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Unity • Justice • Democracy

August 26, 2009

Dear ILA International Executive Board,

We all want a strong union. Our union must involve members if we want a strong contract. Members must have information and democracy.

The LWC strongly opposes a rush to settle our master and local contracts. Members and delegates ratified more than 50 bargaining proposals on ending wage tiers, eliminating the royalty cap, negotiating safety language, and creating job security by controlling technology and union jurisdiction. However, the recent bargaining process has been undemocratic and may destroy the future of our union.

This move to settle our contract early seems extremely unwise:

- 1) Giving back our \$40 million 2009 wage increase to the employers while freezing benefit contributions does not make sense with a year left on our contract. ILA members will suffer as a result. Our industry is in flux: despite an economic slowdown employers are continuing with their expansion plans and we may see different employers become major players in the container market. Health care reform may alter the terms of our contract as well.
- 2) Lifting the container royalty cap while tonnage is down will not help our members or our union in the immediate future, so why the rush? The royalty payments will barely make up the difference for the lost wage increase.
- 3) The ILA cannot bargain blind. To evaluate any management proposal we must have more concrete information about the industry.
- 4) President Hughes' outlined proposal could erode ILA strength if it does not adequately deal with technology or lost jurisdiction.

Wage scale subcommittees, delegates and ILA members have been kept in complete darkness. Our President told us that there is no proposal in writing, yet he outlined a proposal in his letter that he says he must present to us. President Hughes: You are now asking that delegates and members evaluate and ratify a proposal with only a few weeks notice and no access to information?

In February our President pledged that delegates and subcommittees would be involved in refining the 50-plus proposals submitted by members and delegates and ratified by the bargaining committee. President Hughes: Where are those proposals? Who removed them from the bargaining table?

We believe the ILA can win a fair contract. We believe that with information and organization we can improve on the current contract proposal.

We ask that the Executive Board not rush to ratify this proposal, and that we delay negotiations until our union has more information. We ask that the Executive Board take responsibility to involve our members in the fight for a good contract.

In solidarity,



Leonard Riley, LWC Co-Chair



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