

## **Live Bait & Ammo # 63**

The dreaded Judge Drain approved bonuses for Delphi's incompetent frauds. In the Court of Crony Capitalism executives are rewarded for failure and workers are penalized for honest labor.

The criminal transfer of wealth from one class to the other is sanctioned by law and that, my friends, is Econ. 101 in a nutshell. Corporate theft is legal.

The Drain actually said that bonuses for executives and wage cuts for workers would make Delphi more competitive. He sure knows how to warm the shackles. Since the bonuses are tied to performance, executives now have an incentive to pull the trigger on February 17.

The clock is ticking. Preparation for strike should accelerate and our opposition to concessions should be loud and clear. Start Organizing Support. We have less than two months to reduce inventory. Anyone who isn't working to rule is working to ruin. Overtime will extend the picket line not the party.

Overtime at the Delphi Coopersville plant has already been reduced. Either Delphi has a sufficient inventory as a result of all the sucking sissies, or GM has another source for injectors. In either case, it is too late to change horses. We are midstream and the water is rising fast.

On January 30, the Concession Caucus held a union meeting at their corporate offices, the Center for Human Resources [CHR]. UAW-VP Dick Shoemaker told the assembled Local Union presidents and bargaining chairs that every Delphi employee should transfer back to GM. In the next breath he explained that GM had no interest in creating opportunities for Delphi employees to flow back. Has Shoemaker lost his bearings?

I never transferred out of GM. Why should I transfer back to GM? Has it dawned on him that many of us would rather stay and fight? The fact is: we have nowhere to run and nowhere to hide. Shoemaker should quit hedging and Support Our Struggle.

The Concession Caucus insists they have a plan but they don't want to tell us what it is. Does the "plan" include us orphans? Or is it the "plan" to make us sacrificial lambs? Delphi workers feel more like hostages than union members.

I feel sorry for Local leaders who waited patiently for direction from the International. They are rapidly losing credibility with fellow UAW members. These Local leaders tried to be good and loyal soldiers. They are good soldiers, but they are on their own in DaNang now and there's no going home.

Shoemaker says that so far the only thing GM, Delphi, and the UAW have agreed on is that "a strike would devastate everyone." Then he warns us that wages and benefits will fall. It appears the Concession Caucus has made an agreement. They are prepping us for disappointment by lowering expectations and declaring concessions inevitable. Don't buy it.

VOTE NO because Shoemaker is right. A strike will devastate everyone and I will bet my pension against Wagoner's stock options that GM will blink first. Less than a week after Shoe's disoriented report at the CHR, Gettelfinger told the press he was optimistic about the Delphi fiasco and "expressed confidence that retiree health care benefits will be protected now that the bankrupt auto parts maker's top customer and former parent, GM, has taken a significant role in discussions."

If we had a "Benefit Guarantee" from GM as promised in the 1999 Highlights, retiree health care benefits would not be on the table, there would be no "discussion". If Gettelfinger traded away our retirement security, he can bet the

farm we will punch holes in his life raft. Ellen E. Schultz revealed in the Wall Street Journal [Retirees Found Varsity Untruthful, 11/6/2000] that one of the recommendations from a consultant on how to avoid paying retiree benefits was to initiate “Creeping Takeaways” whereby, “the employer reduces benefits in small enough increments that it would not be cost effective for retirees to sue. Over time a precedent of accepting reductions would be established, thereby undercutting legal challenges to more drastic reductions in the future.” Court transcripts reveal GM paid UAW legal fees for the phony lawsuit against GM over takeaways from retirees.

Of course the creepy takeaways aren't restricted to retirees. In Dayton, Ohio Delphi UAW members are giving management eight and a half hours of production for eight hours of pay. The Local Concession Caucus calls it a “courtesy” to management. Here's how the courtesy works. Delphi employees in Dayton had been working a “straight eight” whereby they received a paid lunch in return for keeping machines running by doubling up during lunch and breaks. Then management took away the paid lunch but workers are still expected to double up. The Local Concession Caucus extends this “courtesy” to a company that intends to strip them of their wages, benefits, and pension. No, this ain't your daddy's union.

It appears the CC is waving the flag of surrender not solidarity. GM and Delphi members worked together and voted together as one bargaining unit. Where is the unity now? What action has the official union taken to counter the threats from Miller? Where is Mobilizing@Delphi? We should Show Our Strength with a strike at Tower, Delphi, Lear, American Axle, and Visteon.

The Concession Caucus doesn't have an alternative to the corporate restructuring because they are partners in the business and they have the same world view. In the confines of their narrow little minds there is no alternative. The CC believes workers must sacrifice themselves for the mistakes and crimes of corporate criminals because Sugar Daddy told them so.

The CC already agreed to the sale or closure of eighteen Visteon plants. The CC agreed with Delphi in 2004 that \$14 per hour and no COLA for four years coupled with increased premiums and copays and no defined pension was union scale. No wonder the Concession Caucus accuses the rank and file SOS of driving a wedge. We object to concessions and two tier. Industrial diseases like cancer, deafness, and repetitive stress injuries are rampant in the auto industry yet Miller wants to strip retirees of health care just like he did to retired steelworkers many of whom are reliant on oxygen tanks. Miller is a ruthless, sociopathic, predatory capitalist. The suicides in his wake never shake his resolve to break contracts, dump pensions, slash health care, and cut wages. Jointness was moribund, now it's dead.

Workers who say that concessions are better than no job at all have been asleep at the wheel. Concessions don't save jobs. Concessions lead to head on collisions called plant closures. Concessions finance outsourcing not insourcing. The race to the bottom is no more winnable than a leap off the Golden Gate Bridge. We need an alternative to Secure Our Survival.

The CC's appeal to "equality of sacrifice" is a charade. Miller isn't worth a buck. In a capitalist society a person isn't rewarded for hard work or virtue, they are rewarded for power. Workers' rights are not determined by contract or adjudicated in court. Rights are determined by struggle which is where SOS comes in.

SOS is workers exerting power through direct action on the shopfloor and in the union hall.

SOS coalesces around actions that empower rank and file members to resist concessions, to control the conditions of our labor, to fight back against the corporate attack on the working class, and throw the yoke of company unionism off our necks.

SOS is the voice of the rank and file, a bullhorn for our anger. SOS does not want to replace one hierarchy with another hierarchy. We want to dump the hierarchy on its pointed little head. Real unionism springs from the bottom up, it dies from the top down. SOS is marshaled horizontally across the shopfloor and between plants in a network as wide and open as our ranks. SOS isn't an ideology, it's concerted activity. SOS is a Sign Of Solidarity.

A lot of workers are sitting on the fence. When Miller kicks out the contract there won't be a fence to sit on. The choice won't be easy but it will be simple — fight or get screwed. SOS says, Stop Out Sourcing now, Strike Or Sitdown.

The Concession Caucus doesn't see an alternative to concessions. SOS does see an alternative — ACT LIKE A UNION. Support Our Strike is ready to act now.

UAW members at Tower Automotive took a strike vote. Why should they go out alone?

Every Delphi Local should take the strike vote now. Furthermore, we have a right to expect the GMUAW members who voted on our contracts in 1999 and 2003 to take a Stand On Solidarity with us. Every employer who attempts to use the courts to void a union contract and dump retirees should face the collective will of workers head on.

sos, shotwell