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August 8, 1945

MR. BERNARD E. HILL, ATTORNEY,  
San Pedro Business Men's Association, Inc.,  
359 W. 7th Street,  
San Pedro, California.

Dear Sir:

The letter which was handed to me a few minutes ago by your representative is only another attempt to mislead the public. You have caused signs to be placed on various stores throughout the Harbor District, which lead those reading them to believe that all of the clerks in the Harbor District are on strike. This you know to be untrue. You know that the clerks are only on strike at your place of business (the Hill Style Shop) and J. C. Penney's.

Throughout your letter you talk about the "hair-raising" contract which we supposedly presented to you. Now let's just see how hair-raising the last offer, which I agreed to take back to the union and request its approval really is:—90% of the employees in retail stores in the Harbor District today are women. For women clerks, I offered to recommend \$35.00—you offered \$32.50.

For 5 & 10c store clerks, I offered to recommend \$32.00—you offered \$27.78. Isn't that a stupendous amount of money for the clerks to ask for from the employers in the Harbor District who are making more money than ever before! At the last negotiating meeting I asked and repeated the question three times—"Is this all the employers are willing to pay?" Your answer each time was "Yes." You state that I then walked out. What was I supposed to do—stay and discuss the weather with you?

You now insult the clerks in the Harbor District and the children they are supporting on your meager wage scale by withdrawing your offer of \$32.50. I say again that you are misleading the public and the merchants because you know of our position before the War Labor Board. You know that we have repeatedly asked the National War Labor Board in Washington to hear our case because it and it alone can correct substandard conditions of living under the Wage Stabilization Act. You have repeatedly opposed us before the Board in this matter because you know that the local board can only offer as a maximum wage in substandard cases 55c an hour.

The Retail Clerks in the Harbor District have four times by unanimous vote taken the position that they are entitled to a decent standard of living. They are now united in their attempts to better their living conditions. Now, Mr. Hill, is this so wrong? Most of our members have sons and husbands fighting overseas, in order to insure the right of business men in the Harbor District to continue to prosper and do business. Is it wrong for these wives and mothers to expect the right to earn a decent livelihood while their usual means of support is away. We think not.

Very truly yours,

*Haskell Tidwell,*

Secretary, Retail Clerks  
Local Union No. 905