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UNION STRONG

“UNITED WE BARGAIN, DIVIDED WE BEG”



Heading for a Strike? UTAS Has a Week to Get It Right

You – the members of IAM Local 743 / world class employees of United Technologies Aerospace Systems – should know this:

After two full days of bargaining this week, it cannot be said with confidence that we will be able to reach an acceptable final contract with UTAS/UTC management.

It has been years since HSD workers faced the real possibility of a strike. But that is where we are this Friday, April 22, 2016. This is not a “pump up the membership” message. Or a threat directed at management. This is, simply, where things are.

The IAM Negotiating Committee has been working hard. Led by IAM Chief Negotiator Mike Stone, your IAM Local 743 Negotiating Committee has ground through the hundreds of contract provisions that make up our collective bargaining agreement.

In the hours of meetings with management, we have resolved lots of major and minor contract language issues on everything from HPAS to problems with the clocking in/out software. This progress is real, and helps make UTAS a better place to work.

But those contract tweaks are meaningless if management does not address the substantial gaps between their wish list and our livelihoods.

As it stands now, management is more than willing to sacrifice your standard of living to bump up their bottom line.

When a company like UTAS admits they have rising profits, increasing orders and an urgent need of the exceptional skills and work ethic of the Windsor Locks workforce, you might expect rewards and a bigger share of the loot.

Instead, management sees bargaining as an opportunity to grab your wallet and shake out more for them, thru health insurance cost shifts, pension take-aways, and schemes to cut over-time.

Though many contract language issues are resolved, management’s proposals to cut Shop Steward positions, and interfere with Local 743’s ability to pick our own representatives, show that management wants to run our Union as well as their factory. They ought to learn their own jobs better first.

IAM Chief Negotiator Mike Stone repeatedly brought talks back to “The Big Three” management proposals that could move the members from production lines to picket lines. They are:

High Deductible Health Plans: UTAS’ proposal means thousands of dollars paid by workers before insurance kicks in. High Deductible plans may be

the latest “hot trend” for dumping costs onto working families. But potential out-of-pocket bills up to \$40,000 in one year?

No Pension for New Hires: management wants to shove future employees into 401k’s, opening up the risk of losing your retirement fund if the stock market tanks. If you say, “Hey, it ain’t me,” think of the workers who fought to get the pension you will get. And will those younger workers fight for your retiree rights if we leave them hanging?

Alternative Work Week: up to 20% of a work center could be forced onto a 12 hour x 3 days shift, likely to be Thursday – Saturday, or Sunday – Tuesday. The company’s objective is to keep processes running 24/7 – the result will be drastically cutting over-time while disrupting any normal family arrangements based on real world schedules.

IAM Chief Negotiator Mike Stone told managers that if they needed to run around the clock, hire more people. Brother Stone asked: “Do you really think you can get people to accept an agreement that could cost thousands more in health care costs while

cutting their O/T? And taking pensions away from the new workforce?”

Instead, Stone recommended that the company encourage cooperation from workers by agreeing to our Job Security proposal ensuring that the bargaining unit will remain at its current head count for the life of the agreement.

Then there are the “economics” – wages, holidays, vacation, pension, savings plan, etc. If we’re bargaining a complete package, we need the company’s offer on these sooner than the last minute.

The contract expires Sunday, May 1, 2016. Bargaining will go on every day next week, and into the night as we head towards the deadline. There is time to win an acceptable agreement. Management needs to understand you are serious about it.

**Give your supervisor a simple message:
“I am standing by our Negotiating
Committee. I’ll follow their
recommendation.”**

This Weekend – Get Prepared

No one wants a strike, but sometimes they are necessary. That’s what 40,000 Verizon workers have decided they need to do. It could happen here too.

This weekend, begin making plans. That starts with talking with your family. Help them understand what the issues are and why this fight may be unavoidable.

Make a list of creditors’ contact information. Check your bank account. Start thinking about temporary employment opportunities. Hold off on any pending big purchases.

Check with the Union Hall about picket assignments and other activities that may be needed to sustain our job action. Plan on taking out your tool box at the end of next week, so your tools cannot be used by managers trying to do your work.

Next week, if you see signs of management preparations, make sure to tell your Shop Steward or call the Union Hall. This week engineers were out on the floor trying to learn key hourly jobs. We expect management to obey the law, but need to know if unfair labor practices occur. Report anything that seems unusual.

Together We Win!