

MARINE ENGINEERS' BENEFICIAL ASSOCIATION (AFL-CIO)

"On Watch in Peace and War since 1875"



M.E.B.A. TELEX TIMES

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UNIONS, WATERFRONT WORKERS SHOW SOLIDARITY DURING PEACEFUL PROTEST

In solidarity with peaceful protesters around the country calling for racial equality and demilitarization of police enforcement, waterfront workers around the country, including employers, held peaceful protests on Tuesday. Protests were timed with the final memorial service held for George Floyd, whose death at the hands of the Minneapolis Police Department sparked outrage and led to a nationwide call for change.

All along the West Coast, International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) members stopped work for an eight minute, 46 second moment of silence – the same length of time Floyd's neck was pinned under the weight of a Minneapolis police officer. "Our union has a long history of confronting racism on the job, in our communities and around the world," said ILWU International President Willie Adams. "Today we're joining millions of people who are demanding justice and fundamental change.... There's no place in the labor movement for any leader who defends the kind of depraved act that murdered Mr. Floyd," he said.

From noon to 1 p.m. on Tuesday, workers at East and Gulf Coast ports shut down cranes and computers and powered off equipment. The International Longshoremen's Association (ILA) and employer U.S. Maritime Alliance, Ltd. (USMX) collaborated on a protest hour and issued a joint statement in advance of the event. Among other things, they noted, "We may sit on opposite sides of the negotiating table but the ILA and USMX will be strongly united for this historic moment to honor the life of Mr. George Floyd and all victims of racist violence and to pledge to be the leaders that bring change for the good for all people so that George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, Walter Scott and so many others have not died in vain."

International Brotherhood of Teamsters members and other unions around the country also joined the protest. All showed unity to the gathering American voices pleading for a nation to guarantee "the same respect, freedoms and liberties" for all citizens.

Unions have long understood that labor rights and human rights are intertwined and diversity is considered a fundamental value and strength. Union members are united in the ongoing pursuit of economic, social and racial justice. Union members are taking a leading role in fighting against systemic

racism and continuing the labor movement's never-ending quest for justice. ILWU brothers and sisters are quick to tell you that, "an injury to one is an injury to all."

MARITIME LABOR SEEKS FEDERAL HELP TO RELIEVE CREWS

Maritime labor unions have made an appeal to the State and Defense Departments to help U.S. mariners navigate extreme COVID-19 lockdown provisions implemented by foreign nations that are keeping U.S. mariners trapped on their ships, long past the end of their scheduled assignments.

Six major maritime unions penned a letter to DOS Secretary Mike Pompeo and DOD Secretary Mark Esper alerting them of the problem and pointing out that lack of positive resolution to the situation "may threaten the essential supply chain for some 200,000 active U.S. military personnel now serving overseas." The letter was signed by the M.E.B.A. MM&P, AMO, SIU, SUP and MFOU.

Confining mariners to unabated, high-precision work for months past their assignments is an invitation to fatigue and additional stress that could jeopardize the efficiency of U.S.-flag ship operations - vital for our economy and national security. "Ship's captains, officers and crew members who sail under the American flag and perform these essential functions for our country have not been able to set foot on dry land in months," the letter reads. "Their workplaces have become floating prisons."

"Please make this a priority," the unions told the cabinet secretaries. "Help us bring these stranded U.S. mariners home to safe harbor."

The letter has been made available on the M.E.B.A. website located at www.mebaunion.org.

COMPANIES WORKING TOWARD CREW RELIEFS

M.E.B.A. vessels that are part of the Maritime Security Program engaged in international trade or contracted by the Military Sealift Command have encountered difficulties making crew changes due to pandemic restrictions in foreign countries.

The maritime unions and shipping companies have been working with Government agencies to effect crew changes for these vessels. In an April letter, American President Lines and Maersk Line, Ltd. expressed dire concerns to the U.S. Coast Guard and Maritime Administration about these restrictions.

Progress has been made recently in the efforts to relieve US crewmembers, many who have served aboard their vessels long past their assignments. All 17 crewmembers aboard the MAERSK DURBAN changed out in Haifa, Israel last week. The company is lining up flights to relieve SAFMARINE NGAMI crewmembers in Bahrain. However, a mandatory two-week quarantine in Bahrain slowed the process for all on-signers.

