Meeting With Leo

Of the 13% of the population of the US that work are union members that are allowed to join unions. So what happens it this creates a situation where there is an unfair wage dispariagement from different companies. For instance Walmart will pay their truck driver much more money to go across the country, but when it comes to benefits and stuff they would then have them pay for their own benefits, such as a.medical insurance b. 401k and pensions. The teamsters union or any union can negotiate collectively on behalf of all the members where the employers are now responsible for that cost. So it creates a division of workers and stuff and puts people in different classes where workers are struggling and fighting amongst themselves. Lately because of what happened during the pandemic and stuff, there’s been a large amount of people who have gone and retired from their jobs and taken incentives where they were bought out and allowed to retire early with no reduction in benefits and it’s created a situation where truck drivers, especially truck drivers, that there is a huge shortage of them. I’ve seen truck drivers leave the industry we are in, which is the food service and distribution industries, and gone into the construction industries. They actually make a better living driving working in construction in the trucking industry. But the problem with construction is that when it gets cold here up in the North East, they get laid off for two three months a year and they wind up coming back to us and doing shipment and different work like that but it usually doesn’t last long. So what happening is we are having a huge, huge, huge, huge struggle to get workers to do the work. For instance a box of apples from the Ackima, Washington state area used to cost between $1.50-$2.00 per box to ship. The price has gone to $7.00-$10.00 now to ship due to rising fuel cost, rising demand for drivers because we can’t get enough drivers. Also they used to have backhauls, so lets say a company would then send a truck here to the produce market with a load of produce. They would then go to Long Island City, or the Port of Carney New Jersey and pick up a backload and that would go back to California, Texas, Florida, where ever the loaded load originated from, or it’s next point of origin. Trucks do not make money when they’re empty, they make money when they are full.

What incentives are they providing drivers? The incentives is a beautiful thing, they have a lot of drivers being offered $3k, $5K, $10k signing bonuses. When they turn up to the company they get a bonus and they get an incentive to stay with the company. The incentives are really, really great, problem is When do you get them??? Some of these non-union companies out there offer $3-5k bonuses, but they have to stay with the company for at least 2 years before they see that bonus. So it’s really not a bonus because after a while when the employer realizes he doesn’t need that many drivers he winds up laying them off before he gives them their incentive or bonus. Union contract we offer the highest wages in our industry workers earn from 25-45 per hour including benefits.

Has lowering the age helped? As of November, 2021 the State of New York lowered the cdl driving age to 18 class b, under 36k lbs. Anything else over the 36k requires a class A. If they could lower the age to 18 for class A that would help the shortage of drivers. Problem is companies require years of experience to drive class A. So how does a guy that is 18 going to get the experience? So how do you do that? They will put them in remedial work: no long distances, extreme inclement weather. This allows them to learn the routine and logistics of the companies. This has helped.

Next 10 years: Realize the necessity of union truck drivers across the US. Continue what they are doing. Next goal is Amazon….they need basic healthcare, pensions, and 401k plans which they do not currently provide. US Parcel Service and DHL are their competition….they need to meet the needs of the workers.

Challenges to overcome: Truck drivers and workers become more educated in what they can and cannot do, what they should and should not do. Most of the workforce is new to truck driving. They don’t know the rules. A lot of the drivers now are coming out of high school and they don’t want to go to college. There are many eligible unique training programs for many blue collar jobs including apprenticeship programs. We want to show people they can earn a living without having to go to college and get an education. Instead of working in the white collar sector they can work in the blue collar sector and we offer many, many opportunities.

If you could open the eyes of Americans….stop selling yourself so short! You labor is more important to an employer than anything else! Wealth cannot come unless the fruit of labor ripened and produced. Labor comes before wealth! Join in strikes and movements that affect people even though it may not be your job, it’s someone you know.

Future of food security in the US worse more so than better….sees it getting better in the US other than GMO’s. Food shortage creates hyper inflation which insues riots. Covid were rioting over toilet paper. If people complain now about food shortage, imagine how bad things will be if we run out of food. Food contamination is a big issue and lots of laws in place to protect the food and we cannot mess with any of those laws. Hygiene…soils have animal matter which produces anthrax and ecoli so the foods must be thoroughly washed, cured, packed, and shipped.

Severe shortage if it were to occur what do you think would play the biggest role in that? If government sees this they will enact the national guard. They will prevent price gouging. Price if gas due to Ukraine is through the roof. The united states is not prepared for a worst case scenario. Things are getting worse in terms of independence. There is enough food to grow around, but the number of women and children that are lacking food is very high due to poverty stricken areas.