

MARINE ENGINEERS' BENEFICIAL ASSOCIATION (AFL-CIO)

"On Watch in Peace and War since 1875"



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HOUSE LAWMAKERS CONTINUE WORK ON NEW MSP, TANKER PROGRAM

The House Armed Services Subcommittee on Seapower and Projection Forces marked up their proposal for the Fiscal Year 2020 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), which would extend the life of the Maritime Security Program (MSP) for an additional 10 years through 2035. In addition, the proposal would authorize a Tanker Security Fleet that would provide a stipend for the Department of Defense to utilize 10 U.S.-flagged commercial petroleum tankers vessels.

The tanker fleet would operate similarly to MSP supporting the needs of our military while drawing on a pool of qualified U.S. mariners. The full House Armed Services Committee is expected to finalize the legislation in mid-June where it awaits further consideration on the House floor.

Before the bill markup, Rep. Rob Wittman (R-VA), Ranking Member of the House Armed Services Subcommittee on Seapower and Projection Forces, noted, "...I am also delighted with our continuing effort to change the trajectory of the Merchant Marine. For example, reauthorizing the 60-ship Maritime Security Program and authorizing a new 10-ship Tanker Security Program are all valued steps toward restoring maritime capabilities in a contested environment. Additionally, we begin to recapitalize the Ready Reserve Force by requiring the Navy to order two replacement vessels. These deliberate steps are essential to providing adequate logistics in case of a major escalation in conflict."

MERCHANT SEAMEN ARE D-DAY HEROES

Today is the 75th anniversary of D-Day, the date allied forces stormed France's Normandy beaches as part of the Operation Overlord invasion to free Europe from Nazi tyranny. June 6, 1944 marked the greatest seafight operation the world has ever witnessed and the Merchant Marine was central to victory then and now – a fact that is forgotten at our own peril. In the immediate aftermath of the D-Day success, the national news carried the following article that also appeared in the September *American Marine Engineer*, M.E.B.A.'s newspaper of the day. The June 9, 1944 article is entitled "Merchant Seamen are D-Day Heroes - United States, British Civilian Sailors at Peak of Glorious Record for Aid in Invasion:"

"D-Day would not have been possible without the Merchant Marine. Now that the long-awaited day is history and great Allied forces have been landed in France, it is permitted to indicate the part played by these intrepid civilians, whose deeds for the most part have gone unsung. Probably it is not generally realized that the Merchant Marine has the largest ratio of casualties of any branch of the services, and many of the names on the list are not classified "wounded" or "missing." They were those of the men whose grave is the sea.

The whole picture of the Merchant Marine's heroic deeds will not be available for some time because of security. Working side by side with the British merchant navy and the Allied fleets, the American Merchant Marine has reached a new peak of glory, and into this latest venture it has brought all the hard-earned experience of such historic episodes as the African landings and the bitterly fought Arctic runs to Russia.

Ships without Ports - For weeks before D-Day hundreds of merchant ships which had been diverted from their regular runs for the invasion service roamed the waters near the British Isles without a port to come to. They were kept outside so the enemy would not see any great ship concentration at any principal port. At the prearranged time, they rendezvoused, picked up their priceless cargo and sailed for France. Undaunted by the threat of air attacks, sea mines, surface fire submarines or coastal batteries, they fulfilled their mission according to schedule and returned to Britain's shores to start a shuttle service that will not end before Germany's unconditional surrender.

At their sides are a thousand or more British merchant ships with 50,000 seamen, many of whom have old scores to settle - scores that started at Dunkirk and were aggravated at Crete. These men also were on the Arctic run, they were part of the 500-ship armada at North Africa, they knew what it was to carry men and supplies to the Middle East before the Mediterranean was open and to keep the breath of life in unconquerable Malta.

Craft of Every Type - The ships that went to France were of every conceivable type of transport. Some were former luxury liners that even confirmed 'round-the-world travelers would no longer recognize. Others were no larger than good-sized barges or sea-going tugs. But most were new, the internationally known Liberty ships, designed to meet the needs of the war.

It is a long call since 1819, when the Savannah, the first steam-propelled merchantman made a journey from the United States to England, but that was the beginning of what is now the backbone of one of the world's greatest war efforts. Old-timers, the historically minded, like to go back even farther and recall that when the British repulsed the Spanish Armada there were 163 merchantmen among the 197 ships involved."

CELEBRATION OF AMERICAN MARITIME HEROES

The American Maritime Partnership (AMP) has launched a year-long celebration that will recognize those who have added to the rich history of the U.S. as a maritime nation. U.S. Department of Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao and World War II merchant mariners were announced as the campaign's first American Maritime Heroes. Recipients are being selected on the basis of "courage, outstanding achievements, or noble qualities." The year-long celebration will culminate on June 5, 2020, the 100th anniversary of the enactment of the U.S. Merchant Marine Act of 1920 (the Jones Act).

"The American Maritime Heroes campaign celebrates our maritime heroes and will serve as a reminder to all of the undeniable importance of America's history as a maritime nation and the role of the maritime industry to U.S. prosperity and security," said Matt Woodruff, AMP Chairman. "We are proud to begin the campaign by honoring Sec. Elaine Chao, who is widely recognized as the best transportation secretary ever for the U.S. maritime industry, and the nearly 250,000 World War II merchant mariners who provided the manpower to operate and maintain the wartime vessels that ultimately helped our country and our allies win World War II."

