**Donsback Speech [EZ Speech No. 16132]**

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Remarks by Mr. Louis Donsback at the Annual Worker’s Memorial Day Cere-mony of the U.S. Steel Gary Complex.

ladies and gentlemen, distinguished guests, fellow em-ployees . . . welcome to the [no.]th annual worker’s mem-orial day ceremony here at u.s. steel’s gary complex.

we are gathered here today to honor the life, and com-morate the deaths, of two of our own — chuck kremke, whom we lost in june of last year; and john arizola, who passed away in September. these were good men, family men, honest and hard-working men who should not have did when they did or how they did.

now, i’m not going to rehash the why’s and wherefore’s of these two tragedies; but i would be less than candid if I didn’t point out that — in the final analysis — chuck and john’s deaths ultimately represented management’s failure fully to live up to our company’s “safety first” policy, and to our commitment to ensuring that every officer, every director, every manager, and every sup-ervisor accepts as his or her own, *personal* responsibil-ity the safety of all those who work under them.

how often have you heard someone utter the phrase, “accidents happen?” dozens of times, yes? but i think this so-called “truism” is almost total bullshit [bullcrap/ horse puckey/nonsense]. accidents don’t just “happen.” they occur for a reason, and most often the reason is that someone didn’t follow procedure . . . someone took a shortcut . . . someone didn’t know how to do his or her job properly . . . someone failed to re-port an unsafe working situation . . . someone in a hurry fudged a qc audit . . . someone lost a custom-made tool and decided to improvise . . .

these are ***not*** accidents. an accident is something that simply couldn’t’ve been anticipated. an accident is, by definition, *not* preventable; it’s an occurance that no actions on the part of either workers or managers could have prevented. so when something happens that actually *could* have been prevented — like the several instances i mentioned a second ago — it’s not an acci-dent; it’s a deriliction of duty on the part of some human being.

nobody goes to work in the morning thinking they aren’t going to come home that night — or at least come home in one piece. Yet nearly four million Americans are injur-ed or die from workplace injuries every year. and i’d be willing to bet a dollar to a doughnut that not one in a hundred of these tragedies are truly accidental; the vast majority are indeed preventable.

i know that this can’t come as much of a comfort to the families and communities devasted by deaths in the work-place. but it’s a fact that we must face head-on, and in facing it, we must rededicate ourselves to an unwaver-ing commitment to the policy of “safety first” in all areas of our operations.

as the new manager of the department of safety & and industrial hygiene here at gary, i’m especially conscious of how difficult it is to enforce a “safety first” policy in an industry like ours. making steel is an inherently dan-gerous business. it’s hot, it’s noisey, lots of fire, lots of really hot stuff. it’s not a place for the timid, that’s for sure!

but that’s why making steel presents such monumental challenges to the “safety first” credo. There are obvi-ously hazards in *every* business that involves turning raw materials into finished products. but in the steel business, these challenges are especially numerous and notoriously difficult to overcome. but overcome them we must. We might not ever reach a true “zero-injury” status, but we’ve got to do much better job than we’re doing now to achieve that goal.

for example [give an example or two of how “safety performance has been very disappointing.”]

so obviously we’ve got to do better job. in a moment, i’m going to have the honor of introducing [full name], vice president of gray and granite city operations, who’ll have some remarks on behalf of the company about [sub-ject of his remarks]. but before i turn the podium over to [first name], I’d like to share with you my own person-al goals in taking over leadership of the safety and in-dustrial hygiene department:

I pledge to stop at nothing to drive the “safety first” policy throughout our organization.

i will do everything within my power to make sure that no one else loses his or her life while working at this company.

i will seek diligently to identify and remove hazards in every nook and cranny in every one of our facilities.

and Perhaps most important, I will undertake a tho-rough and comprehensive review of all our safety-training programs to make sure we’re preparing all of our employees — and especially our newbies — to hit the floor running and to perform their jobs not only flaw-lessly, but safely, as well.

i hope that you’ll all join me in this commitment, because i truly think that — together — we can make u.s. steel the industry leader in the whole area of worker and en-vironmental safety.

now, before i introduce [name of next speaker], i’d like to acknowledge and thank the officials of the united steel workers union, representing the hard-working men and women of steel. i know that the usw is every bit as con-cerned about worker safety as we in management are; and i look forward to forging even more effective rela-tionships with all of our union partners in a collabora-tive effort to abolish death and injury in the workplace.

and now i’ll turn the podium over to [name]. [name]

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