

November 6, 2011

Brothers and Sisters:

Late yesterday, the White House released the report of Presidential Emergency Board No. 243. The full, 101 page report is available on BMWED's website at www.bmwed.org for download or viewing.

The Board made recommendations on wages, health and welfare and supplemental sickness. Additionally, it made recommendations regarding future disposition of BMWED's craft specific proposals on meals and lodging, travel allowance and rate equity on Norfolk Southern. However, the Board made no monetary recommendations on those issues.

I have summoned BMWED's National Bargaining Committee to Washington, D.C. to meet with the Carriers on Tuesday, November 8, 2011 to discuss the Board's recommendations and attempt to fashion an agreement for rank and file ratification. If our initial meeting is unsuccessful, we have meetings scheduled for the following week as well on November 16 and 17. Additionally, I have convened a meeting of the National Association in Kansas City, Missouri on November 30, 2011 to address the Board's report and its consequences.

Under Section 10 of the Railway Labor Act, the BMWED and the Carriers now must honor a 30 day "cooling off" period that expires at 12:01 AM, December 6, 2011. During that time, BMWED cannot strike, nor can the Carriers unilaterally impose new terms and conditions of employment. After the expiration of that cooling off period, either party is free to exercise economic self-help.

Many rumors will be flying over the next 30 days. I urge you to visit this website and contact your local or system union representative to get accurate, up to the minute accounts of what is really going on. We must approach the next 30 days in a disciplined and focused manner, showing solidarity with each other and the members of the other unions affected by the Board's report.

Freddie N. Simpson

President BMWED