



# United Steelworkers of America

AFL-CIO-CLC

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Five Gateway Center  
Pittsburgh, PA 15222

**Leo W. Gerard**  
International President

December 19, 2002

M. A. "Mac" Fleming, President  
Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees  
Suite 200  
26555 Evergreen Road  
Southfield, MI 48076

Dear President Fleming:

It is my understanding that the BMWWE did not ratify the merger proposal with the International Brotherhood of Boilermakers. I wish to again offer, on behalf of the million plus active and retired Steelworkers in the United States and Canada, to enter into merger discussions with the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees.

The Steelworkers are a fighting Union, as is the BMWWE, and that principle of fighting for the rights and quality of life of our members gives us much in common. I know that the BMWWE is at the forefront of Rail Labor and a merger of our two great Unions would serve to benefit both of our memberships.

While the Steelworkers started off as a traditional Union representing workers in the Steel Industry, we have diversified through mergers (nine in total) and organizing to become a large Industrial Union representing all types of workers. Our current Organizing budget is 30 million US dollars per year and we have hundreds of Organizers in the field in both the United States and Canada.

From our previous discussion, I have come to understand the structure of the BMWWE, as it is similar to the TCU structure. As you are aware, the Canadian Division of the TCU merged with us recently and we found ways to incorporate them into our Union. I believe we can accomplish the same with the BMWWE.

The BMWWE could be a division within the Steelworker structure and could be either our Rail Division or a Transportation Division; whichever would work best to build an even stronger Union. I state this to indicate our willingness to accommodate the membership of the BMWWE within the Steelworkers Organization. For such a merger must serve to increase the power of the BMWWE as well as the power of the Steelworkers.

The Steelworkers, as you know, have faced many challengers over the last few years, which have led to aggressive action by our Union. We have changed our structure to reflect the new era, and have been forced to make some tough decisions. These actions however, have placed us in a strong financial situation with over 1.5 billion dollars in assets. This did not eliminate the will of our members to fight back.

Our rapid response locals generated 850,000 letters to federal politicians forcing a Republican government to take action to protect our Steel Industry in the United States without causing harm to our Canadian Brothers and Sisters. I am simply trying to show how together we could accomplish so much more together. The Steelworkers can assist the BMW with political and economic clout in both Canada and the United States to deliver better contracts to the membership. Of course, we see that the BMW membership can also improve the strength of the Steelworkers in being an even more dynamic and aggressive Union.

It is my understanding that the BMW wished to negotiate a pension arrangement for their members in addition to Railroad Retirement. The Steelworkers have multi-employer plans similar to the IBB in both the United States and Canada with tens of thousands of active and retired plan participants.

The Steelworkers are committed to working with you to reach a merger agreement that will enhance the viability and strength of both of our Unions. As I stated earlier this year during our previous discussions a merger must be for the benefit of both our memberships, for that is whom we have been elected to serve.

The Steelworkers remain ready at any time to negotiate a merger agreement with the BMW, an agreement that will live on to support, strengthen, and improve the quality of life of both our memberships.

I would be more than willing to meet with you as soon as possible in the New Year in order to discuss the opportunity to continue our discussions towards a merger of our two great Unions.

In solidarity,



Leo W. Gerard  
International President

c: Andrew V. Palm, Vice President  
Lawrence McBrearty, Canadian National Director

Mac A. Fleming  
President



Freddie N. Simpson  
Secretary-Treasurer

**Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employes**  
*Affiliated with the A.F.L.-C.I.O. and C.L.C.*

December 20, 2002

AFFIL  
BMW/USW

Mr. Leo W. Gerard, President  
United Steelworkers of America  
Five Gateway Center  
Pittsburgh, PA 15222

Dear Leo:

Thank you for your letter of December 19, 2002 offering to re-enter merger discussions with the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employes. Although our attempt to merge with the Boilermakers was unsuccessful, we have not lost our resolve to explore all possible partnerships on behalf of our members. I will be placing the issue of mergers, as well as your letter on the agenda of our Grand Lodge Officers meeting to be held next month. Once our officers have discussed this matter, I will be in touch.

In solidarity,

President

cc: Mr. Freddie N. Simpson  
Grand Lodge Officers

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