



BC INTERIOR BARGAINING Turning Points

"Speaking up for forest workers in the BC Interior"

VOLUME 1 ISSUE 2

DECEMBER 6, 2010

IFLRA OFFERS YOUR JOBS TO THEIR FOREMEN

Improving Job Security has been a priority of your BC Interior Bargaining Committee.

The BC Interior Bargaining Committee believes there is a huge void in our current collective agreement and Employers are continuing to take advantage and exploit the language void which has resulted in our members losing work.

Under the umbrella of the Interior Forest Labour Relations Association (IFLRA), southern interior Employers all say the Union is making up this allegation and asserts that there are no issues at all on the shop floor with regards to their Foremen and Supervisors doing bargaining unit work.

The necessary language improvements that are needed to address the issue of Working Foremen has been withheld from the union by your Employers.

Some of the southern interior Employers such as Tolko Industries and West Fraser have already

adopted this same language in their northern operations and had a hand in crafting it. They indicate no problems with the language while still refusing to treat their southern interior Employees in the same manner. This language proposal is not only in all of the northern BC agreements, it's also included in all the coast collective agreements. More restrictive language is even found at an Aspen Planers operation in Merritt.

The IFLRA has consistently taken the position that although Foreman should not really be doing our work, they feel that *"times are tough"* and suggest that they are struggling to stay alive—essentially, justifying to themselves, that they can keep our members at home while the Foremen performs their work.

The IFLRA insists that they need this flexibility—the logical conclusion being is that the Employers intend to continue to de-employ our members and continue to grow this insidious practice while every other Employer in BC has agreed to the union's language proposal.

Turning Point—Foremen routinely find it an advantage to work in place of a bargaining unit employee in order to enhance productivity and incrementally recapture traditional union work for Staff.

Steelworkers propose the northern interior language for the agreement that says employees outside the bargaining unit will not perform work that is normally done by employees in the bargaining unit.

And Steelworkers knowingly add, that nothing in the agreement shall be construed as prohibiting foremen from doing work for purposes of instruction, provided in so doing a lay-off of bargaining unit employees does not result, or in the case of an emergency, when regular employees are not available, provided that every reasonable effort is made to find a replacement.