

Sept 20, 2004

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Brothers and Sisters:

I just had to respond to the latest letter from Grand Lodge concerning the merger. All the paragraph headings seem to begin with, in boldface type, "Dodd is dead wrong." That continues the theme of the letter's opening which seems to imply Brother Dodd is the anti-Christ. I thought I would offer a few thoughts of my own on some of the items addressed. Particularly as I did not read the last "Appeal to Reason." I have no idea what Jed's position is on most of this. I am merely taking Brother Simpson and Geller at their word that they are his positions.

The fact of the financials is that, IBT has much larger financial resources than does the BMWE. They should have. They are over 30 times larger than we are. But this has its drawbacks. As financial resources are targeted and allotted, the IBT leadership has to consider our needs as they stack up against the financial needs of the other 1.4 million Teamsters. This in and of itself does not mean we will never be able to access these resources. But if the budget is tight and we need financing at the same time as say the UPS and Trucking Divisions of the IBT, then we may find ourselves on the back burner. How such a conflict might play out might indeed surprise me. But the scenario I have laid out is also a reality which should be considered. I came to this conclusion from my own reading of the merger literature. But the demon Dodd did not just make this concern out of whole cloth.

The vote is being steamrolled. I raised this issue with Brother Simpson in Las Vegas. I did not see quite the urgency in voting on this merger proposal without first getting our own house in order. I did expect that we would have a hard copy of the merger documents with some time for debate before the balloting period opened. I like to read. But I have a hard time reading and cross referencing 5 different documents (merger proposal, BMWE By-Laws, BMWE proposed By-Laws, IBT By-Laws and the Rail Conference By-Laws) on line. But that is what I had attempted to do until the entire package arrived last week. We should have had the documents in our hands weeks before balloting began. I enjoy reading this type of stuff. Most I have talked to do not. And it can be damned confusing. I think the proponents of the merger are banking on that.

Grand Lodge is rushing the vote. It's just a fact. The language they use in that paragraph makes it pretty clear they want this done before the Section 6 notices go out November 1. And our position is not strengthened on Nov. 1, if even should we vote to merge, we do not become IBT members until January 1.

The letter says "Dodd is dead wrong about BMWE autonomy." Accept this fact brothers and sisters. Any merger means a loss of some level of autonomy. The merger document makes clear that the IBT By-laws govern except as amended specifically by the merger agreement. And we

have extensively altered our own By-Laws to conform to the IBT—as we would have to do eventually in any merger. But as I see it, we also cede certain powers to the Rail Conference of the IBT. The Rail Conference By-Laws allows that body to set its own per capita tax at the 2006 convention. And in 2006 the IBT stops picking up our Rail Conference per capita. I am sure the costs, should such an increase occur, will be picked up by Grand Lodge. Indeed the merger agreement calls for just such a transfer of payments. But that will mean either a dues increase for us—which we did not vote on—or payment of the increased per capita by Grand Lodge. If this occurred it would be a hidden dues increase as other services—or budgetary options for Grand Lodge would suffer a negative impact. Think of it this way. When George Bush cuts taxes and increases borrowing to pay for it, interest rates go up for all of us because his borrowing makes the supply of money more valuable. That increase in interest rates falls directly on us every time we buy a car, mortgage a house, take the wife out to dinner on our credit card etc. It's a hidden tax. We all pay the costs eventually.

I do not know what Jed Dodd says about the IBT Executive Board. And I know we can run for those positions. But the fact is that we are not represented on that Board by virtue of this agreement.

The two year out clause is smoke and mirrors. I think out officers who are members of the Rail Conference would be considered officers of the IBT in that capacity. If they tried to pull out, they might well face charges of sedition and be removed or otherwise subject to penalties under the IBT Constitution. But that really is not my main concern. This is a feel good clause to pull in the fence-sitters with the fallacy that we can get out. Frankly a merger of this magnitude will tangle us up so much that we will not be able to manage a pullout. We would never be able to set up the infrastructure necessary to fill the services that will be turned over to the IBT. And, by the way, any funds we have deposited with say the Rail Conference would be gone forever as IBT assets if we tried to pull out. Even though those assets might be made up in a significant part by funds our per capita tax provided to the conference.

Being together with the BLE for bargaining purposes doesn't give me a warm and fuzzy feeling in and of itself. We have lost ground every time we enter into multi-craft bargaining. The members in Boston know well how our "determined" brothers rolled over and played dead with MBCR once their concerns were met. Remember PEB 219? Everyone was hanging together with us until the night before a "national" strike. It wasn't until we bargained on our own in the next round that we were able to make some inroads against the worst provisions of 219.

Like apparently Brother Dodd, I have concerns about the status of our members who are subject to seasonal furloughs. Apparently GL does not believe anyone will stop paying their dues during a layoff even if it means their families do not eat that week. This particular issue will, I believe, impact our representation at the Rail Conference, the IBT Convention and perhaps cause a lack of officers to force the involuntary merger or closing of Local Lodges because the officers have eligibility problems. This was an issue fought out 5 Conventions ago. Now, and the merger document is very clear, unemployment cards will no longer be sufficient to continue a member in good standing when he is unemployed through no fault of his own.

State Legislative Boards will no longer have their own budgets. That is very clear in the

agreement. And it was attested to by IBT and BMWE representatives in Las Vegas. Brother Gates offered assurances about how he intends to fund the States. And he believes it will give us greater flexibility. I have a good relationship with Danny and trust he means it. I understand the difficulties he faces with certain funds being restricted for use in the state of origin under our present By-Laws. But Brother Dodd is right. There is no longer a set aside for the individual states. The mechanism by which we will be funded is most assuredly significantly different from what we have now. And no State Legislative Board is assured that they will be able to juggle things to meet their in State priorities. The set aside for each state is gone in this agreement. And Danny or his successor will have to make decisions on activating Directors on a case by case basis.

The Teamsters may no longer be controlled by the Mafia. But their internal investigative board, led by a former Federal prosecutor resigned to protest Mr. Hoffa's foot-dragging in instances of corruption when it was his political supporters involved. As a side note the three top officers of the largest IBT Local in New England are all serving jail sentences for corruption. And, seeing as how I am still close to the Legislative section, they backed the Republican candidate for governor every year since 1990—despite the fact that virtually all organized Labor and the AFL-CIO backed labor friendly Democratic candidates. We have now, in Massachusetts had the four most virulently anti-Labor governors since Calvin Coolidge. And the price of their support was that the Local 25 President gets the Labor seats on two Boards that were usually appointed by the State Federation of the AFL-CIO. Both those Labor positions are now under a cloud due to Local 25's corruption problems.

As far as IBT power, they are no different than any other labor organization in this anti-union era. Their membership in their core industries has continually decline. They were an organization of 2.3 million members twenty years ago. While we have lost much in the way of membership over twenty years in our industry, the saturation of BMWE in our craft nationwide exceeds that of the IBT in the trucking industry. I do not say this accusingly. Every union has faced sine tough going with anti-union courts, administrations and legislatures. That does not even include the increasingly anti-union business climate since the PATCO declaration of war by Ronald Reagan.

And the IBT is not solely responsible for the Metro-North rates of pay. Fact is when we negotiated the early M/N agreements we accomplished for those members better agreements than we had with most carriers. Since then the IBT has settled for pretty much what the rest of the industry has gotten at the bargaining table. But if you apply the same 2% raise (for example) to rates of twenty dollars an hour for Metro-North as you do to the Amtrak Brothers at say fifteen dollars an hour, then the M/N guys will be making more. The IBT has done no better for its members than we have for ours. They just had a better starting point that we had previously bargained on Metro North in a different business climate.