

UAW-GM 2011 CONTRACT FLOODLIGHTS

I expected smoke and mirrors not bad jokes and chicken dances. Does King's Concession Caucus really expect us to laugh it off as we peck scraps out of the dirt?

Tier one workers haven't had a raise since Gettelfinger opened the contract and created the magic VEBA (famous for disappearing acts). Now King wants workers to donate 10% of their profit sharing to the VEBA? How many times do these company sidekicks expect workers to pay for the same goose? We gave up a dollar an hour in 2006 for the VEBA. That's a dollar an hour every hour of every working day of every working week of every working month of every working year for the rest of our working lives. Roll up your sleeves and ring it up on your calculator. A minimum of two grand a year for the last five years and rattling the cash registers like a one dollar slot machine that never pays out.

There's a sordid reason we didn't get COLA back. It was diverted to pay for health care. King didn't hold the line on health care, he gave the company COLA again. Hell, retirees get COLA on Social Security. Why shouldn't workers get COLA? Check me if I'm wrong, but GM raised the price of vehicles while workers bit the bullet. We're losing our front teeth while GM executives set up Swiss bank accounts.

Whose brother-in-law has first bid on a GMCH plant where the sign on the door says Best Offer? Those four plants were redlined and put on the market, not protected. They were disarmed, stripped of the right to strike, and locked down. The buyer is free to dictate wages and benefits while International reps sit on the sidelines and snicker like death row voyeurs.

Second tier workers have nothing but poverty to look forward to for the rest of their lives. No pension and no chance of saving anything as the cost of living goes up faster than a white flag in UAW negotiations. How does King expect to organize new members when he can't win something as simple and straightforward as cost of living raises? Second tier workers get a buck an hour toward health care in retirement? What the hell will that pittance be worth in thirty years? It's a fart in the pocket compared to Bob King's parachute. The raises don't make up for what they lost the last two years. What do they have to look forward to but more debt? GM can make one billion a year and pay zero profit sharing. Does anyone imagine they don't know how to cook books?

Bloomberg News reported: *There's no limit to the number of workers who can be hired at those [second tier] wages, said Joe Ashton, the union's vice president for GM relations. "We would love to see it at 40 percent because that would mean our workforce would have grown,"*

Ashton said of GM's portion of workers earning lower wages. [<http://www.businessweek.com/news/2011-09-21/gm-aims-for-lower-u-s-labor-costs-with-buyouts-cheaper-hires.html>]

If the UAW's goal is to increase the number of workers snorkeling the poverty line, their policy of plowing down the levees will surely succeed. King said that the Lake Orion deal—forty percent second tier—was a unique situation. Now Ashton reveals it's the promise land. So what's to ratify? A dead end job? The Concession Cons act like we've never heard GM promise investment, new jobs, and profit sharing if we'll only work harder and faster and longer for less. The road paved with concessions ends in a house of destitution.

Why didn't Mr. Human Rights fight for the eight hour day? An attendance policy that acknowledged tolerance for illness wasn't a zero sum game or that managerial belligerence wasn't a victimless crime? King must have left his conscience in church the day he forgot to defend workers against speed ups, overloaded jobs, and the fat fact that the reason transplants have lower costs than GM is because American companies have too many bosses per worker and an ocean liner full of over paid, incompetent frauds who think if they prop up the mummified Bob Lutz in a wheel chair with hubcaps investors will think they know how to design cars.

An arbitrator may very well take a hard look at the feather beds set up at the Center for Human Resources where union and company sweethearts double up on every piece of paper and mouse click before they go to the golf course. An arbitrator could easily justify a cost of living raise once he compares salary compensation at the transplants with the lavish pay packages at GM and money wasted on UAW appointees.

This contract belongs in the shredder along with GM's receipts for expenses for keeping four GMCH Bargaining Chairs sequestered in Detroit while UAW negotiators stripped their members of any bargaining leverage and hung them for display in an open air market in Beijing.

Workers at GMCH have another name for King. Guess what it rhymes with.

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