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May 26, 2006

**To: All TWU Local Presidents
All TWU Brothers and Sisters**

Dear TWU Brothers and Sisters:

I am writing to you today to let you know about the dark shadow that now has suddenly come to hang over our long-standing relationship with the AFL-CIO.

You are all aware what importance TWU has always placed on our relationship with the AFL-CIO. We have always contributed more than our per capita share of money and volunteer effort to labor's joint ventures, ranging from grassroots organizing to political contributions to labor participation in civil rights events. Symbolically, the letters "AFL-CIO" are at the center of the TWU logo that decorates our union tee-shirts and COPE jackets. Our efforts for the central labor organization have, over the years, on a per capita basis, at least matched those of the larger unions whose numbers dominate the organization.

In addition, when it comes to the AFL-CIO's role in dealing with friction among unions we have always set a premium on labor unity, and have always complied immediately with Article XX and Article XXI decisions, including those that we regarded as clearly off the mark.

However, a subcommittee of the AFL-CIO Executive Council has recently made a decision that we believe is such a departure from what clearly was AFL-CIO "law" that, with much regret and after going through a thorough and agonizing appraisal of the situation, we have decided that we cannot comply with it.

The case is the result of our effort to affiliate the Professional Flight Attendants Association ("PFAA"), the representative of Northwest flight attendants, with TWU. This effort began last fall, when TWU began providing concrete assistance to PFAA after Northwest Airlines filed a bankruptcy petition. At the time, both IAM and CWA-AFA were also offering assistance to PFAA, and discussing possible affiliation with it. CWA-AFA, at the time, also launched a massive organizing drive to displace PFAA as the representative of Northwest flight attendants. Through the AFL-CIO's Article XXI proceeding, CWA-AFA (in a decision that we strongly disagreed with, but did comply with) gained the right to be the only AFL-CIO union to engage in a traditional card signing, organizing campaign. However, it was understood by everyone involved that this decision did not prohibit IAM and TWU from assisting and attempting to affiliate PFAA, and it was equally known to all that IAM and TWU each intended to, and in fact did continue to seek an affiliation agreement with PFAA.

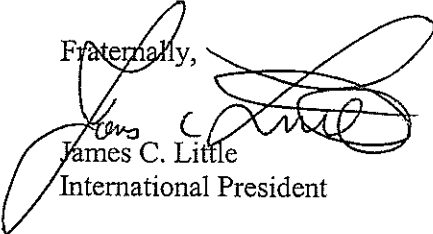
Our continued assistance to the Northwest flight attendants, and our negotiations with PFAA finally bore fruit at roughly the same time that CWA-AFA filed its representation petition with the National Mediation Board. At the time, understanding that the AFL-CIO had never used its Article XXI proceedings to halt affiliation efforts, and that prior cases made clear that Article XXI could have nothing to do with affiliation efforts, we gave our word to the Northwest flight attendants that we would not be pressured into giving up our affiliation agreement. We believed that it should be and was up to the flight attendants themselves to vote on whether they wanted PFAA to affiliate with TWU, and to decide whether they preferred PFAA or CWA-AFA as their representative.

We were not surprised when CWA-AFA filed a proceeding to require that we give up the affiliation, but we believed that the application was frivolous in view of prior cases. We were surprised, rudely surprised, when the subcommittee of the AFL-CIO assigned to rule on the cases decided that we must give up our affiliation with PFAA and endorse CWA-AFA in the NMB election.

We cannot, and will not do so. The word we gave to the Northwest flight attendants that they would have a democratic choice on their union's affiliation with TWU, and an improved choice in their NMB election, cannot be taken back so as to comply with a decision that we believe is a total departure from the AFL-CIO Constitution as it has been practiced for many years.

As a result of our decision, certain sanctions will likely be imposed next week. These include being deprived of the right to file Article XXI cases. More serious sanctions could be imposed by the AFL-CIO Executive Council in August; we must inform you that the likely prospect of certain sanctions could lead to serious disruption of our relation to the AFL-CIO. This is not a result we desire, but it is not one that will hurt our ability to represent our members, nor, in this case, will it deter us from continuing to do what is right, and what will best serve all the members of TWU.

Fraternally,


James C. Little
International President

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c : TWU International Executive Council