

S.O.S. BULLETIN

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Brothers and Sisters of the UAW rank & file let us take a lesson from our leaders.

According to Article 11 of the UAW Constitution, elected delegates must approve salaries for International officials at each convention. Thus, prior to the recent Constitutional Convention future salaries of International officers were undetermined.

Gary Walkowicz, a delegate from Local 600 who opposed Bob King for president moved that a resolution from Local 600 be approved by the convention. The resolution read:

“Be it resolved: that all International Leadership and International Representatives be given raises/bonuses ONLY when the union membership receives them and NOT before. Be it further resolved: that if the union membership takes concessions, then the International Leadership and International Representatives must take the same concessions.”

The motion was greeted with wide applause but subsequently voted down by the majority of lapdog delegates eager to please the reigning Concession Caucus which controls the bureaucracy of the UAW.

In regard for the broad rank & file support of the resolution that Walkowicz presented, the Concession Caucus offered an amendment that we think all rank & file workers should study as an example for our own bargaining negotiations.

The Concession Caucus begins by saying that the International President and other IEB officers “were scheduled to receive a three percent lump sum payment” and quarterly cost of living raises.

Now let us pause here a moment, because this is precisely where we, as rank & file members, fail to bargain effectively. Do you see how the Cons enter negotiations as if a 3% raise plus COLA is already “scheduled”? We usually begin hoping we can keep our shirts tucked in, but they have already set the bar above the current rate. Of course, the fact is, nothing has been legitimately scheduled at all. It’s just bull shit. The contract expired and is scheduled to be renewed at the Convention.

Then the Cons make a grandstand gesture. “The scheduled lump sum payments and the Cost of Living Provisions have been eliminated.....”

What? Do you mean the Cons have graciously accepted a wage freeze in regard for all the pay and benefit cuts the rank & file has endured for the last decade? Do they actually believe in “equality of sacrifice”?

Yes, they have accepted a *hypothetical* wage freeze except that “the salaries shall remain at the levels set forth in Section 3.” But what do they mean by “remain”?

In Section 3 we see the following raises which the Cons expect to “remain”.

The Int. President from \$144,733.47 to \$153,248.29 (a raise of \$8,514.82 or 5.9%)
The Int. Sec-Treas from \$133,891.32 to \$142,080.87 (a raise of \$8,189.55 or 6%)
The Int. Vice-Pres from \$129,656.09 to \$137,718.59 (a raise of \$8,062.50 or 6%)
The Int. E-Board from \$118,813.90 to \$126,551.13 (a raise of \$7,737.23 or 6.5%)
The Int. Reps from \$97,965.19 to \$105,076.96 (a raise of \$7,111.77 or 7.3%)

That would be a sweet wage freeze by most standards but that’s not all. The salaries are “subject to future bargaining as described in Section 13.” Which is the section of the UAW Constitution that allows the Cons to adjust their salaries, benefits, pensions, etc..... later.

Now that’s bargaining. Now that’s something to remember the next time one of our International reps explains how we have to save our jobs and be competitive by taking a wage cut.

While humbly collecting these raises and other payments for themselves, the Concession Caucus has supported and even demanded not only wage freezes for the rank & file, but the actual elimination of raises, plus buy-downs, two-tier and three-tier pay scales, COLA diversions or no COLA whatsoever, loss of daily overtime premiums, higher insurance co-pays, in other words: severe income deprivations for rank & file workers. That's the point. That’s the Con in Concession Caucus. They negotiate terms and conditions for us that they don't have to live under themselves. Nobody is restricting their break time. They don’t have a zero tolerance attendance policy.

At the UAW Constitutional Convention every Concession Caucus member who holds an appointed—not elected—position is on the convention floor controlling the crowd. The appointees applaud on cue and they boo on cue. It’s an organized huzzah choir. For example, when delegate Cathy Abney courageously nominated Gary Walkowicz for President she concluded her nominating speech by saying:

"Our union faces a huge crisis, a real emergency, brought on by past policies.

We need to do a radical 180-degree turn, away from policies of concessions.

We need policies that put the workers’ interests first."

At that point hundreds of Concession Caucus appointees loudly booed.

What could be more revealing? A delegate who says that UAW leaders should “put the workers’ interests first” is loudly booed by Concession Caucus appointees.

The message from the UAW Concession Caucus leadership could not be more clear.

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:
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