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SWISS AND KOREAN-OWNED TTI'S PUSH TO AUTOMATE LONG BEACH PORT TERMINAL RAISES CONCERNS ABOUT IMPACTS TO U.S. AND LOCAL ECONOMIES, CYBER SECURITY

SAN PEDRO, CA (May 18, 2021) – Total Terminals International (TTI) met with leaders of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union on Monday, May 17, to announce that it intends to pursue automating Pier T at the Port of Long Beach.

“While foreign-owned corporations like TTI continue to push to fully automate their terminal operations at our publically owned U.S. ports, they need to remember that the ports exist for the benefit of the U.S. and local economies, not the destruction of jobs and maximum extraction of foreign profit,” said Ramon Ponce de Leon, ILWU Local 13 President.

U.S. ports are one of the United States’ greatest economic resources and support millions of jobs and businesses nationwide. Although most U.S. ports are publically owned, marine terminals are often leased to foreign companies that are optimizing for foreign profits over domestic benefit. “The ILWU stands for America’s workers, businesses, farmers, communities and schools that rely on the ports not only for the movement of cargo but also for the tax revenue that’s generated by the men and women who work on the docks. Robots don’t pay taxes; people do,” said Mike Podue, ILWU Local 63 President.

As evidenced last week with Colonial Pipeline and Ireland’s health system shutting down after being held hostage for ransom by Russian hackers, cyber terrorism continues to be both a national and international threat. Fully automated ports could leave our nation’s greatest economic engine and our economy even more vulnerable to such foreign attacks.

“Although the ILWU recognizes the need for responsible advancements that reduce our carbon footprint and improve efficiencies, any efforts to automate port terminals for the primary purpose of increased offshore corporate profits comes at a cost that our local communities and country cannot afford,” said ILWU Local 94 President Danny Miranda. “As the Long Beach Harbor Commission, the Mayor of Long Beach, and the Executive Director of the Port of Long Beach consider TTI’s request, we ask that it carefully weigh the impacts that continued automation would have on American jobs and our local communities.”

Mediterranean Shipping Company (MSC), based in Switzerland, owns 80% of TTI through its subsidiary, Terminal Investment Limited (TIL). The remaining 20% of TTI is owned by Hyundai Merchant Marine (HMM), based in South Korea.

The International Longshore and Warehouse Union formed in 1934 and is headquartered in San Francisco, California. ILWU Locals 13, 63 and 94 represent Longshore Workers, Marine Clerks and Walking Bosses/Foremen in the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach, California.

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