

Live Bait & Ammo #88: Inequality is Morally Hazardous

In June 2001 Ron Gettelfinger organized a rally in Washington DC to support Ford Motor Company against allegations of building unsafe vehicles. 1,900 Ford Explorers circled the Capitol and 3,500 UAW members and their families rallied in Senate Park. “We stood up and were counted—for our families and our communities,” Gettelfinger said in the UAW/Ford magazine, “Sharing Our Pride.” [www.uawford.com/pdf/pride_sum01.pdf]

What rallies has Gettelfinger organized to support UAW members at Delphi, Visteon, Caterpillar, Accuride, Conn-Selmer? What rallies has Gettelfinger organized to support equal access to health care? What rallies has Gettelfinger organized to support an end to military adventures at the expense of health, education, and employment?

The UAW has the power and the resources to circle the wagons around the nation’s capitol in support of the working class, but Gettelfinger’s first priority is protection of the corporation.

The proposal to set up the UAW as the administrator of health care for GM retirees would make union officials the arbiters of concessions. The shoe fits. I suspect the office rats are eager to put their feet up on new desks and study the reflections in their wingtips.

Supporters of private health care say that providing workers and retirees with the same access to health care as CEOs and union officials presents a “moral hazard” because workers will utilize medical services too freely. According to the creed of “Moral Hazard” only the privileged deserve unlimited access to medical care. Fiscal restraint must be imposed on workers and retirees to prevent them from abusing the system.

UAW International reps receive 100% reimbursement for all out of pocket medical expenses and CEOs get the same tender loving care as our illustrious members of Congress. But workers and retirees need the built in restraint of “pay as you go” to prevent them from wasting the doctor’s time with their petty complaints about repetitive stress injuries and industrial disease?

Every CEO's pension is bulletproof. UAW International reps have COLA on their pensions. How morally hazardous can you get? Or am I out of place to suggest that the class of people who live off income earned by others make bad choices, weak excuses, and poor examples?

Demand equal access to health care and tamperproof Cost Of Living Adjustments [COLA]. Like Dave Yettaw always said, "If it's good for the top floor, it's good for the shop floor."

(sos, gregg shotwell)

www.soldiersofsolidarity.com www.futureoftheunion.com www.factoryrat.com