

## A Message regarding recent Social Media posts on Collective Bargaining:

April 5, 2019

Good Evening Brothers and Sisters;

I am writing this note in response to many misleading comments on social media sites regarding this Local and its negotiation of the 2019 ICI Agreement. These reported comments are based on false information and misconceptions regarding the process and next steps. Some conversations have supposedly been with some of the reps of this Local and report that there is dissension among the Reps; I am not aware of this, also that the Manager will sign the Agreement without a Ratification Vote. This is just plain and simple "B.S."

Many of these comments seem to be coming from a Union organization that chose to leave their Brother Unions in the Building Trades. Now, they want people from the Unions that they have rejected to join in pushing their agenda! If all the BTA Unions go their own way, where is the strength in the Union Movement with this *'everyone for themselves'* attitude? This other Union has chosen its path; let's see where it will lead and good luck to them. Local 488 has an obligation to its members to find ways to put them to work, and also to our signatory contractors, to help them to be competitive in this economic turndown. If our Contractors can't remain competitive and stay in business, who employs our membership?

Who do we blame, since these 'chats' seem like a 'blame-game' of sorts?

- 1) Maybe the past Federal Governments, for not doing their homework on environment and social issues?
- 2) Maybe the current Federal Government who shut down Energy East and cancelled Northern Gateway to Prince Rupert, and whose leader seems to think that Alberta doesn't warrant attention even though it was the economic engine that moved Canada for 15 years?
- 3) Could it be the past Provincial Governments who allowed double breasting and similar rules so that it was almost impossible to organize in order to grow our market share?
- 4) Is it the fault of the present Provincial Government which has tried to correct some of the more onerous labour laws that were put in place against Unions? This government inherited a bad economy based on energy with no pipelines to move our oil to the marketplace. Why invest in producing oil when you can't move it to the marketplace? The present government isn't perfect, but I would give them an "A" for effort in trying to get pipelines built and in getting the province working again, and also for their support of Unions.
- 5) Perhaps we could blame environmentalists who use every trick in the book in addition to high-priced lawyers, funded by outside money to stop Alberta Oil from getting to market? Don't take my word for it: in the Edmonton Journal of Wednesday, November 14, read David Staples article on Vivian Krause, who researched how these groups received *"as much as \$90 Million in the last decade, going to Canadian groups to fight oil sands and pipelines"*. She goes on to state that these same tactics were not used in the USA North Dakota and Texas fracking industries. Interesting .
- 6) And of course, let's not leave out the Unions, who *must* be responsible for all this unemployment. I am sure that there are some folks in this province and who are, maybe, running in the current Provincial election who will say that it is all a Union plot. Sadly, some of our own members seem to believe this too.

In closing, I will say this: Your Union officers and staff work hard to support and maintain the best interests of the membership of this Local, also that our signatory partners need to be competitive with rates that need to reflect the present market for labour; how long will our Contractors stick with the construction unions if they can't secure the work which results in our employment? The global market for commodities is based on supply and demand, and labour is a commodity. Just like when there are too many homes for sale on the market, the price goes down. If there is a slow labour market, people will sell their skills for less and generally without benefits. This is the reality.

This Local Union will present an Agreement to the membership for ratification soon, one that will be reasonable and consider the present market conditions. This Contract, after ratification, will enable this Union to create work opportunities that will give our membership a decent wage and still maintain benefits. The membership of this Local will decide on this Agreement, not some other Unions members, who have removed themselves from solidarity with their fellow construction Unions, and most of whose work is Maintenance.

I would dismiss those who present simple nostrums for complex problems that even our elected politicians haven't resolved.

A fraternal thank you,  
Business Manager  
UA Local Union 488