



TRANSPORTATION DISTRICT 140

DISTRICT DES TRANSPORTS 140

International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers
Association internationale des machinistes et des travailleurs et travailleuses de l'aérospatiale

June 28, 2012

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The Right Honourable Stephen Harper
Prime Minister of Canada
Office of the Prime Minister
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A2

By e-mail and fax

Mr. Prime Minister:

The members of the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAMAW) strongly oppose the way your government is steam-rolling over the working people of Canada.

Your government's behaviour has set back the collective bargaining process in this country almost 100 years. Indeed, 93 years ago, the actions taken by the government in power at the time, and which led to the Winnipeg General Strike, are again coming to the forefront.

Your government's continuing misuse of power has angered a large number of working women and men. The people of this country are not sheep and they are waking up! From the prorogation in 2010, when you decided that you would just shut down the process if you didn't get what you wanted, to the events of 2011, when your government was found in contempt of Parliament, there has been a complete denigration of the democratic process.

Your government has refused to respect the law, namely the *Air Canada Public Participation Act*, and has chosen to simply stand by as the Aircraft Maintenance industry in Canada is being decimated.

Due to the continuing fiasco that is the Aveos bankruptcy, there are approximately 2600 highly trained technicians (who, by the way, are also taxpayers) out of work. The Conservative Government has done nothing.

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The way your government has dealt with the numerous issues at “Canada’s National Airline” is deplorable. Bill C-33 has created an environment in which there is no incentive for any employer under federal jurisdiction to bargain in good faith with its employees. In addition, Labour Minister Lisa Raitt’s decision to take away the parties’ legal right to strike/lockout does not allow for the opportunity to release some of the pent-up frustrations or stresses that have resulted from a decade of negativity.

In the final blow in the IAMAW/Air Canada dispute, Arbitrator Michel Picher issued his decision on Sunday, June 17th. As was expected, Mr. Picher chose the employer’s submission as the most appropriate. The Union is not surprised that he has done so, as the legislation set forward by Labour Minister Lisa Raitt left little room for him to do otherwise.

Bill C-33 contains the most onerous stipulations ever seen in such legislation. The Arbitrator’s hands were tied by the following language in the bill:

(2) In making the selection of a final offer, the arbitrator is to be guided by the need for terms and conditions of employment that are consistent with those in other airlines and that will provide the necessary degree of flexibility to ensure (a) the short- and long-term economic viability and competitiveness of the employer; and (b) the sustainability of the employer’s pension plan, taking into account any short-term funding pressures on the employer.

Mr. Harper, enjoy your government’s time in power. I believe this will be the last majority government that the Conservatives will see for a long time. As we approach the end of your mandate in 2015, the IAMAW will be working to make sure that you do not get another majority.

Sincerely,



Chuck Atkinson
President and Directing General Chairperson
Transportation District 140, IAMAW