

Live Bait & Ammo #105: Who deserves to profit from labor?

*In their last contract members agreed to cost-saving measures worth millions of dollars in the hope of keeping the plant open. "I think 'being competitive' is an excuse to destroy the union," said McIntosh. ["An Excuse to Destroy Unions?" by Christine Moroski, *Solidarity*, the official publication of the International UAW, March-April 2008]*

The UAW councils at GM, Ford, and Chrysler went down like foam dominoes, but 3,600 workers at American Axle are digging in for the core conflict: ownership.

Who owns the jobs? Who created the wealth that American Axle invested around the globe? Whose community developed and maintained the infrastructure that made America the most powerful industrial stronghold in the world? Whose local governments served the corporate welfare with lucrative tax breaks? Who deserves to profit from labor?

The UAW Concession Caucus has "agreed to cost saving measures" at the expense of workers and their communities time after time. With each new concession the corpos used the savings to invest outside the US. Vulture capitalists like Dick Dauch, Steve Miller, and Wilbur Ross call it "restructuring". But all the new structures are relocated across the border, overseas, or in non union shops.

The latest round of concessions at Delphi, Visteon, and the Big Three signals endgame. Gettelfinger, the corpos celebrated valentine, isn't negotiating collective bargaining agreements, he's negotiating closing costs. They're turning the lights out in the industrial heartland with severance and VEBA and two tier and temporaries.

While vulture capitalists trash our communities and amputate incomes from working people, prime time puff adders like Lou Dobbs and Glenn Beck rant against immigrants as if the poor and dispossessed were stealing our jobs. We know who is stealing our jobs—rich blowhards with multiple stock options and off shore accounts. All working Americans are beginning to look poor and dispossessed.

UAW members at American Axle know there isn't a concession that will save them or a severance that will ease the pain when they're deprived of earning power. UAW members at assembly plants should prepare to reject scab products because GM, Ford, Chrysler, AAM, and Dana are out to destroy the union, emasculate American workers, and blame it on the competition. No one deserves to profit from labor more than the men and women who labor.

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