

American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations



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October 25, 2002

Mr. James W. Ekberg
40 Lumur Drive
Sayville, New York 11782

Dear Brother Ekberg:

Thank you for writing about the Association of Commuter Railroad Employees (ACRE) and that unaffiliated organization's apparent claim that it is seeking affiliation with the AFL-CIO. Let me assure you that I am deeply concerned with ACRE's statements and conduct and I would direct you to TTD and TWU President Sonny Hall's August 27, 2001, letter, which accurately reflects the sentiments of the labor movement regarding ACRE's continuing raid on AFL-CIO affiliated rail unions.

As I have stated publicly, today more than ever commuter rail workers and all working men and women should stay in the home of the real labor movement and resist opportunist groups such as ACRE that aim to divide us when we know our strength is drawn from our unity. Workers belonging to AFL-CIO unions benefit from the collective strength of 66 member unions; and specifically, commuter rail workers benefit from the clout of transportation unions united under the umbrella of the Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO (TTD).


Clearly, the challenges facing railroad employees are extremely serious. Groups such as ACRE must not be allowed to deceive commuter railroad employees into believing that their fortunes are well served through membership in an unaffiliated organization that is not a part of the 13 million member labor movement. The fact is that by choosing ACRE representation, the members will ultimately lose out on the many benefits of being a part of our great movement. Any statements by ACRE suggesting that AFL-CIO affiliation is in its future should be discounted as claims designed to affect the outcome of ACRE raiding campaigns such as the most recent effort directed at BRS represented employees at Metro-North.

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I join TTD and all our affiliated rail unions in calling on all commuter railroad workers to resist the divisive efforts of ACRE. Finally, let me make it clear that no unaffiliated organization that raids AFL-CIO unions will be rewarded with membership in the AFL-CIO.

Again, thank you for writing me and please continue to speak out in favor of solidarity and against the efforts of ACRE.

Sincerely,


John J. Sweeney
President

JJS:lh

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WE MAKE A DIFFERENCE

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October 4, 2002

Mr. James W. Ekberg
40 Lumur Drive
Sayville, NY 11782

Dear Brother Ekberg:

James, in response to your September 30, 2002 letter (fax) I need to make it very clear that my response is in no way intended to interfere in the elections of officers within the ACRE organization.

In terms of the basic question related to ACRE and the possibility of ACRE, at some later date, becoming an affiliate of the AFL-CIO, I state the following:

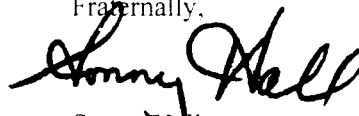
To my knowledge no written effort has been made by ACRE to become part of the AFL-CIO, nor a member of T.W.U.

Since ACRE never has requested either the T.W.U. and/or the AFL-CIO for affiliation, I suppose one can say they never were turned down. You cannot say NO to a question never asked.

It is correct for the ACRE leadership to say they have had a friendly relationship with me during the past years, and as far as I am concerned still do. However, this does not mean that they are not wrong, because they are wrong. Raiding other Unions is wrong and destructive for every Union member, ACRE membership included.

There is no doubt in my mind that now that ACRE leaders decided to raid an AFL-CIO Union, there is no way ACRE could ever become an affiliate of the AFL-CIO. While I state this belief, I am at the same time saddened by this situation created by ACRE leaders. The rank-and-file membership and their families need the support of the AFL-CIO and under this situation it will not happen. Why is it important for the ACRE membership - "Because Together We Make a Difference".

Fraternally,



Sonny Hall
International President

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