

Wage Cut and Plant Closings Unacceptable

A Free Press article on March 4th published information that before negotiations were broken off the International Union had proposed wage cuts for both skilled and production workers. According to the article, AAM proposes paying skilled trades \$20.50 an hour and the Union proposes \$27 – but that's still more than a \$5 an hour cut out of the base rate! AAM proposes paying production workers \$11.50-\$14.50 an hour; the Union counters with \$14.65-\$21. The company's last offer also eliminates COLA and they want to get rid of a defined pension plan for seniority workers. It's a good thing there is no agreement because there is no way American Axle workers should go along with this!

The company compares us only with the bankrupt company Dana and says they want the same agreement. They've got some nerve! A profitable company compares itself to a bankrupt company and demands the same concessions! What about comparing us to Ford and Chrysler axle workers? Despite the fact two tier was forced on them this contract like it was forced on us last contract, the workers with seniority are still making the traditional wage! And this, despite the fact these companies claimed financial difficulties.

The Strike Gives Us Strength

Every day our strike creates a ripple effect. This has forced AAM back to the table! By Mon., Mar. 10th, seven GM plants will be down including Toledo Transmission as well as supplier plants like Lear and Delphi.

GM, Chrysler, Ford and Delphi workers are glad we are standing up because they felt railroaded and betrayed in their negotiations. If profitable AAM is allowed to roll over us now, our concessions will be used against GM, Chrysler and Ford workers the next time around. The spiral will be never-ending until someone draws a line in the sand. We are the ones to do it!

The continuing threat to "idle" most of AAM pattern contract plants if Management does not get their way is disgusting. This economic terrorism escalated when AAM did not get the contract re-opened a couple of years ago; the threats have continued ever since. The Buffalo "idling" was meant as an example for the rest of us. In Sept., 2007, AAM bought an empty plant in Oxford, Mi. and started moving work there from Detroit and Tonawanda Forges, hiring non-union workers at \$10 an hour! When the company formed in 1994 there were approximately 5,600 workers. There are now only approximately 3,600 workers in the pattern plants and they want to take it down 1000 more! It's time for the company to stop union busting and start bargaining in good faith. It's time we got the credit we deserve for making AAM what they are today!

****Maintain our wages, pensions and health care benefits***

****No plant closings, fill empty floor space in the union plants***

****Products guaranteed to all plants beyond the life of the contract like the GM Contract***

****No flaky "if business case can be made" language***

****Eliminate two-tier with a wage-benefit bridge***

****Actual contract language at least a week before the vote***

****Observers at the ballot boxes and during the vote count***

****Don't be fooled by lump sum signing bonuses, buy-downs, and buy-outs***

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