



LOCAL 2-21 C.A.T. Letter

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I suppose things could have gone worse than they did over the past 2 days, but I'm not sure how. The company came right into the room on Monday morning and handed us a proposal they want us to bring back for a vote (see cover letter of proposal on back of sheet). While the proposal may seem confusing, the bottom line is they made some minor changes to the flexibility language, CP-1 and the transfer language; otherwise the proposal is the same thing we voted down in June. The changes they made were minimal and do not address the fears we have surrounding CP-1 and flexibility.

To add insult to injury, the company said we have until February 5th to accept this offer or our economics will be revisited. The company handed out a gloom and doom pamphlet explaining the hard times in the paper industry and more specifically the hard times NewPage is facing. They said their economic offer doesn't match the poor economic times and they would pull their offer from the table. So, in a nutshell, it's basically the same thing we voted on in June except this time they added a threat to it.

It's obvious we are in for a battle. They are using strong arm tactics with the intent of muscling their way through negotiations while taking full advantage of these poor economic times to kick us around. It's going to be difficult but we can't let the company shove flexibility, CP-1, Christmas, transfer language and deferred maintenance down our throats.

Our International Rep (Sally Feistel) set up a conference call today with Jon Geenen (VP of the USW and head of paper bargaining) and Mike Bolton (our District Director). That call lasted over an hour with much discussion about NewPage's financial situation and negotiation strategies in general.

We were initially scheduled to meet with the company again on Thursday and Friday but the company said they are not interested in getting together again until after February 5th.

Thank you for your support.
In Solidarity,

Bryon Branstrom