



'ANGUS BARKS'

By Jeff Francis
AEG Executive Board

Access To Assembly

During 29/42 Integration negotiations 2 weeks ago, your Negotiating Committee presented proposals to the Company concerning displacement and upgrading to jobs in Assembly. There have been a lot of fights between the Union and the Company over these issues in the past. The Union's proposals are designed to maintain old grievance settlements, and ensure future in-plant upgrade opportunities. **BACKGROUND-** For years there's been a fence around Assembly jobs. For example, an R19 machinist can be bumped by dozens of plant-wide classifications (in line with seniority). An R19 assembler can only be bumped by two classifications. For example, R19 machinists with assembly skills are denied upgrade to R19 assembly. But R19 assemblers with machining skills can upgrade to R19 machining. **DIFFERENT GOALS-** The Union believes in seniority. We defend our member's right to displacement, if they have the skills to do the work, no matter where the job is. We fight for our members to improve their skills through upgrades, if they have the willingness to learn. These are legitimate Union issues the Company will have to deal with in negotiations.

The Company never wants their assembly operation disrupted, because it is the last stop products make before they are converted to profit dollars. The Company wants to assure its customers that well trained experienced workers are putting together their engines, so as to minimize any chance of human error causing an engine failure in the sky. These are legitimate business issues that the Union must deal with in these negotiations.

UGLY SIDE- Some managers in the past deliberately ignored the Union's efforts, hired straight into Assembly off the street, and tried to convince their new-hires that seniority was bad, and the Union no good. In the long run that strategy doesn't work, because even the most naive management recruit learns what GE is about, after a couple of years of face-to-face contact. It is a disservice to the Company, as well as the Union, to promote the false perception that any one area of the plant is more important than any other.

DISPLACEMENT- When Turbine moved out in the mid-1980's, and when AEG had mass layoffs 1988-90, the Union faced a situation where members hitting the street had up to 5 years more seniority than members working in Assembly. To address the imbalance, the Union grieved and won displacement rights for R23 Turbine Assembly & Test to bump R19 Assembly, R23 Machine Repair and R22 All-Round and R20 Machine & Assemble to bump R17 Assembly. Displacements resulting from these settlements totalled less than 10, because they don't come into play unless times are real bad plant-wide. But they are small holes in the fence, and we are not willing to give them up.

UPGRADES- The Union was involved in the late 1980's in convincing the Company to allow R17 Bench, Sheetmetal and Spotweld to upgrade to R17 Assembly. At that time 60% of Rotor Assemblers had non-mechanical backgrounds. The Company would hire R19 Assemblers from the street, so the in-plant avenue up through assembly started at Rotor. Currently 60% of Rotor Assemblers have mechanical backgrounds, and that has improved the skill base feeding higher rated assembly jobs. The Union wants to broaden those eligible for upgrade, and we have told the Company our members will demonstrate the initiative to get trained, in exchange for the opportunity for advancement.

LOGAN EXPRESS- With layoffs imminent at many airports, clearly the Company has the option to wall off Assembly and hire laid off airline mechanics. The Union is not interested in any agreement that would enable that option. Any tentative agreement has to pass a plant-wide vote of the membership. These issues of access to assembly are high up there (#2) for members outside Bldg 29/42, right behind the issue of (#1) NEW WORK for assembly

• PAYSTUB PROGRESS •

Last week, the Company informed Local 201 that the old method of listing hours for regular, STOT, premium, NSB, vacation, sick and union time will be added back onto the new paystub. The hours will appear on the bottom left-hand corner of your paystub. This info. satisfies the Union's demand that our members be able to verify their pay. We expect implementation shortly.

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