

Letter from the Editor - The working world

Posted by [TBN Editor](#) On 08/30/2016

Hollywood, MD - Just as the summer season begins with the Memorial Day weekend, so it ends with Labor Day weekend. Summer in America is thus bookended by two observances most Americans seem to know little about—except that it means three consecutive days off, cookouts, pool parties and sales with door-buster savings.

Labor Day is not a strictly American tradition. The world is a workplace and the amazing edifices, and congenial hospitality that travelers encounter are truly a testament to this. Additionally, a significant portion of America's work ethic was originally imported from other countries.

Today, America is certainly no slouch in the working world. But it hasn't been easy. America's Labor Day has its origins in the Labor Movement, a polarizing development of the late 19th century. The Pullman Strike during the 1890s pitted the American Railway Union against the Pullman Company and the federal government. The strike disrupted rail service in the U.S. during the summer of 1894 and impacted everyone from farmers to travelers. It led to riots, the deployment of federal troops, arrests, deaths, litigation and a jail sentence for its top instigator. As a conciliatory gesture, President Cleveland established the Labor Day holiday.

Whether you are union or nonunion, white collar or blue collar, are employed by a big or small business--the workplace can be a daunting, emotional place to be. The drama never seems to end. It's amazing so much work manages to get done. For many—armed forces, firefighters, law enforcement, construction workers, airline employees, plant workers—even window washers—the workplace can be dangerous. Every year we hear several gut-wrenching stories of workplace violence and workplace accidents.

Whether you have painted the top of a tall suspension bridge or changed the diaper on the bottom of a small baby, whether you give orders, take orders or carry out orders--you are part of the world of workers. Thank you for all you do and enjoy your Labor Day weekend.

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