska.

All six firms are non-union and Sea-Land uses them to haul its freight, the Teamsters have charged.

Sea-Land provided the NLRB with an entirely different list of trucking firms it claims to use — all of them union.

The difference, explained an NLRB attorney, is said to be that Sea-Land uses the union firms for short, insignificant hauls to bring the freight to the other non-union firms.

But whatever the arrangement is, the NLRB has ruled that the Teamsters may not legally strike Sea-Land in the trucking dispute because the union has not represented Sea-Land truckers since the company ended its trucking operation. The Teamsters dispute that.

Meanwhile, Sea-Land officials said they will lose \$2.3 million weekly because of the Teamsters' strike and are seeking an immediate court order. If the Teamsters are found to be conducting an illegal strike, they could be held liable for Sea-Land's losses if the company presses that in court, according to the NLRB.

Priority freight — including perishable foodstuffs — could be threatened if the strike continues, according to Sand. He said vanloads of Sea-Land cargo are sitting idle in both Alaska and the Seattle area awaiting shipment.

Another Sea-Land vessel arrives at the Port of Anchorage Saturday. The previous one was unloaded by Sea-Land management.

Sea-Land hauls about half of all consumer goods to the state and is the biggest container cargo shipper in the world.