

## Insights

**On the Waterfront** A 26-year-old longshoreman named Steve Surgan was the fifth worker to die while working the L.A. Long Beach Harbor in the last year, and his union says he died because people were trying to do things too fast. To make the point completely clear, the union won't be working at all on Thursday, June 27.

Surgan died June 22 unloading a containership, an example of the state-of-the-art shipping technique that bundles cargo into 20- to 40-foot-long steel boxes, which are unloaded as units with special equipment. In Surgan's case, the union says that the ship's crew unlash the cargo while the vessel was still at sea, to lessen the time spent unloading in port. The resulting unshipshape pile of loose tielines fouled a crane hoist beam. The crane operator freed the beam — which swung and killed Surgan with a single blow to the head.

David Arian, president of Local 13 of the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union, says the union will wait until the Monday following their 24-hour walkout for an "appropriate" response to the safety issue from L.A. shippers. If none is forthcoming, the strike will go on for real, until the issue of safety gets taken seriously.

Metropolitan Stevedore Operators, in charge of unloading, had "no comment at this time." Evergreen Marine, owner of the Taiwanese ship that Surgan was unloading when he was killed, would only say, "There's really no one present who's allowed to give any information regarding this matter."

**Train of Thought?** Hard on the heels of a \$39 million damage award in Portland against the Church of Scientology comes a Los Angeles case that may create even more waves.

Larry Wollersheim is suing the religion/corporation for more than \$25 million in damages, claiming he was sold more than \$100,000 worth of Scientology training on the basis of bogus promises that the training would raise his I.Q., make him "well" and give him "supernatural powers."

On Monday, July 1, Wollersheim's case is scheduled to be assigned a judge for its day in court.

The decision last month in Oregon sent hundreds of Scientologists marching in the streets of Portland to protest the award.

Testimony in the case included accounts of "hard T.R.s" (training routines) in which subjects were made to sit absolutely still for up to 15 hours a day, seven days a week, for weeks at a time.

"I expect," says attorney Leta Schlosser, who is representing Wollersheim, "to present some interesting testimony."