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LOCAL 1256

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President's Report

"Fighting Back makes a Difference !!!". That was Our Union's determined message to us throughout much of the 1990's.

Back then we faced fierce opposition from the Provincial Government. A huge battle against the Mike Harris Conservatives. Our Union lead the way against the laws being passed that wrapped a rope around our wind-pipe. We demonstrated, marched, rallied, and became Activists. The fight was then both in the workplace and out in the streets. In the end we did 'blunt' the aims of that former government, moving them from the worst they had hoped to do to us. But, all in all, we knew we had to struggle to off-set the worst. And we did!!!

Today, the economic situation aims to make us victims, to it. But, this time we are NOT struggling. We are not marching, demonstrating, rallying, or if we are, we are doing so in a meek muted fashion at best. In the fullest understanding the corporations and their political friends know we represent a 'force'. That 'force' can do expectational things, and it has proved it time and time again. Our Union, today, is more than anything accepting and accommodating the worst consequences of this economic situation. We are, sadly, falling for the CONcessions and all the typical finger pointing against workers and their hard fought standards through their unions.

We are entering into collective bargaining at AutoModular and Marmon Keystone. Our Local Union, its unit leadership, and membership, need to fully understand that our Local Union does not swallow the present 'logic' heaped on us like layers and layers of FEAR. We have a Union to attempt to challenge and defeat the FEAR that aims to swallow our standards of living. We need to seek determination that exceeds FEAR and replaces it with confidence and self-worth. Both within ourselves and one another. That's what we need to do.

In all the units we need to assert our rights and protect one another from the worst of these times. We need to show the employers we are not about 'slogans' or false speeches and defeated logic.

In fact, these times present us with new opportunities. The idea of reaching into the corporate direction of profit based business, and ownership, through public support is now on the agenda. Rather than the flawed concept of subsidies we need to obtain conditions for employment levels, investment, product development, equity ownership. And we need to now explore the reality of

public ownership, Nationalization, and securing our industrial base. This is the only way we will be able to sustain it.

Our Union is a 'force' for so much shared common and public good. We can only achieve these goals if we are indeed proud to be who we are, again. Confident in our values and views. And driven through collective intelligence, activism, and creative thought for a future we can secure for us and our loved ones. We then can leave our Union to the next generation of workers rather than a faint recollection.

We need to defy those that seek to make us poor and wasted through greed and narrow false directions. But, we need to defy those within our Union that would have us lay-down to such despair and defeat. We are the CAW!!!

In Solidarity,
Angus MacDonald
President CAW Local 1256