

Live Bait & Ammo # 96: A Cat Named Job Security

The cat is out of the bag. Tiny Sherwood, president of Local 652 in Lansing, confirmed that the UAW is negotiating a two tier wage for new hires.

The trade off? “Job security.”

You’d have thought that job security cat was at the bottom of the river by now, securely anchored with a bag full of broken contracts, but the promise of job security has more lives than a loan shark has lies.

"We won't go to a two-tier wage unless we get something out of it," he [Tiny] said. "That would have to be something like job security." [\[Two-tiered Pay Plan Figures in GM Talks-Weiland-Lansing State Journal -8/24/07\]](#)

“At the Saturn complex in Spring Hill, Tenn., local UAW officials have tentatively agreed to let workers earn less than half the \$28-an-hour wage of veteran GM workers to staff an on-site parts-sequencing operation,” wrote David Barkholz in Automotive News, where he broke the story revealing two tier is here but the UAW calls it “Organizing”. [\[UAW Budes on 2-tier Wage-Barkholz-Automotive News -8/20/07\]](#)

Now that the UAW has lost two-thirds of their membership, the Concession Caucus is unveiling their Southern Organizing Strategy: Work For Less.

Here’s how the cat is skinned. The Con Caucus convinces employers to let them reorganize their workforce at lower wages. Outsourcing indirect labor and sub assembly jobs, and then reorganizing them at lower wages is like trading a dollar for seven dimes and calling it “win-win”.

"It may be a way to help keep union jobs," said Sherwood. [\[Automotive News - 8/20/07\]](#)

GM must pay Tiny a lot of over time for these bite size snacks of wisdom. Barbara Weiland reported in the *Lansing State Journal*, "In 1982, there were about 23,000 people working for GM in Lansing; now there are about 6,000." **[Rabble Rouser-Weiland-LSJ Business Weekly -6/18/07]** In other words, roughly 70% of GM's most loyal customers—employees—are out of work in Tiny's town. Nonetheless, Tiny thinks more cooperation with the corporate agenda will save union jobs.

In the identical article Ms. Weiland states, "In the same time [1982-2007], market share has fallen from 43.2 percent to about 25 percent." I wish one of the wizards in GM's marketing department would calculate the employee to market share ratio. There may be a correlation here.

Of course, there's more than one way to drown a cat.

The Concession Caucus has always believed in a multi level approach to givebacks and they aren't willing to rest on laurels they won at Delphi and Visteon. Big Three automakers and the UAW are staging rallies around the country in "hopes the grassroots effort will help beat back" fuel economy mandates. [\[Carmakers Hold CAFE Rallies-Shepardson-Detroit News -8/15/07\]](#)

Apparently company/union leaders haven't read reports that contend declining sales are a result of US auto companies failure to build vehicles customers "want", as in, "fuel efficient."

The strategic impact of a corporate orchestrated “grassroots” campaign against better fuel economy is..... like drilling a hole in the bottom of a boat to let water out. It may slapstick a smile on everyone’s face, but it won’t sell cars or save jobs. Unions and corporations should be campaigning together for National Health Care— a solution that would help workers, manufacturers, and customers. Instead, corporos and their partners in the Concession Caucus are singing “VEBA Las Vegas” as bilge water rises to the oar locks and the deck chairs slide overboard.

The VEBA scam (seven dimes for a dollar) gambles retirement security on the UAW’s chances of beating health care inflation by playing the stock market. But the only way to beat health care inflation is to buy stock in pharmaceutical companies and then raise copays on retirees.

The Con Caucus promotes VEBA on the premise that retiree health care will be safer in the hands of the union, “if” the company goes bankrupt. Of course, a VEBA partially funded by equity in the company leaves just enough apron string to hang oneself in the event of bankruptcy.

Cars that burn more cash than workers earn won’t sell. A plan to **Vandalize Employee Benefits Again** won’t sell. Two tier won’t save union jobs, it’ll sell them to the lowest bidder. Don’t let the Con Caucus put our union on the auction block. Send negotiators back to the table with a clear ultimatum: Autoworkers must profit from their labor, or nobody will.

Vote NO on VEBA. Vote NO on Two Tier. Vote NO until all the temporaries are made equal union members with seniority back dated to their day of hire. The union isn’t temporary. We’re here to stay.

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