The MAERSK SENTOSA and the MAERSK KINLOSS have now changed service and are currently shuttling between the Middle East and India/Sri Lanka.

APL is looking into relief options for the APL GULF EXPRESS. In addition, contracted companies chartered a flight to Diego Garcia last month to effect crew changes on numerous CONMAR vessels.

URGENT ILO CALL TO RELEASE GLOBAL MARINERS

The International Labour Organization (ILO) has put out an urgent call for the release of up to 200,000 international seafarers trapped on their vessels due to restrictive COVID-19 policies. The ILO has urged governments, immigration, health and maritime authorities to work together to recognize seafarers as ‘key workers’ who ensure the flow of trade and the movement of vital medical supplies, safety equipment, food and other critical goods during the pandemic.

The ILO has called on governments to adopt, without delay, all possible measures to facilitate crew changes and the repatriation of seafarers, while taking steps to minimize the risk of contagion.

“I urge member States to recognize seafarers as “key workers” and adopt the urgently-needed measures that will enable those who have been working hard to keep us supplied with medicines, food and other necessities, to go home and be replaced by fresh crews,” said ILO Director-General Guy Ryder. “Forcing exhausted seafarers to continue working more than four months beyond the end of their contract is unacceptable. This jeopardizes their health and endangers maritime safety. Action is needed now to ensure decent work for seafarers, avoid maritime accidents and environmental disasters. We call on governments to work together to make these crew changes happen in safety.”

MOMENTUM SLOWS FOR ILL-ADVISED OAKLAND BALLPARK

The pandemic has helped dull interest in pursuing an ill-conceived plan to create a new 35,000-seat waterfront baseball stadium in Oakland that would interfere with ongoing port and vessel operations.

The push to relocate the Oakland A’s to a new ballpark on the waterfront along with a hotel and housing developments had been viewed as a ‘fait accompli’ at one time.

But enthusiasm for construction at the Charles Howard Terminal began to dampen after Oakland area businesses and transport unions, including the M.E.B.A., began informing the public about the unsuitability of the new site. The East Oakland Stadium Alliance, a coalition that includes the M.E.B.A., MM&P, ILWU, IBU and many others, have staunchly opposed building the new stadium in an already overworked traffic area. They called it a threat to public safety that would present transportation conflicts and impair smooth vessel operations, among other things.

The Alliance has urged planners to focus instead on building a modern ballpark at the current Coliseum site in East Oakland which already possesses the necessary transportation logistics network that the proposed site lacks.

The economic situation in Oakland, greatly exacerbated by the pandemic, is now giving Oakland authorities pause in their desire to pursue the massive initiative at the Charles Howard Terminal. The East Oakland Stadium Alliance sees this as a critical juncture in the battle against the move and needs Oakland area residents to get involved, voice their support for “staying put” and refurbishing the Coliseum and signing an online petition to oppose the Howard Terminal plan. You can read and sign the petition at www.123formbuilder.com/form-4755450/

DOYLE BRINGS M.E.B.A. EXPERIENCE TO PORT OF BALTIMORE

Congratulations to William Doyle, newly appointed by Maryland Governor Larry Hogan to lead the Port of Baltimore as the new Executive Director of the Maryland Port Administration. Bill got his start in the industry sailing around the world as an M.E.B.A. engineer. Later, he worked at our Headquarters in Washington D.C. for almost eight years as in-house counsel before joining the Federal Maritime Commission as a Commissioner in 2013. He signed up with the M.E.B.A. in 1992 after graduating from Massachusetts Maritime Academy. For the past two years, Bill has served as the Executive Director & CEO of the Dredging Contractors of America.

He takes over his new position on July 22 and relieves the outgoing Jim White, who retired from the post after leading the port for 18 years.

HOUSE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE LEADERS CELEBRATE JONES ACT

The Chair of the House Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure Peter DeFazio (D-OR) and Chair of the House Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Sean Maloney (D-NY) hailed the Jones Act upon the occasion of its 100th Anniversary last week (June 5th). As M.E.B.A. members well know, the Jones Act is a fundamental piece of U.S. maritime policy that ensures that the transportation of cargo or passengers between any two ports in the U.S. is conducted on vessels built, owned, and flagged in the U.S., and crewed by American mariners. The Jones Act was spearheaded by Sen. Wesley Jones (R-WA) and signed into law on June 5, 1920, by President Woodrow Wilson.

