



Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers

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July 31, 2003

WHY THE TEAMSTERS?

Article XXVI, Teamsters Canada, section 1, International Brotherhood of Teamsters Constitution at page 173 states:

"Executive Board has designated Teamsters Canada as the nationwide representative of all Canadian Teamsters. By incorporating the unique structure of Teamsters Canada in this Constitution, we acknowledge the sovereignty of the nation of Canada and the diversity and distinctiveness of its political, cultural, legal, and social institutions. Canadian Teamsters reflect their country's distinct French and English heritages, each with its own constitutionally protected historical and linguistic traditions, labour relations systems, laws, and customs. We further acknowledge that by virtue of its responsibilities, which include the coordination of the activities of all affiliates and members in Canada, Teamsters Canada will engage in legislative and political action; will provide research, education, and communication services; and will assist local unions with national bargaining, organizing, and liaison with other Canadian labour organizations; all of which functions are similar to the duties performed by the International Union for members in the United States. Teamster members in the United States and Canada will benefit from the centralized policymaking existing in each country. Those mutually supportive governing bodies will facilitate our Union's ability to develop strategies to deal with corporations and political events that transcend our national border.

TEAMSTERS CANADA

In recognition of the distinct national character of Teamsters members in Canada, the General Executive Board has designated Teamsters Canada as the nationwide representative of all Canadian Teamsters.

As you all know, in 1999 the BLE and the UTU tried unsuccessfully to merge the two unions into a single organization. The BLE membership in 2001 overwhelmingly voted against any merger with the UTU. The actual numbers of votes were 2,800 against and 600 in favour; with 80% return votes of the BLE active membership. For the actual information please go to:

<http://www.ble.org/pr/newsletter/1001/newsletter/story2.html>,
<http://www.ble.org/pr/newsletter/1201/newsletter/story.html>,
<http://www.ble.org/pr/newsletter/1201/newsletter/story1.html>

In 2002, the Advisory Board, under the direction of International BLE President Brother Don Hahs began to seek other unions to merge with to form a stronger organization and to provide better protection against the carriers and the governments who are trying to take away what we have achieved at the bargaining table. After listening to the presentations of selected unions, the Advisory Board chose the International Brotherhood of Teamsters and directed the Executive Committee to begin discussion with the IBT Executive Committee.

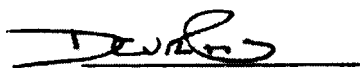
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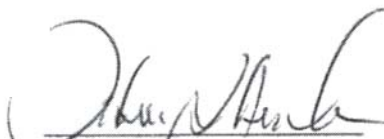
Why the Teamsters?

The Teamsters are 1.4 million members in North America who provide a huge umbrella for the BLE to organize shortline properties; to have research and strategic planning on a scale that we never enjoyed; to have legal and government affairs coordinated in Ottawa and to be part of a very powerful union. The most important benefits of the merger is that the Teamsters will allow us in Canada to have an independent union, Canadian based, Canadian controlled and run by Canadians. One of the major concerns about the previous merger with the UTU was that the UTU has a US based president and secretary-treasurer and no control over the money and the interest generated by that money. Under the IBT merger we will have an autonomous Canadian BLE, with our own dues structure.

This is the 21st century and we need to have an effective union for our membership that will provide us with an exciting future. The merger with the IBT will provide the exciting future for the membership. We are not here to fight with other unions just to protect the BLE's membership

In Solidarity,


Dennis Curtis
General Chairman


George Hucker
Vice President – NLR


Rob Hewitt
General Chairman

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