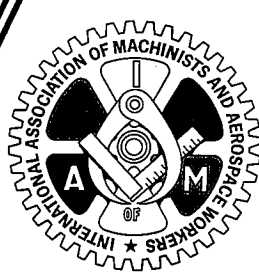


**International
Association of
Machinists and
Aerospace Workers**



9000 Machinists Place
Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20772-2687

Area Code 301
967-4500



OFFICE OF THE INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT

GL - 2 Communications

June 26, 2008

Subj: 2008 U. S. Elections

To: All IAM Members

Dear Sisters and Brothers:

Now is not the right time for the IAM to endorse Senator Barack Obama. And here's why.

Our members feel the economy squeezing their family finances for every last dime, every single week. They care deeply about incessant increases in utility rates, auto and health insurance rates, mortgage and credit card interest rates; and, most disturbing, rising unemployment rates. When a gallon of regular gasoline costs \$4 plus and a gallon of milk costs \$5 plus, they know hard times lie ahead.

But those meat and potato issues have not found a place in the message frame developed by Senator Obama's campaign. To us, hope and change are not antidotes to the economic pressures blue-collar families face. They are just words.

In the Machinists Union, a predominantly blue-collar union, the impression continues to grow that Senator Barack Obama could care less about folks like us. At the plant closings in Galesburg and Herrin, Illinois and during our fight to save pensions at United Airlines, he never lifted a finger to help our members. His policy positions on jobs, NAFTA renegotiations, skills for our kids, health care for every American, and re-regulation seemed anemic if not academic exercises.

In phone calls to IAM members, Senator Obama never broke eighteen percent in any state. He came in third, often a distant third, behind Senators Hillary Clinton and John McCain. And our union made over a quarter million calls to its members.

That leaves the Machinists Union in a quandary. We cannot vote for a continuation of the Bush Error. But nor can we endorse Senator Obama, not yet anyway. Now is just not the right time.

That is why the Machinists Union voted "present" when the AFL-CIO conducted its first ever General Board ballot by fax machine. Other unions voted as we did. Together those unions, representing nearly 600,000 mostly blue-collar workers, refused to be railroaded into a decision they were not yet prepared to make.

All IAM Members

Page 2

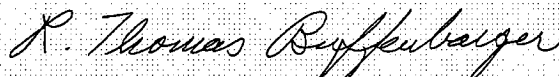
June 26, 2008

Founded in an Atlanta railroad pit 120 years ago, the Machinists Union always has shrugged off warnings that the train is leaving the station. We know from experience that those trains cannot get very far without us or the other unions who voted "present."

So, we will wait to hear from Senator Obama listening carefully for a clearer, more compelling set of policies to improve the lives and protect the livelihoods of blue-collar workers everywhere. We look forward to a productive conversation with him about the policies that will resonate with our members.

Perhaps, by the time delegates to the IAM's 37th Quadrennial Convention gather in Orlando in early September, we will have had an honest talk. Meanwhile, the IAM will focus on electing a veto-proof United States Senate.

In solidarity,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "R. Thomas Buffenbarger". The signature is written in black ink on a white background.

R. Thomas Buffenbarger
International President

RTB/tak