

April 21, 2010

Rocky Mount, NC

To: Our General Committee

From: Bookie Woodcock, 1106

I got to start by saying I do not believe the new agreement proposal is the best in the world, but I will say it's a big step in the right direction. No agreement will ever please everyone nor is an agreement meant to protect everyone. You have got to get the best agreement you can for the people working and for the time we are working in. Work in the present and plan for the future.

In case no one is looking, change is happening all around us and the railroad is changing too. The change a 35 year employee has seen verses the change a 5-10 year employee has seen is indescribable yet they are still changes. No matter how long our railroad career last, we will continue to see our railroad change. What we have to do is get on board and change too.

The days of being paid for poor performance, not working, sharp shooting and screwing our fellow brothers (it's all about ME attitude) are over. The new BLET agreement has proven that and has also opened the doors to bigger and better ways of making money on the railroad. The railroads love it, yea, they are making money, but aren't they suppose to??? And guess what, the engineers are making money too. You go to work, work the best you can, make the railroad money and make yourself a very good living. Sure is nice to get a bonus each year for doing what I've been doing all my life. Just working. Sure is nice to see the company I work for making money because it creates business and new business creates jobs. Yea, we have lost jobs or positions over the years, but truthfully the positions lost were no longer needed due to CHANGE. Computers, robots and the technology of today's world are going to continue change the way we railroad. You cannot stop progress and growth; you can only progress and grow or get kicked to the curb. Oh the change is here whether we like it or not. You just watch how much it will and can change it this agreement does not pass.

If this agreement fails, and the railroad continues to push for coordination, which they will, the change a 5-10 year man will see, will make them wonder if they still work for a railroad or not. We all work hard but we are all spoiled. Easy jobs, good pay, good benefits, good people and our families live better than most in our neighborhoods. We all walked into it when we started our railroad career. We knew what we were getting into and could not wait to sign the dotted line and start making big bucks...

Well, we still are going to make the big bucks, have good jobs, good benefits and our families will still be better than most. If this agreement fails, you will see a change and very soon you will see a difference in how you work and how much you get paid. It will not take the railroad long to push their coordination plan through and filter it down to us.

We need to step back and punt. Change is going to happen. You can make the change be a good one or bad one. Like I said at the start, this is not a perfect agreement. It allows each of us to start the new era of railroad contracts and negotiations. This agreement is referred to as a WIN WIN contract. It will never be an all UTU WIN nor will it ever be an all CSXT WIN. This is what our union does, it negotiates the best agreement it possibly can for US and yes, there will always be change to contend with.

Go vote and make it count.