

Pennsylvania Federation Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees Joint Protective Board Resolution to Oppose the Takeover of the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees by the International Brotherhood of Boilermakers, Iron Ship Builders, Blacksmiths, Forgers and Helpers

Whereas, the Grand Lodge Officers, in a split vote, agreed to put the proposed Takeover Agreement of the BMWWE by the IBB (Boilermakers Union) to a vote of the rank and file membership which is required by the Grand Lodge Constitution and By-Laws before any merger or takeover can be completed; and

Whereas, this agreement to takeover the BMWWE fails to provide for the membership the necessary improvements in bargaining power at the contract table and/or in the halls of government which would be required in consideration of any takeover or merger, denies the newly created BMWWE entity political autonomy and the right to self-determination, requires BMWWE members to pay more per month in International dues than other members of the Boilermakers Union, and states that we must turn over 20 million dollars in the current BMWWE treasury to the Boilermakers Union; and

Whereas, while this proposed takeover has little or no benefit to the membership of the BMWWE, it does have considerable benefit to the Grand Lodge Officers who have guaranteed and preserved their positions while simultaneously making themselves eligible for two additional pensions in addition to the Railroad Retirement pension and their current pension with the BMWWE, giving current full time Grand Lodge Officers four pensions and making all full time System Officers and General Chairmen eligible for three additional pensions in addition to Railroad Retirement pension which would provide System Officers and General Chairmen with four pensions; and

Whereas, the financing of this proposed takeover arrangement is accomplished by taking the interest (over 1 million dollars per year) from the BMWWE Strike Fund; and

Whereas, the takeover would require that we be governed by the IBB Constitution and By-Laws that permits the IBB to select the BMWWE leadership, only provides for two representatives to the IBB Executive Council (the ruling body of the IBB) giving the BMWWE 1/6 representation while we would constitute over 1/3 of the total membership, centralizes all decisions of the Union with the IBB President with virtually no right to appeal, provides that all Local Lodges of 35 or less members be disbanded and permits the IBB International to seize the assets of the disbanded local lodges and other serious problems too numerous to list in this resolution; and

Whereas, the IBB leadership showed their true colors when they refused to back the BMWWE and other Rail Unions when we threatened to shut down America's railroads to

protect our Railroad Retirement disability and while this threat forced management and the government to back down and drop their plans to dismantle our disability plan, the IBB refused to participate in this struggle to protect this benefit; and

Whereas, the IBB leadership showed their true colors when they refused to back the reform caucus of Sweeny-Trumka in their successful bid to be elected head of the AFL-CIO and instead elected to support the bankrupt and pro-management policies of Lane Kirkland and Tom Donahue; and

Whereas, the BMWWE has received an offer to engage in merger discussions with the United Steel Workers of America and has refused to consider this proposal which should be evaluated before any additional consideration is given to the IBB takeover terms, and previously had rejected a merger offer from the Service Employees International Union which was superior to the takeover terms from the IBB, but did not provide for three additional pensions for Union officers; therefore,

Be It Resolved, that the Pennsylvania Federation Joint Protective Board goes on record opposing this Takeover Agreement to make the BMWWE a division of the IBB and urges all members of the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees to reject this agreement when a ballot is sent to them for their ratification or rejection; and

Be It Further Resolved, that copies of this resolution be widely distributed and that the membership be kept fully informed about this very important event in our Union lives.

June 28, 2001
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania