

ORANGE PEEL

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O' BROTHER, Where art thou?

The fire service has been dealt another blow. The Brotherhood is under attack again. Not by terrorists, or by weakened floor members, but by a corporation.

The moneymaking Penn Well Corporation, owner of Fire Engineering, has decided to fire Bob Pressler. They have released him from all editorial duties as well as his duties as head of H.O.T. instruction for FDIC and FDIC West.

Why does this affect us, striking the core of our brotherhood? Simply because Bob is our brother and he has been wronged in an egregious way. His ideals did not appeal to a bunch of suits that think fire exists only to light their \$10 cigars. They don't know that it takes more than the ability to pull hose to put out a fire. They don't know that it takes more than the ability to crawl to make a hall ahead of the nozzle and grab the kid. They do know that there is money to be made from firefighters who will pay to be taught by the best and to see what's new in the fire service. They do know their name gets used in the same sentences as Pressler, Fredericks, Dugan, Lombardo and Ciampo and their product benefits from it, which ultimately benefits their pocketbooks. Money, not training, is their bottom line.

They miscalculated the Strength of the Brotherhood. They failed to see the long-term effects of their ego saving maneuver. They think that by firing Bob Pressler and then following that with words like "training" and "hypocrisy" that we will back their decision for *the future of the service*. They have missed the point completely. Bob *is* the future of the fire service. As are all of the other names that have signed on to support Bob. We are all the future and we can and will shape the fire service, as we see fit. Bob's knowledge and experience along with the fact he is simply a great guy to be around makes him the wise choice to follow. The alternative is to sign on with a company that wants to teach the fire service because it is profitable. This is the wrong reason to teach anything, especially something as critical as saving lives.

We are the Brotherhood. We must stick together. Where you stand on this issue will determine where your allegiance lies. Your allegiance will be decided by what's in your heart. Your heart is who you are. Choose wisely. The Brotherhood will survive without you but is stronger with you.