

S.O.S. BULLETIN

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Issue No. 13

September 8, 2010

Solidarity in the Ranks

While UAW President Bob King pledges his support to the corporate agenda, rank and file members and local union leaders are mounting formidable roadblocks.

In January 2010 the UAW International told members at five GM parts plants [formerly Delphi] that the raise they rightfully expected was canceled. The UAW International explained that the government would not allow GM to pay the contractual raise. It was a lie. Rank & file members didn't buy it. GM and the UAW International were forced to capitulate. Both the raise and a performance bonus were paid after rank & file members fought back.

Locals Uphold Master Agreement

The UAW International attempted to convince GM parts plants to break their master agreement and negotiate separate contracts. So far only one plant in Saginaw under intense duress capitulated. That plant was promptly sold to a firm controlled by the Chinese government. It's only a matter of time before the Chinese capitalists stripmine the plant and close it. The four other GM parts plants remain united under a master agreement.

When the UAW International strong-armed the Chairperson at a GM parts plant in Wyoming, Mi. into breaking the master agreement, the rank & file soundly defeated the concession contract. The bargaining committees at three other GM parts plants have either refused to negotiate at all or refused to present the company's proposal to the members for a vote despite intense pressure from both management and the UAW International.

Defiance Grows

The GM Metal Fab plant in Indianapolis, In. under the leadership of Bargaining Chairman Greg Clark has likewise refused to break the master agreement. Members of UAW Local 23 passed a motion at an official union meeting to honor solidarity and uphold the National UAW-GM Contract.

The UAW International under the leadership of UAW-GM VP Joe Ashton attempted to circumvent the Local Union. Ashton negotiated a concession contract with the anti union employer J.D. Norman. The membership refused to allow International reps to present a contract that would break the National Agreement and set up the local members as scabs, i.e., union members who undermine solidarity in a contract dispute and side with the company.

The prospective buyer, J.D. Norman, held a private meeting with employees in violation of the National Labor Relations Act but the UAW International declined to file charges.

Stronger and Louder

The rank & file are on their own but they are not alone. When Bob King tried to convince Ford workers at his home plant in Dearborn, Mi. to accept a concession contract that included a no strike clause, he was booed out of the plant. The reenactment of that resistance at Local 23 in Indianapolis indicates a pattern of resistance that is growing stronger and louder.

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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