



INFORMATION UPDATE #40 **November 16, 2009**

OPPOSE THE BLACKMAIL AGAINST THE WORKERS!

Last week we outlined the concessions that U.S. Steel is demanding from the workers at the Lake Erie Works, which is the most modern steel plant in North America. It is obvious that U.S. Steel is using the economic crisis, and the fact that steel demand is down about 40% in North America, to try to convince the workers to agree to concessions both for them and for the pensioners. The end result of concessions is that it takes money out of the pockets of the workers and pensioners (those who create the value now and those who did it in the past) and shifts it into the pockets of the millionaires and billionaires.

BLACKMAIL AT HECKETT-MULTISERVE

On Friday the workers at Heckett-Multiserve, a division of a huge multi-national Harsco held an information picket at the Hamilton Works gates. About 100 workers have been locked out since June 10, 2009. The company has been operating with supervisory personnel and scabs. The company issued a letter basically telling the workers (after the workers rejected the company final offer on November 7, 2009 by 93%) that the workers can come back to work as of December 7, 2009 under the terms of the final offer and with no union. The company wants to crush any defense organization that the workers have.

It should also be noted that all the U.S. Steel plants in the U.S. employ a company called Tube City to perform the same jobs that Heckett-Multiserve performs at the former Stelco. So to add to the complexity of the situation, U.S. Steel may be trying to crush the union here in order to their preferred company. The Tube City workers in the U.S. work for quite a bit less per hour than the workers employed by U.S. Steel in these plants in the U.S.

BLACKMAIL AT DOFASCO

It has also come to our attention that workers are being blackmailed at Arcelor-Mittal (Dofasco). According to a document dated November 12, 2009 issued by Local 67 of the United Association of journeyman and Apprentices of the Plumbing and Pipe Fitting industry of the United States and Canada (Local 67), Dofasco wants the workers to forgo a \$1.00 an hour increase in wages for six months. It appears that Local 67 was told that "Dofasco Management are now competing globally through Arcelormittal Europe for operations and construction expenses. The Europe office measures all its steel plants success by its steel production compared to its plant maintenance expense. "

And now we get to the blackmail. "Dofasco management has told the Building Trades that by keeping the \$1.00 off the wages will insure that all projects continue to full completion. **Dofasco management says Europe can easily stop work at Dofasco and start steel production at any other Arcelormittal steel plant if costs are too high under the new production/maintenance ratio.**"

Now the chickens are coming home to roost. Globalization was hailed as the end all and be all for the people of the world. In fact it is a mechanism by which these huge conglomerates can threaten and blackmail the workers all over the world. Whether it is autoworkers, the miners at Inco Vale or Xstrata in Sudbury, the steelworkers at Stelco, Dofasco or Multi-serve, the rich want to try to crush the workers.

BLACKMAIL OF THE PUBLIC SECTOR WORKERS!

On November 11, 2009 the *Hamilton Spectator* ran an editorial entitled "All Ontarians share the pain." After explaining how "the provincial government is facing a \$24.7 billion deficit, and program spending that has grown 23 per cent in the last two years alone," the editorial declares "But the public sector has yet to endure what the private sector is suffering during this economic downturn. Private-sector workers by the thousands are unemployed, and many more have suffered wage freezes, rollbacks and unpaid-time-off requirements. The private sector, from automotive to newspapers, is going through critical analysis and evolution, and in many cases will look entirely different five years from now, at least for those players who survive. Many private sector pensions are at risk, as are benefits....**This financial mess rests on the back of every Ontarian, and demands compromise and sacrifice from all of us.**"

Is the Spectator worried about thousands and thousands of workers getting laid off? Has it agitated that companies should not lay off these workers because it just contributes to making the economic crisis worse? No, it never has. But when it comes to preparing public opinion to attack the public sector workers, the Spectator steps up to the plate. And they do it as if they have some sympathy for the private sector workers. When the auto monopolies were doing public opinion to attack the autoworkers and convince them to take over \$22 an hour in benefits and wages (using the blackmail that if they didn't agree they would all lose their jobs!), the media were leading the charge to try to turn public opinion against the autoworkers. Now they are leading the charge against the public sector workers, and acting as if they speak for "all Ontarians."

OUR EXPERIENCE OF WHO CAUSED THE CRISIS

When Stelco came out of bankruptcy the new owners of Stelco (Rodney Mott, Tricap, Appaloosa and Sunrise, commonly called hedge funds or vulture capitalists) received the new Stelco shares for less than \$150 million. They also received a \$150 million loan from the provincial government at 1% interest. In eighteen (18) months Rodney Mott and the vultures turned this \$150 million into over \$1.1 billion- that is, they made 700% on their money in 18 months. The only measures they took in the plant was to close the hot strip mill, the machine shop and to get several hundred workers to retire. They then ran off with the money, and glowing articles were written about these vultures as the saviours of Stelco. This kind of activity is going on all over the world, and to be quite blunt, this is the cause of the crisis. It is the height of hypocrisy by the *Hamilton Spectator* to say "**This financial mess rests on the back of every Ontarian, and demands compromise and sacrifice from all of us.**" Of course Rodney Mott and the vultures will not sacrifice, they are out there figuring out how to make their next killing, (which requires workers giving up their claims on the value they produce), with the full support of the media.

JOIN US

DEMONSTRATION AND RALLY

**MONDAY—DECEMBER 14, 2009--3:30 P.M.-- GORE PARK
MANUFACTURING, YES! NATION WRECKING, NO!**

WHOSE ECONOMY, OUR ECONOMY!

WHO DECIDES, WE DECIDE!

CONCESSIONS ARE NOT SOLUTIONS!

Many of our readers downtown are asking us what can they do. We are distributing these leaflets downtown first of all to keep the Hamilton community informed about what our concerns are. Secondly, some time in the future we may need the help of the community. At this time we only want people to come support us on December 14, 2009 at our rally.

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