Sec. Chao has previously served as deputy maritime administrator at the Maritime Administration; chairman of the Federal Maritime Commission; deputy DOT secretary; and as Secretary of the Department of Labor. In addition, she has led major organizations like the Peace Corps and United Way. “We have never had a transportation secretary with such knowledge about, experience in, and passion for our industry,” Woodruff said. “When the chips are down, there is no stronger advocate than Sec. Chao. She is a proven American maritime hero.”

The World War II merchant mariners are renowned for their bravery and contribution to the Allied victory nearly 75 years ago. Almost 250,000 merchant mariners transported tens of millions of tons of war supplies and more than seven million servicemen under the most challenging circumstances imaginable. As a result, they suffered the highest casualty rate of any service during World War II, with one mariner out of every 26 lost. Often defenseless against enemy vessels, these merchant mariners continued to sustain the war effort. A total of 8,241 merchant mariners died in World War II, and many others were captured and became prisoners of war. Today only about 2,000 remain.

“Especially as Americans reflect this week on the 75th anniversary of D-Day, it is a privilege to salute the courageous mariners who helped make the invasion possible and ensured that our military could triumph, at Normandy and throughout the entire war,” said Woodruff. “We all owe these heroes a debt of gratitude that can never be fully repaid.”

MATSON BEGINS SCRUBBER INSTALL ON THREE MORE SHIPS

Matson Navigation is continuing the installation of state-of-the-art exhaust gas cleaning systems on several more vessels in its fleet. The move will help reduce fleet emissions as new International Maritime Organization (IMO) regulations take effect on January 1, 2020. Three vessels will receive the new equipment in 2019 and three more will get the installs in 2020. It is believed that the M/V MANUKAI, M/V MAUNAWILI, and M/V MANULANI are the first three of the six vessels to be addressed.

As part of Matson’s fleet renewal program, the company is in the process of bringing in four new vessels to replace older generation ships. Two Philly Shipyard-built vessels have already joined the Matson fleet (DANIEL K. INOUE and KAIMANA HILA) and two NASSCO-built ships are nearing completion (LURLINE and MATSONIA). Each of the four is equipped with dual-fuel engines designed to run on new low-sulfur fuels or LNG.

International Maritime Organization (IMO) rules will require reducing the sulfur content of bunker fuel that ships burn from 3.5 percent to 0.5 percent by January 2020. Ships without scrubbers would have to burn costlier low-sulfur fuels such as marine gas-oil (MGO) or ultra-low-sulfur fuel oil to comply with the clean air rules.

Back in 2015 and 2016, Matson installed scrubbers on the ANCHORAGE, KODIAK and TACOMA – three of its ships in the Alaska service. Similar to the systems Matson deploys in Alaska, the scrubber technology being installed in the six additional vessels will reduce sulfur oxides (SOx) emissions to levels at or below the limits set by the new IMO regulations, and below those of vessels using low-sulfur fuel.

UPCOMING TALKS WITH PASHA; INPUT, PARTICIPATION WELCOMED

M.E.B.A. is taking advantage of the June 15, 2019 economic reopener with Pasha to amend the agreements for Deep Sea and Port Engineers. Our contract with Pasha runs through June 2022 and

covers the HORIZON ENTERPRISE (C-8), HORIZON PACIFIC (C-8), HORIZON RELIANCE (C-9) and HORIZON SPIRIT (C-9), as well as Port Engineers.

Rank and file members interested in participating in negotiations, which will likely take place in the Oakland area, should contact Oakland Patrolman Max Alper (malper@mebaunion.org). Dates have not yet been set. All comments and suggestions should be sent to Adam Vokac (avokac@mebaunion.org) and Max making sure they are sent from PERSONAL email addresses.

NEAR-NORMAL ATLANTIC HURRICANE SEASON PREDICTED; ABOVE NORMAL IN PACIFIC

NOAA's Climate Prediction Center is predicting that a near-normal Atlantic hurricane season is most likely this year. This outlook forecasts a 40% chance of a near-normal season, a 30% chance of an above-normal season and a 30% chance of a below-normal season. The hurricane season officially extends from June 1 to November 30. For 2019, NOAA predicts a likely range of 9 to 15 named storms (winds of 39 mph or higher), of which 4 to 8 could become hurricanes (winds of 74 mph or higher), including 2 to 4 major hurricanes (category 3, 4 or 5; with winds of 111 mph or higher). NOAA provides these ranges with a 70% confidence. An average hurricane season produces 12 named storms, of which 6 become hurricanes, including 3 major hurricanes.

NOAA noted that they believe there is a 70% chance of above-normal tropical cyclone activity during the central Pacific hurricane season this year. The 2019 outlook also indicates a 20% chance of a near-normal season in the Pacific and only a 10% chance of a below-normal season. For the season as a whole, 5 to 8 tropical cyclones are predicted for the central Pacific hurricane basin. This number includes tropical depressions, named storms and hurricanes. A near-normal season has four to five tropical cyclones, and an above-normal season has six or more tropical cyclones.

REGULAR MONTHLY MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

Monday, July 8 – **Boston@1200; Seattle (Fife)@1300;**

Tuesday, July 9 – **CMES@1430; Charleston@1400; Houston@1315; Oakland@1230;**

Wednesday, July 10 – **Jacksonville@1300; New Orleans@1315;**

Thursday, July 11 – **L.A. (San Pedro)@1230; NY/NJ@1300; Norfolk@1300; Tampa@1300;**

Friday, July 12 – **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 proven 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 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.