



## LOCAL 2-21 C.A.T. Letter

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# Explanation of Bribe and Rumors

I originally planned to wait awhile before putting out another CAT letter pertaining to the latest contract proposal, but with the way the false rumors are flying around I figured I'd put something out now before many of you head off to camp. I also want to address a posting going throughout the mill that is not accurate. That posting has some figures on it that show how your \$6,000 bribe would be taxed. That posting was not calculated or distributed by anyone on the committee and is not accurate.

I guess that's as good of a place to start as any; the bribe. The \$6,000 bribe will be taxed like any other bonus (pronounced bone-us) or sold vacation (which are taxed as supplement incomes), and that is 25%. That means the Federal government will deduct \$1,500 from your \$6,000 bribe, leaving you with \$4,500. From that \$4,500, you will still have your State taxes of 4.4% and Social Security deducted. **The final figure would leave you with a little less than 2/3 of the bribe which will be just under \$4,000. However, all of that is a moot issue. It doesn't matter what they take for taxes, it will all come out in the end of the year when you do your taxes. To me, the taxes are irrelevant. What you need to understand is that this IS your back pay. Based on the average wage out here and based on 2,400 hours per year, the company owes you about \$5,700.** This money needs to be given to us as wages so it is included when calculating next year's vacation, as well as in your 401 and the RIF. Just by screwing you on your vacations alone, the company will keep just under \$500,000. Remember, you get 2% of last year's gross earnings for each vacation you have. That means you are giving up \$120 (2% of \$6,000) for every vacation you take. That's your money folks! You earned it!

One of the rumors I am hearing is that you have to either accept this contract or go on strike. That's not even close to being true. **There is no one talking about going on strike.** Your options are to accept this proposal as is or vote no and send it back into the company's hands. They can either implement like they did in '89; or they can go back to the table for more negotiations, like they did in '02 when we voted down their last/best/final. Implementation would mean reliving '89 and the attitude they created which continues to live today in every person that went through it back then. Going back to the table like we did in 2002 was good for both parties. They ended up getting a contract and we were able to improve our insurance by incorporating a stand-alone plan. That language saved us money with our premiums throughout the contract. We continue to benefit from that today. The electricians accepted the first last/best/offer and have paid high premiums (if they chose the PPO) because of it and continue to pay the high premiums today. This message is not to throw anyone under the bus; it is meant to show you there are things worth fighting for.

I (along with 100% of your committee) will make every one of you a promise: **When the time comes (and it will come) where I believe in my heart that there is no more this committee can get for you, I will be man enough to tell you that. I may not like what is on the offer, but if I feel we have gone as far as we can without going out on strike, I will tell you. But, I honestly do not feel we are there yet.** I feel the company needs to answer to a few more things with the length of the contract only being one of the issues. I do not believe we should be accepting this offer.

There are a lot of internal concerns being shared by the NewPage Council to the International right now regarding the length of this contract offer. I am dealing with this on a daily basis and will keep you posted. I am hoping we can do something about it. Otherwise, we will be returning to the negotiating table in 17 months and who the hell wants to relive all this fun so soon. I think we all know why the company wants to do this, so they can come right back at us to take more.

I'd like to bring your attention to the fact that many of you expressed concern about the week of December 6th being muzzle loading season and that many departments are maxed out with vacations. For this reason, we are looking at pushing back the information meetings to the week of December 13th. As of right now, it is scheduled for Thursday, December 16th. I will keep you posted and will have contract proposals (in their entirety) available before hand so you can prepare to ask questions about it. Again, you'll be hearing more about that in the near future through another CAT letter, where I will also be discussing our biggest fight CP-1.

So, in a nutshell, I'm asking you to vote this proposal down and send us back to the table. We all know why NewPage wanted the 3 month hiatus and that was simply to get us closer to Christmas and offer the bribe thinking we would take the money and run. Please vote NO.

Thank you for your support.

In Solidarity,

Bryon Branstrom