

Live Bait & Ammo #138: Bust the Union Busters and Win

Some workers are not taking it lying down. When the UAW Concession Caucus informed workers at the GM parts plant in Saginaw that the raise guaranteed by their Collective Bargaining Agreement was suspended, they demanded a grievance. If the committee person refuses to write the grievance, the UAW will be in violation of the National Labor Relations Act. In either case, without the raise the option of “protected concerted activity” is wide open to the rank and file.

Soldiers of solidarity aren't just talking words. They want a showdown.

The Con Caucus is trying to make it sound like the government is forcing the takedown. It's a lie. The Delphi-UAW contract is legally binding to the successor, General Motors. The Con Caucus wants parts workers to accept wage reductions, fewer holidays, a new attendance policy, and a no strike clause, just like the GM-UAW contract *except* — they want to cut them out of the Master Agreement, isolate each individual plant, and throttle their bargaining power. Why? Because breaking the Master Agreement would make it easier for GM to sell them to their Chinese partners. No union rep with cojones bigger than bb's would endorse breaking the Master Agreement.

When the Con Caucus presented the no strike clause at Chrysler and GM, they made it sound like government agents forced it on them. But when Bob King rolled out the no strike clause at Ford, it was evident the decision was his baby from the get go. King wants to pave the road to poverty with no strike clauses. According to the Concession King it's better to cut your legs off at the knees than have to stand for what you believe.

The GM parts plants have bargaining power as long as they hold their Master Agreement like four fingers curled in a fist and clamped with a thumb. GM cannot afford labor strife. If the parts plants work to rule, GM will buckle like a boxer with a glass chin. The Gang of Five are profitable, and have always been profitable. If they weren't vital to GM's recovery, GM wouldn't have bought them. Unlike 2008 GM is poised to turn a profit. They can't afford a slow down.

When the Cons took American Axle out on strike in 2008, GM couldn't move metal off the lot without a tow truck. The die was cast before the first picket. The Cons timed the strike to help the companies reduce inventory, then persuaded members to break the Master Agreement. It's the King-Gettelfinger version of pattern bargaining: strive for the lowest standard and sell it under threat of plant closings just like a union buster.

And just like union busters the Con Caucus takes members into captive audience meetings on company time and tells them they must make more concessions if they want to save their jobs. It's a lie. How can you tell? Because finger puppets wiggle when they lie and they wiggle whenever the company inserts a new bribe. All union busters follow the same playbook: threats of job loss, personal intimidation, snitches, scab subcontractors, and cash under the table.

But the wider implications of this Con Job are even deadlier. If the Con Caucus succeeds at breaking the Master Agreement at the parts plants, they will proceed to Metal Fab, Powertrain, SPO, and then to each and every Assembly plant. One at a time. Piece by piece. Conquer and divide.

GM parts workers have nothing to gain and everything to lose by breaking the Master Agreement. GM workers at powertrain, stamping, SPO, and assembly plants have everything to gain and nothing to lose by supporting the parts workers. We'll all need each other in 2011. We won't have to strike, we can take them apart from the inside, one rule at a time.

Want a real union? Meet with other soldiers of solidarity on

Saturday, January 23, 2010

10:30 a.m. — 5:00 p.m.

Metropolitan Hotel - Detroit Airport

31500 Wick Road, Romulus, MI 48174 (734-467-8000)

where we will engage each other in meaningful discussion of how rank & file workers can bust the union busters and win.

Lunch will be provided. So please, RSVP rankfileautomtg@gmail.com or call **734-272-7651**

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www.factoryrat.com

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