

S.O.S. BULLETIN

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DOUBLE-CROSS AT GM - LAKE ORION!

“WE DIDN'T VOTE FOR THIS!”

UAW Local 5960 members at Lake Orion (MI) Assembly had a shocking union meeting October 3. After being laid off almost a year, while their plant was retooled for the Aveo, they were told that only 60% of them could come back to work for full wages. The UAW decided the other 40% would be making Two Tier wages, regardless of seniority. A 50% pay cut for many seniority workers who didn't "make the cut-off." Maybe they should just be happy because their benefits aren't being cut – yet???

Stunned, members couldn't believe it. They were laid off a year ago at full wages and now they couldn't come back to work unless they agreed to half wages???. Can the International magically "poof" members down the Tier Chain?

International now has the gall to say there won't be a vote on this unheard-of, raw deal, claiming Lake Orion Local 5960 already voted approval. Hell no they didn't! The 2009 Modifications highlights (the only part members were allowed to see) state on page 6 that "innovative labor agreements will have to be put in place so that such production can be done profitably." INNOVATIVE MEANS NEW AND DIFFERENT, IT DOES NOT MEAN GOING BACKWARDS 30 YEARS!

The International is claiming that this contract language is a blank check for them to fill in. NO IT'S NOT. International is once again violating Art. 19, Sec. 3 of their own Constitution. We, the workers, have the right to ratify all contracts and "supplements thereof." The UAW cannot make a deal with an employer that abrogates the Constitution without opening themselves up to an NLRB charge of being a company-dominated union. They need a reminder that their first obligation is to their Membership and their own Constitution.

They didn't have the guts to ask for a blank check so they used slick and sly con-artist words. But nobody has to honor a fraudulent contract, once the fraud is exposed!

Everyone But The Workers Knew!

A news article in the Free Press 10/08 reports that the plant outbid Janesville and Spring Hill for the work – last year! In other words they knew this deal was cut in advance. Everybody knew except the **workers** whose lives would be drastically affected! The union fat cats hid it from their membership until now, telling many lies to frightened people, for many months. We got "Dunned" in this deal, but it isn't done.

One worker told a Labor Notes reporter that low-seniority workers like him had been lied to for an entire year. "They repeatedly told us 'there's no way you can be booted down to two-tier wages.' We sat waiting for an entire year to go back to work, and they spring this on us at the last minute!"

No contract is valid in any court if it is fraudulent, that is, if important terms and conditions are hidden from one party. This deal is fraudulent, a swindle, and a crime.

THE 60/40 UNION SCHEME!

The 60/40 set-up was carefully chosen to divide workers against each other, as usual. The company and the union calculated that the 60% who kept their pay will outweigh the 40% who lost theirs. They figure that will keep a voting majority somewhat happy, scared they're next, but grateful to still have full pay. And in other words, firmly in the control of the people who ran this scam. And, as usual, this isn't the end of it. This new shafting puts everybody's future in doubt. Now that we've seen that "innovative" means magically popping workers right down the tiered class system they created, what other magic is up the evil, string pulling, fat cat wizard's sleeves? Who's next? Who will have their next little "innovation" blow up in their faces?

How about no one? How 'bout we stop the "innovation station" from getting any trains to poverty even rolling. Now that we know this is a scam that will keep on giving, and it is far from done, let's stand so no one else gets "Dunned" over ever again.

NO JOBS OUT THERE MEANS PARENTS CAN'T RETIRE

The UAW's VP Joe Ashton is trying to shift the blame. He says there would be no problem if all the people eligible to retire, would retire. Another division tactic from the preachers of solidarity. And, just exactly how are workers supposed to retire when by now, most are supporting adult children and grandchildren who have been strung along as temp workers, abused as Two Tier workers, or laid off in a dismal, greed-created recession? Most older workers have family depending on them. Only a very few families can afford to have their main breadwinner retire – weary, carpal tunnel scarred, and deserving as they may be! Is Genius Joe Ashton going to adopt all those families so their only current means of support can actually retire? Too bad they didn't actually practice organizing for social and economic justice as they preach so well. We wouldn't be in this jam now.

Dues Paying Members Speak Out:

These are some comments from Lake Orion workers, in the press and on the internet:

Temps Lied To

“When they hired everyone into Orion they told everyone that their seniority would start over in exchange for getting the full wage. OK, but now there is a situation where people who have worked at Orion for years could get passed over for the 60% status by people who started the very year they were hired. This affects the '07 the most because their necks are on the chopping block. It is an issue of fairness.”

"Temps were promised to be made permanent. Tier 2 was only supposed to be after people retired. It wasn't supposed to affect Tier 1 or be a larger number than in other shops. People were enormously misled. They didn't allow a vote because it would've never passed."

We Have A Right To A Vote

“The 2009 amendments do say a separate contract needs to be negotiated, but it says nothing about the members not having any say in to it! I think that in itself has to be illegal. They didn't want us to vote because they knew we would never sell out our friends like this.”

Company Figures Are Suspicious

“There are many ways to lower labor costs besides cutting wages in half. And what figures are they using to come to the wage? What transplant wages are they using? What companies? Why are they allowed to include temp wages of other companies to be averaged in?”

It Wasn't A Real Vote

“No one we know voted yes at all, much less for anything that sounded like this. When we voted at Orion, I specifically asked to read about what I was going to be voting on and was told they didn't have anything available. Being forced to vote on something you can't read is un-American.”

A Cut To \$15 Is A Cut Into Poverty

“We planned our lives on this wage. Our kids, the next generation, will suffer and not have the same chances and opportunity we had.”

“I buy most all of my grandkids' clothes as I'm sure many grandparents do who worked at GM and have struggling children. How in the hell do they think more people are not going homeless in this economy?!?!”

**JOIN LAKE ORION WORKERS, ACTIVE AND RETIRED WORKERS FROM MANY
PLANTS, AS WE PROTEST AT SOLIDARITY HOUSE IN DETROIT:
END TWO TIER! LAKE ORION SOLIDARITY RALLY
SATURDAY OCTOBER 16, NOON!
BRING YOUR OWN SIGN! SAY WHAT YOU WANT TO SAY!**