

# Reject IAM-Boeing blackmail!

## Form a rank-and-file committee to defeat concessions

The Socialist Equality Party  
3 January 2014

The Socialist Equality Party calls on Boeing workers to decisively reject the sellout deal being pushed by the IAM International on behalf of the giant aircraft corporation. The contract extension is nothing but a rehash of the first one overwhelmingly rejected by workers on November 13.

The deal would end company-paid pensions for new-hires, undermine wages, and strip workers of the right to strike. Pay raises are limited to one percent every other year—a de facto pay cut in the face of rising prices—and out-of-pocket health care costs will rise dramatically, while Boeing will have the power to reduce benefits in line with the requirements of Obama's Affordable Care Act.

Once again, the IAM is joining Boeing execs and the big business politicians to blackmail workers with threats that production of the 777x will be moved to low-wage states if workers reject the contract. But the experience of tens of millions of workers—and the closed and shuttered aerospace, auto and steel factories around the country—prove that concessions do nothing to protect jobs.

On the contrary, givebacks only set a new benchmark in the race to the bottom for workers. Hard won rights given up today are followed by demands for even bigger concessions tomorrow, even as companies like Boeing rake in huge profits and squander billions on stock buybacks to boost the fortunes of wealthy investors and CEOs.

While families will be devastated if this deal goes through, not a penny of IAM President Tom Buffenbarger's \$304,000 annual salary or his comfortable retirement benefits will be touched. On the contrary, the business executives who run the IAM are counting on the continual flow of millions in union dues from workers who will be reduced to little more

than impoverished wage slaves.

The November 13 vote was an expression of the growing anger of the working class against the looting of society by the wealthy elite and the decades of betrayals by unions that have become nothing more than direct instruments of the corporations and the government.

Boeing workers should once again reject this blackmail and vote 'no' today. But this is only the beginning. To take forward this struggle workers need a strategy to defeat concessions *and* defend their jobs at the same time.

Although several District Lodge 751 officials have criticized the International and the contract they have no program to oppose Boeing's threat to relocate production and wipe out tens of thousands of jobs. On the contrary, President Tom Wroblewski and the Lodge 751 leadership accept without question the supposed "right" of Boeing's billionaire investors and corporate executives to own and control vast industrial operations built by the labor of generations of workers.

If Boeing made good on its threat to shift production, Wroblewski & Co. would, in the end, join in demanding that workers accept a concessions contract, if not now, then in 2016. Wroblewski and others were involved in the secret negotiations for the November 13 deal and have only changed their tune in the face of mass opposition.

Moreover, the IAM and other trade unions are tied to the Democrats, who, no less than the Republicans, defend the capitalist system, which by its very nature impoverishes the many to enrich the few. The insistent demands for concessions by the pro-corporate politicians like Democratic Governor Jay Inslee are a continuation of the Obama administration's role in 2009, when, with the support of the United Auto

Workers, it forced General Motors and Chrysler workers to accept a permanent 50 percent wage cut for new-hires.

The UAW, IAM and other unions all support Obama's "in-sourcing" policy to entice corporations to shift production from China, Mexico and other low-wage countries through a savage reduction in labor costs and an increase in exploitation of workers in the United States. This promises big returns to the business executives who run the unions, like the UAW, which is now cashing in the \$4.35 billion in Chrysler shares it received for selling out its members.

Rank-and-file workers must take the conduct of the Boeing struggle out of the hands of all sections of the IAM. Workers should elect rank-and-file factory committees, consisting of the most militant and trusted workers, to broaden the struggle to mobilize the whole working population in the Puget Sound area against the blackmail threats of Boeing and to defend the jobs and living standards of all workers. Appeals for support should be issued to workers throughout the United States facing similar attacks and to other workers internationally.

This must become the beginning of an industrial and political counter-offensive by the whole working class. If secure and good-paying jobs, health care, pensions and other basic necessities are to be defended, then the social rights of the working class must take precedence over the supposed right of the corporate and financial elite to plunder society.

The answer to Boeing's threats is to nationalize the corporation and the entire aerospace industry and transform it into a publicly owned enterprise. The big corporations and banks must be put under workers control and the entire economy reorganized on the basis of production for human need, not private profit.

To fight for this, workers need a political organization, independent of the two big business parties and all those that defend the profit system. The Socialist Equality Party is fighting to build a mass political party of the working class to replace the economic and political dictatorship of the banks and big business with a workers government, genuine democracy and socialism.

We urge all Boeing workers who want to take up this fight to contact the SEP .



To contact the WSWWS and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

**[wsws.org/contact](http://wsws.org/contact)**