



November 5, 2008

TO: All Paper and Pulp Industry Local Unions

Last Thursday, the USW was party to a major and historic victory for working families in the paper industry that resulted in the International Trade Commission upholding stiff penalties for countries that were illegally threatening American jobs. Our work on trade, the critical relationships that we have developed at state and national levels in the political arena, and our partnering and aggressive support of two paper companies resulted in a momentous shift in unchecked and unfair trade policies in the paper industry. This work will undoubtedly save American manufacturing jobs, and speaks volumes about the real threat to decent jobs is in this country. It also points to what the solutions are as well.

100% of the lightweight thermal paper capacity in the U.S.A. is produced by USW members at Kanzaki Papers and Appleton Papers Inc. in environments that value hard work, fair wages and benefits, and decent working conditions. A number of these jobs were in jeopardy because foreign producers were dumping paper in the United States market and selling it for a price that was less than it cost to produce. The product in question wasn't a dwindling market of a low tech commodity grade paper, but rather high tech paper that services high tech and growing markets that generate good jobs. To underscore this point, one of the producers just recently made an enormous investment in new equipment that would service growing demand and bring even more efficiency and productivity to the market.

Just a few years ago, prior to our merger, this victory and our participation in it would not have been possible. The willingness of the two companies to take an aggressive position and make a significant investment, along with the active involvement of people like Jimmy Allen and Rick Barr (two of our local presidents) and our legislative department and headquarters staff laid a solid foundation for success.

But our success also emphasizes the importance of our work in the political arena, because the ITC is indeed a political entity itself. Some of the champions of working families that the USW has worked so hard to elect in past elections such as Governor Doyle from Wisconsin, Governor Strickland from Ohio, Senators Herb Kohl and Sherrod Brown, and Freshman Congressman Steve Kagen all gave passionate testimony about the devastation that would follow a negative finding. Governor Rendell of Pennsylvania and others sent written testimony that helped tremendously.

Last Thursday was a good day for USW Paperworkers. If we continue to focus our work in the political and legislative arenas, we will find ourselves having more success on the real issues impacting working Americans.

In solidarity,

Leo W. Gerard  
International President

Jon T. Geenen  
International Vice President