

S.O.S. BULLETIN

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Report from Carquest Picket Line

Carquest warehouse workers of Steelworkers Lo. 12934-02 have been locked out of their jobs since September. Their contract expired and Carquest refused to negotiate, just locked them out. They have been on the picket line ever since. "Our families are on hold," said picketer Fred Belchak. "It's tough with Thanksgiving, Christmas, taxes and heating bills coming." He said the community support has been outstanding, people come by and donate food. The Fraternal Order of Eagles, Bay City, hosted a Spaghetti Benefit Dinner on December 11. Bro. Belchak showed true Union spirit, telling a reporter, "I want to go back to work. I want to be the one to give." **Don't Shop At Carquest!**

More Resistance Is Showing Up

At the end of October, Ford workers nationally stood up, stood together and voted NO on concessions that included a tricky no-strike clause. (See below for Ford workers' comments on that!) Now, New York City bus and subway workers have voted in a whole new union slate to protest previous sell-outs. And, Teamsters in Chicago have voted NO *for the third time*, against giving more concessions to Yellow Freight (YRC). The Chicago membership is defying the national Teamster leadership which already gave away the concessions nationally.

How many more? Come one, come all! Enough is Enough! There's power in numbers!

Ford Workers Show Their Spirit:

"If you're selling shit, no one will buy it unless they need fertilizer."

After the Ford workers voted 74% NO, against any more concessions, these comments were sent to a Local 600 (Dearborn, MI) newsletter organized by retiree Ron Lare and tradeswoman Judy Wraight. Ron's e-mail is ronlare@sbcglobal.net.

DEARBORN TRUCK PLANT: Gary Walkowicz, Dearborn Truck bargaining committee: ***(Gary has stood against the concession philosophy from the start, and he was the leading inspiration for the national NO campaign)***: The No vote gathered speed at the end because workers started to see they could do it. All the anger and frustration of auto workers started coming out. Kansas City (92% NO!) gave us a big boost and workers in Kentucky and Dearborn Truck wanted to get an even bigger No vote. This is not the end of concessions attacks, but the first step is just saying No. That opens the door for other workers, too.

DEARBORN TRUCK PLANT, President Nick Kottalis: They tried so desperately to pass these concessions. And lo and behold on Monday morning, the day after, they found a billion dollars that they made.

DEARBORN DIVERSIFIED: Eric Truss: They say we only lose the right to strike over improvements in wages and benefits. But that's what people want the right to strike for. I can't believe our Local 600 is defending the agreement in spite of all the opposition. Gettelfinger shouldn't have said he didn't sell the agreement well enough. He should just say the membership spoke. I campaigned for No, so my co-workers are telling me to run for office.

STAMPING AND BODY, Victor Bean, General Council delegate: I'm happy to see the No vote but it needs to go a bit further than that. We've got a Constitutional Convention coming up. Ron Gettelfinger said "We didn't sell it the agreement well enough". ***But if you're selling shit, no one will buy it unless they need fertilizer.*** The Convention should pass a resolution saying no raises or bonuses for International Reps if we are giving concessions. I'm going to run for Convention delegate.

STAMPING AND BODY, Robert Wade, hi-lo driver: It's a crying shame that upper management at Ford can't realize that enough is enough. Why should hourly workers continue to take more concessions when they keep getting their raises and bonuses. Between the top five executives at Ford they are making over 60,000,000 a year.

(comments continued on page 2, over)

PARTS UNIT, Robert Morris, bargaining committee, Parts unit: Some of our leadership are too long removed from the 40 hour member to understand their concerns, needs and fears. I define my leadership as my ability to recognize and follow the wishes of my membership. This attempt to give contractual parity ignored the sacrifices already made by my membership which allowed Ford to survive without going on welfare like Chrysler and GM.

M&C –T, Greg DeOrnellas, DTP electrician, formerly Local 36: Based on my firsthand experience with repeatedly granting the Company concessions at Fords Wixom Assembly, where the workforce was whipsawed against other plants all threatened with closure and **after doing all that was asked, Ford Management still closed Wixom sending half the work to Mexico and half the work to Canada**. Unless we are willing to match the wages of Mexico or South America or China and in the absence of Socialized medicine like they have in Canada, at some point we, the UAW workforce must decide when enough is enough. I work at DTP. I have already agreed to concessions in the National contract as well as concessions to the local operating agreement. I don't blame the company for asking for continual givebacks that is only smart business but I don't see real estate agents willing to work for 5% commision.'I dont see plumbers willing to make house calls for less than \$75 an hour,'mechanics,'etc. Stick together and have pride!

M&C –T, Judy Wraight: Concessions are a way to lose the union. We need our union. The song Solidarity Forever" says: "Without our brain and muscle, not a single wheel would turn."

ELECTRICIAN, M&C–T UNIT: "We must be competitive", Mullaly. AND if we had voted for the concessions on top of concessions the non union transplant shop down South would simply say "We will work for even less, still" and the race to the bottom would continue.I am working a mandatory 12 hour day, the first 10 at straight time followed by 1.5 at time and a half and on Saturday and Sunday I must work my scheduled 12 hours, the first 8 at time and a quarter.ENOUGH!!!!

PARTS UNIT RETIREEE, Doug Kowalske: Ron, Lots of things run through my thoughts on this. The sustainability of our Union has always been that those who come in help take care of those who go out .Having new hires come in at half the pay and with woefully inadequate benefits for a modern western economy is just not sustainable for ANYONE, the Company, the Union, or the local and national economy. I have read that if the minimum wage had been adjusted for inflation and maintained at a comparable level to its' inception, it would be between \$12.75 and \$14 an hour. Can we build a State or National Economy on minimum wage labor? NO! From a UAW retiree standpoint; at some point, when the \$14 an hour new people realize they make LESS and have no benefits than all of those hundreds of thousands of retirees, they are going to say "Screw those old people. They didn't stand for ME when they had the chance" Or as my DAD, (a Local 600 retiree, 34 years), said when I came into Ford Motor, **"Always watch out for the Union guys with shiny shoes. They ain't on your side anymore."**

OHIO ASSEMBLY PLANT, LOCAL 2000 Mary Springowksi, Alternate District Committeeperson: When Ron Gettelfinger and Bob King said they underestimated the membership, that was very true. The day when the International said 'jump' and the locals said 'how high' is over. We reminded them the membership is the highest authority.

AUTO ALLIANCE, UAW Local 3000, Pam Powell, said: The result restores some of my faith in the voting process. I just hope we didn't wait too long to say what we think.

KANSAS CITY, UAW 249, SUV ASSEMBLY LINE, Dennis Gallie: I voted Yes to strike because I think the mood of the rank and file is very much opposed to more concessions but we haven't had any word about forming a local strike committee. We are faced with a situation like the 1930s. We had a strike vote over production standards. It has been really rough in the plant. It's the worst speedup I've ever been through. It's enforced with discipline and workers are resisting it. **You can't just make an idle threat. We've got to get serious right now.**

More on-line resources: warriorsoflabor.com, uawtalk.com, blueovalforums.com/forums/fordemployeeforum.

This bulletin is put out in the interests of informing workers and renewing the fighting power of organized labor.

Please send your comments and your on-the-job, on-scene reports to:
soldiersofsolidarity@yahoo.com

Solidarity!
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