



Brief Update from Over the Road Air Date: March 18, 2020

“Long Haul” Paul Marhoefer: [00:00:00] Hey everyone. Paul here checking in from a warehouse in Florida where I'm waiting on a load of dairy products. We've heard from a lot of you out there this week. Thanks for your calls and messages. You're wondering what's it like out there for truckers with everything that's going on in the country. We got this call just a couple of days ago.

Caller: [00:00:27] [over the phone] Hey, this is Jordan. I'm calling from Washington D.C. Obviously like a lot of people in the world right now, I'm hunkered down in my apartment because of COVID-19, and I've been thinking a lot about what this means for truckers in terms of, you know, the economy and folks stocking up on groceries and, you know, their role is the lifeblood of the country in a moment of chaos like this.

Paul: Well, Jordan, life for me as a reefer hauler has not changed that much. I guess that speaks a little bit to what attracted me to reefer work in the beginning is people always gotta eat. And well there have been small changes. So, I mean this week I've seen people wearing bandannas, like the Lone Ranger. You go to weigh your truck and the nice cashier at the truck stop quickly avoids your outstretched hand and she sets your change on the counter. Who can blame her? There's an old customer who we've been to for years, had a nice indoor toilet and it's, well, there's an out of order sign on it. And well maybe it really is out of order, or maybe they just don't want to be a petri dish for a pandemic.

So, you know, it's easy to get thin skinned about these things. But these are just working people who don't want to get sick. And my wife, Denise, said she'd like to go with me next week in case I get quarantined somewhere far away, we could be together. And I, wow, um, I'm not sure

about that. I have to admit that I went to our dollar store and bought three bars of white ivory soap, and that's the kind of soap my German grandmother used to always clean me up with when I came to her house. There's just something very comforting about the pleasing aroma of ivory white soap. Will that prevent the pandemic from coming to me? [soft, acoustic guitar begins] No, but it makes me think of my grandmother and that's what helps me.

Yeah. So for everyone out there who's, you know, wondering if the food still coming. Yeah. We're still trucking out here. And I just kicked off 40,000 pounds of dairy products in Florida, and I'm going to go get another load of dairy products and take it to Virginia. And I'm going to keep moving the food until I get sick or someone tells me to stop.

So we'll be back tomorrow with episode three. In the meantime, if you're looking for more detailed coverage, oh man, what did they call that, COVID-19? I'm really, I think I've got a caffeine deficit going on here. I'm not fully awake, but if you want a more in-depth coverage, go to overdriveonline.com. Take care and we'll talk tomorrow. [guitar fades out]

[Radiotopia sign-off] *Radiotopia. Radiotopia, from PRX.*

[00:04:38] **END OF AUDIO.**