Chairman DeFazio said, “The Jones Act has been and remains critical to supporting U.S. mariners’ jobs and our maritime industry, not to mention bolstering our national security. Over its 100-year history, the Jones Act has been critical in times of war, national emergencies and natural disasters, and global crises such as the current pandemic. Without it, the fleet and maritime work force which moves 100 percent of our coastwise trade, would wither and substantially weaken the U.S. standing as a maritime power...As the Chair of the Committee with jurisdiction over maritime policy, it will continue to be a priority of mine to ensure the Jones Act remains an unwavering pillar upholding and strengthening U.S. leadership among the world’s maritime nations.”

Chair Maloney noted, “The bedrock principles and protections of the Jones Act are as essential today as they were when the Congress bill was passed a century ago. We are, at our core, a maritime nation. The U.S. Merchant Marine enables the country to project force anywhere around the globe and ensures the security of our waters at home. We cannot be complacent in our defense of the Jones Act, which remains a critical component of U.S. maritime and military strategy.”

ENORMOUS SURGE IN CYBER ATTACKS SINCE FEBRUARY

There has been a massive 400% increase in attempted hacks since February 2020 coinciding with a period when the maritime industry turned to greater use of technology and working from home due to the Coronavirus pandemic. The data was cited by Israeli cybersecurity specialist Naval Dome, which believes the pandemic is leaving the maritime and offshore energy sectors more vulnerable to cyber-attacks than before. Naval Dome ascribed the spike in malware, ransomware, and phishing emails to the COVID-19 crisis, adding that travel restrictions, social distancing measures, and economic recession are beginning to bite into a company’s ability to sufficiently protect itself.

“As budgets are cut and in the absence of service engineers, we are seeing ship and offshore rig staff connecting their Operational Technology (OT) systems to shoreside networks, at the behest of OEMs

[Original Equipment Manufacturers], for brief periods of time to carry out diagnostics and upload software updates and patches themselves. This means that their Information Technology (IT) and OT systems are no longer segregated and individual endpoints, critical systems, and components may be susceptible.”

Naval Dome said that during the first three months of 2020, attacks targeting home workers increased tenfold, adding that PC security software provider McAfee reported that between January and April cloud-based cyber-attacks on all businesses increased by 630%. “If hackers penetrate networks,” they said, “and critical equipment is exposed, there could be significant safety, downtime, financial and potential reputational damage,” the company stressed, adding that remote working and the introduction of remotely controlled, autonomous technologies is likely to take place at a faster pace in a post-coronavirus world.

KEEP HQ UPDATED WITH YOUR LATEST CONTACT INFO

As a reminder, you should keep the Union updated with your current contact information including mailing address. This can be easily achieved using the address change form available on the M.E.B.A. website. It can be found at www.mebaunion.org under the “Members” tab or in the “Documents & Member Notices” section.

Alternatively, you can send your updated information to Renee Bowman at HQ by mail, fax at (202) 638-5369, or e-mail at membership@mebaunion.org

Since the M.E.B.A. Plans office in Baltimore and Headquarters databases are NOT linked, you must also forward a signed change of address form to the Plans Office if you wish to update your information with them.

JUNE ONLINE MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

Monday, July 6 – Boston@1200; Seattle (Fife)@1300;
Tuesday, July 7 – CMES@1430; Charleston@1400; Houston@1315; Oakland@1230;
Wednesday, July 8 – Jacksonville@1300; New Orleans@1315;
Thursday, July 9 – L.A. (San Pedro)@1230; NY/NJ@1300; Norfolk@1300; Tampa@1300;
Friday, July 10 – Honolulu@1100.

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The M.E.B.A. is the nation's oldest maritime labor union, established in 1875. M.E.B.A.'s expertise and demonstrated track record of readiness, safety, and loyalty in answering America's call to action in times of both peace and war is unrivaled in the world. M.E.B.A. HQ – Phone: (202) 638-5355; mebahq@mebaunion.org. Visit us on Facebook. For publication and related inquiries (and to send photos & hot news tips) contact Marco Cannistraro, M.E.B.A. Special Projects & Communications – marco@mebaunion.org Visit us on Facebook, follow us on Twitter and check us out on Instagram.