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Dear Sisters and Brothers:

In a demonstration of good faith and with an eye toward the job security and safety of the members of both organizations, the UTU has retracted its application for a single-craft representation election at the Union Pacific Railroad, while the BLET has agreed to refrain from organizing UTU-represented properties.

Our two organizations have had their differences, but when it comes to protecting our members' job security and safety, we must stand together against the hostile attacks of the carriers' expressed intent on eliminating jobs.

It is clear that the major railroads in national negotiations are pursuing a strategy to use past differences between the BLET and the UTU as a wedge to reduce crew size, thereby putting the lives of all rail workers and the public in danger and also seriously threatening the financial security of the Railroad Retirement system.

Carriers claim that experimental positive train control (PTC) will permit crew-size reduction and permanent elimination of thousands of jobs. In fact, the carriers' attempt to reduce crew size has nothing to do with new technology and everything to do with increasing corporate profits and executive bonuses.

Indeed, carriers have told the National Transportation Safety Board that implementation of PTC is many years away. Moreover, the Federal Railroad Administration has not conducted a study into the safety and reliability of reduced crew size, nor its impact on an already highly fatigued workforce operating trains through congested areas carrying highly toxic hazmat during this era of heightened terrorist threats to the security of our nation's railroads.

Over the next week, you will be receiving communications from officers of our organizations asking your cooperation in a joint strategy that has as its purpose a successful outcome to this round of bargaining. For this to work, it is essential that every member of both organizations cooperate and participate in this effort.

This is a job security and safety issue to the members of both our organizations, and also a threat to financial solvency of the Railroad Retirement system. Every member, members of their family, and railroad retiree will soon be given instructions regarding this united effort.

In solidarity,

Don M. Hahs  
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