

The Province

Docks' praises sung

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Billy Bragg's got a brand-new musical message for Vancouver: Our dockers rock.

Bragg, a British leftie dear to the hearts of folk-festival fans, is one of 17 artists who've lent their voices to a CD celebrating the cause of 500 Liverpool longshoremen fired in 1995 and left adrift for years for defying a move to privatize England's last unionized port.

The disc also features Chumbawamba, Oasis, Paul Weller and the Boo Radleys.

In what became known as the world's longest picket line, dockers around the world refused to handle Liverpool's scab ships.

One of them, the Neptune Jade, became the movement's public focus. In Vancouver, on Oct. 4, 1997, a motley crowd of about 30 local activists braved bitter dawn rains in a picket line that sent the ship packing for Japan still fully loaded.

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