

*"An Injury To One Is An Injury To All"*

## **Pennsylvania Federation**

121 North Broad Street - Suite 503  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19107  
phone: (215) 569-1285  
fax: (215) 569-0676

Office of the General Chairman  
Jed Dodd



August 22, 2002

certified letter number 7099 3400 0014 4961 4940  
return receipt requested

W. E. LaRue  
2669 Willard Drive  
Troy, MI 48089-4038

Dear Brother LaRue:

Thank you for your letter of August 16, 2002. You apparently now believe in the right of BMW members to hear competing points of view, not just the "official line" of those in power. Well, better late than never, Brother!

In this letter, I want to respond to some of the points you make, correct others, and suggest a way in which all BMW members - not just the members of the Pennsylvania Federation - will have an opportunity to hear different points of view about the proposed merger with the Boilermakers.

First, let me apologize for not sending you the Pennsylvania Federation mailings from last year, in which we explained why we thought a merger with the Boilermakers was a bad idea. I have made sure that your name is now on the list, and that you will promptly receive all of our future mailings. In addition, you can always go to our website, <http://www.pennfedbmwe.org>, for immediate access to all of our communications on the merger.

You criticized my analysis of the proceedings at the 2002 Grand Lodge Convention, stating that I portrayed them in a "false light" and that I "don't much like" majority rule. My description of the Convention is based on what hundreds of delegates saw with their own eyes and heard with their own ears. My account is completely supported by the verbatim transcript of the proceedings. Your frequent attempts to silence opposition by cutting off microphones, your refusal to conduct a roll call vote on eliminating the recall provisions from the Constitution - it's all in there.

As for majority rule, you seem to forget that as Chairman of the Pennsylvania Federation, I am elected directly by the rank-and-file members. I note that you, Brother Fleming, and your allies have never submitted yourselves to the members, but achieved power through votes of convention delegates. I believe that the members should have even more say in running this Union. You and your allies apparently don't trust the members:

- \* You and your allies wanted to eliminate the recall provisions of the Constitution so that officers can't be held accountable.
- \* You didn't want an accurate count at the Convention of the votes against eliminating the recall provisions.
- \* You and your allies wanted to remove from the Constitution the right of members to vote on any proposed merger with the Boilermakers.
- \* Your allies wanted to throw me and Brothers Glover and Bowden out of the Union because we dared to file suit to enforce our democratic rights.
- \* You and your allies have resurrected a merger with the Boilermakers after the members voted against the idea, even with your attempts to prevent opposing viewpoints from being heard.

Democratic rights? Majority rule? I like them just fine. I'll put my record on democracy and trust in the members against yours any day, Brother.

You have asked that the Pennsylvania Federation distribute, at our expense, your materials in support of the revised merger proposal, saying you "are looking forward to the opportunity to let Pennsylvania Federation members read an alternative viewpoint." You seem to be forgetting that members of the Pennsylvania Federation get a huge amount of pro-merger communications from the Grand Lodge, from Brother Fleming, and from you personally. Let's review some of these communications:

- The print and online versions of the *BMWE Journal* for August 2001 contained seven articles favoring the proposed merger, and none in opposition. It included your column supporting the merger.
- The BMWE website included, as of August 20, 2001, eighteen additional "News" documents which favored the proposed merger. It included two letters from you personally, dated August 3 and August 17.
- The ballot package for the 2001 referendum contained an inflammatory letter by Brother Fleming, attacking the opponents of the merger and *falsely stating* that "In the event this merger does not occur, it is a fact that BMWE members are facing a dues increase in the amount of \$5 to \$10 per month in order to maintain services."
- On August 23, 2001, the Grand Lodge posted on its website new communications addressed to all members, urging them to vote in favor of the

merger.

- A letter from Charles W. Jones, president of the Boilermakers, dated August 20, 2001, urging BMWWE members to vote in favor of the merger, was mailed to all members.
- A letter dated May 17, 2002, from Brother Fleming was mailed to all BMWWE members, praising a possible merger with the Boilermakers and announcing a return to the bargaining table with them.
- The Grand Lodge posted another article about the benefits of reopening merger talks with the Boilermakers on its website on May 17, 2002. The same article also appeared in the *BMWWE Journal* for May/June 2002.
- Copies of the revised agreement, together with explanatory information, 34 side letters, and 8 attachments, were posted on the BMWWE website.
- Every member received at home a two-page letter from Brother Fleming dated June 29, 2002, supporting the merger and including eight (8) additional pages of material supporting the merger.
- On August 17, 2002, the BMWWE website was updated to add a special page devoted to campaigning in favor of the proposed merger.

