



FOREMEN'S UNION

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BULLETIN

September 2015

STOP WORK MEMBERSHIP MEETING THURSDAY, OCTOBER 1, 2015

7 PM AT THE CRUISE TERMINAL SP. 93

Executive Board Meeting: Last Wednesday of every month at 11:30 am unless otherwise noted

Come Backs: Effective Saturday, September 19, 2015 Class B Longshore workers will only be allowed comebacks in CL/HL category. This no comeback rule will be in effect until we have sufficient new registrants trained in CL/HL. This agreement was jointly agreed to with Local 13.

Food for Thought: As a newly registered worker in the Longshore industry, we would like to welcome you on behalf of the ILWU and impress upon you certain point of view for you to consider.

You are privileged to be entering an industry that is virtually unique in several very important respects. The industry provides jobs that are stable and ever-increasing in numbers in Southern California. We have survived the container revolution with our work opportunity intact. The collective bargaining agreement under which you work is very likely the best in the world, no matter what industry or what union you look at. In a very real sense, your table has been set; you are in every respect the envy of working people everywhere, and you shouldn't forget that.

Now it is important for you to know that the wages, healthcare benefits, pension benefits, pay guarantee plan benefits and other provisions under which you work didn't just materialize out of thin air: nor are they a function of the generosity of the employers. Plain and simple fact of the matter is that the conditions that we enjoy today, conditions that are unique to the West Coast Longshore industry, have directly to do with the ILWU – with the people who fought and died on the picket lines in the 1930's, with the people who fought to defend the union in the 1940's and 1950's, and with the rank and file workers who came before you and who saw this union as their hope for the future, as their best shot at justice on the job and improve living standards for themselves and their families. But what is crucial to the continued well-being of Longshoremen is the coastwise agreement. Local's 13, 63 and 94 are not an island and you should learn about the experiences of your brothers and sisters in other ports.

If you don't know so already, you'll quickly learn that the ILWU is your most valued possession. Your willingness to defend and protect it from those who would abuse and destroy it is the one absolutely essential ingredient without which your future and your families future is at risk.



I think you all know good and well that you are lucky to be here and that you're damned glad of it. But good fortune also conveys to you certain duties and responsibilities. The employers will make clear their expectations that you work productively and safely, that you acquire skills, that you be diligent and trustworthy – we'll not be labor their expectations. But as union men and women, we want to impress you with your union responsibilities.

What makes the ILWU special and different from any other union in the world is the fact that this union is truly the property of its members. It's run from the bottom up, not the top down. All officials at all levels of the organization are elected from the ranks. Policies and programs are decided upon by the membership. No one carries a big stick. We pride ourselves on selling people the facts, on encouraging healthy debate, and making our choices by democratic means. We believe that our members can be trusted, that if provided a clear and coherent account on any situation that they confront, they will come to a wise and just collect a decision.

We say this, knowing full well that these are complicated times we live in. We know that there are elements in this society, some even in this great union, who would destroy this union, who exploit its democratic procedures for their personal gain and ambition, who abused the privilege of membership, who counsel distrust of those among us whom we ourselves have elected to represent us.

You, therefore, have certain obligations thrust upon you from the union side. You have the obligation to participate to the fullest in union affairs – to attend meetings, serve on committees, run for, and if elected, serve in office. You have the obligation to protect our internal democratic procedures from those who would wreck them and from those who would exploit them for their own purpose and at your expense. You have the obligation to defend this union from attack from any quarter, not just because this is the right and ethical thing to do, but because your jobs and livelihood are on the line. Simply put, this union is your bread and butter, and it will only be as good and as strong as you make it. If the union is weakened, attacked, splintered or divided by people outside or inside of its ranks, your contract is in immediate jeopardy, and all the benefits and protections that are provided by the contract are put up for grabs.

As a final point, you can't take what we have for granted. You can't afford to ignore the struggles of those who went before you. You can't afford to ignore the principles upon which the union was founded on and which is presently functions. You can't afford to ignore those who cast doubt upon it, who exploit it for personal means, or who aspire to capture control from the rank-and-file. This is a great union. It has a noble history. Its strength and influence are a function of its rank-and-file membership. And, most importantly, its future will be only as good as you are willing to make.

We were asked to share this with our membership. *This was written in early 1970 by an unknown author and given to us at the PCPA convention in San Francisco on September 8, 2015.*
"What has Changed"!!

In Solidarity:

Daniel G. Miranda
President

Edward Alexander
Vice President

Mike Trudeau
Secretary – Treasurer

