

Negotiations between Teamsters and CN derail

Canada NewsWire

MONTREAL, Oct. 14, 2013

The Teamsters are gearing up for a battle to ensure the safety of Canadians and rail workers...

MONTREAL, Oct. 14, 2013 /CNW Telbec/ - The Teamsters Canada Rail Conference (TCRC), which represents some 3,300 conductors, trainmen, yardmen and traffic coordinators at Canadian National (CN), are gearing up for a fight with the railway company.

The Teamsters Union offered to continue conciliation, which ended on October 7. Unfortunately, CN's management rejected the union's proposal and as a result, there could be a strike or a lockout on October 28.

"We're extremely disappointed by CN's refusal (to extend the mediation period)," said TCRC spokesperson Roland Hackl. "The railway uses an old tactic: pointing a gun to its workers' heads to force them to make concessions."

What these concessions would mean is that CN workers would be required to work longer hours with less rest time in between trips, which flies in the face of scientific research on fatigue management.

In July, CN CEO Claude Mongeau said that railways had to make safety their "number one priority." However, the employer's demands seems to contradict this statement, and now Teamsters are having to gear up for a fight to ensure the safety of Canadians and rail workers.

"CN's managers have to walk the walk and talk the talk; they have to understand that people are not machines and that you should never place profits before people," added the union spokesperson.

The railway's profits are projected to hit \$3 billion this year.

The collective agreement expired July 22. Wages and the retirement plan are not the central issues in this bargaining round.

The Teamsters represents 115,000 members in Canada in all trades. The International Brotherhood of Teamsters, with which Teamsters Canada is affiliated, has 1.4 million members in North America.

SOURCE Teamsters Canada