As you can see, the members of the Pennsylvania Federation have heard a great deal from you and your colleagues about the merger. Have the opponents of the merger had access to the membership to discuss our views? No - and what little access we've had, you and Brother Fleming have been trying to stop.

So here's my proposal to you, Brother. You want to communicate directly to the members of the Pennsylvania Federation? That's fine with me, subject to these conditions:

1. You may send one mailing, at your expense, to the members of the Pennsylvania Federation. In addition, provide my office with material not to exceed one page, and we will include it in the next edition of *An Appeal To Reason* at our expense; *and*
2. The Grand Lodge agrees to do a mailing to its entire mailing list of members, containing our communication against the merger, and gives us a page in the next *BMWWE Journal* to express our views on the merger. We are willing to pay for the mailing - although if the Court rules that the Grand Lodge must pay for such communications, we will expect a reimbursement.


Now, what could be fairer than that? You want access, we want access. Let's have the members throughout the Brotherhood hear all the views about the proposed merger. Indeed, if you accept this proposal, I hope that you will talk to our brother chairmen of the other System Federations to allow a little free speech in their organizations as well.

You say you want *equal* space to match whatever we communicate to the members. But that's much more than we asked of the Grand Lodge in our lawsuit - as you well know, since you are a named defendant in the case. We've never suggested that the leaders of the Grand Lodge or the System Federations have to give equal time to their opponents, only that there has to be a fair opportunity to communicate those views as part of the merger process. Moreover, you and your allies at the Grand Lodge have the power to communicate with Pennsylvania Federation members anytime. You did it repeatedly during the 2001 merger referendum, and you've already started doing it for the upcoming vote. Unfortunately, we have no similar way of communicating with most of the members in the Brotherhood unless the Grand Lodge sends our material using its mailing list.

So now that you are a convert to democracy, Brother, let's get this going so that your letter to the members of the Pennsylvania Federation can get going, and our letters to the Grand Lodge membership can go out at the same time. Let's let the members decide about the merger!

Or were you just pulling my leg?

In Solidarity,

  
Jed Dodd  
General Chairman

cc Pennsylvania Federation Joint Protective Board

2669 Willard Drive  
Troy, MI 48089-4038  
August 16, 2002

Mr. Jed Dodd, General Chairman  
Pennsylvania Federation  
121 North Broad Street, Suite 503  
Philadelphia, PA 19107-1913

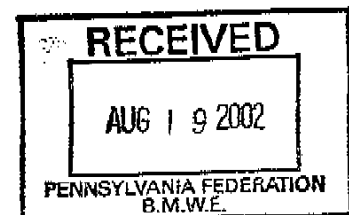
Dear Brother Dodd:

Last year, you spent my dues money to oppose a merger between BMW and the Boilermakers. The Pennsylvania Federation paid for mass mailings to the Pennsylvania Federation membership (except, for some reason, to me) and to members of other system divisions and federations across the union.

Next, before convention, you put out another mass mailing which called into question my handling of Brotherhood finances. However, you never put out the Havey report that cleared me of any wrongdoing. It certainly looks like you are only interested in one-sided, political hatchet jobs.

Then, in the most recent "Appeal to Reason", you put out a so-called convention report that shows you are the master of "spin". You and your allies lost your elections. Democracy means that there is majority rule. Sorry you don't much like that, but that's the way it's done in this Organization. But to read your version of it, you would think that Mafia goons and Soviet commissars were offering to take delegates on a one-way trip to the desert if they didn't get in line. Give me a break. You deliberately put the convention in a false light, and then invented the claim that the Boilermakers were running the show. You know better.

So, I want to publish, at the Pennsylvania Federation's expense, a four-page response to the last "Appeal to Reason," using the same format, same printer, same mailing list, with the same System Federation footing the bill. And, from now on, every time you (or one of your fronts like "members first") publish anything at union expense using my dues money (or using a union mailing list) regarding the Boilermaker merger, I want the equal right to have the Pennsylvania Federation publish, at Federation expense, my pro-merger outlook. Likewise, I want my materials to be posted on the Federation website, in the same way you post anti-merger materials. What could be more fair?



Please make arrangements to have the printing, labeling and postage prepaid for my first publication. I will send my materials directly to the printer you make the advance arrangements with.

Please advise promptly. I am looking forward to the opportunity to let Pennsylvania Federation members read an alternative viewpoint.

Sincerely and fraternally,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "M. B. Rue". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Member, Lodge 3089