

Workers battle to keep scab workers out of plant

By Bill Casper
staff writer

Eighty-hourly production and skilled trade workers of Standard Tube have thrown up picket lines at the Redford Township factory and at a Disabled American Veterans hall where company officials were hiring employees to replace the union strikers Tuesday.

The strikers, represented by United Auto Workers Local 851, claim they were originally locked out by Standard Tube officials the day before their labor contract had expired on May 20.

A secretary for Standard Tube president Benjamin Sachs said company officials have no comment on the labor dispute at this time.

Mike Karkick, local union president, said company officials demanded several concessions, and he charged that their primary objective is to break the union.

"OUR OBJECTIVE is to get company officials to bargain in good faith with us," said Karkick. "We submitted a proposal that we thought would help the company and not hurt our workers, but he (Sachs) wanted much more from us. I don't think it would matter what we offer the company because I believe he (Sachs) intends to break the union."

"We are prepared to pursue every possible action to save our jobs," he said. "We have instructed our people to keep the picketing peaceful, and so far we haven't had any major problems."

Police said there were no incidents Tuesday at the DAV hall, which company officials rented for the day to take job applications.

However, police reported strikers throwing nails in the entrance to the Standard Tube plant Monday as salary employees crossed the picket lines to report to work. They also reported that the strikers spat at the cars and tapped picket signs against them, but did no damage.

"We just wanted to slow them (salary workers) up as they passed through our picket lines to ask them to observe our strike," Karkick said. "We talked to all the people who came to apply for our job Tuesday and we asked them not to cross our picket line."

"Actually, I'm surprised the turnout was so small," he said. "I expected at least 100 people would have been lined up to apply for jobs, but I estimate that only 30 people have gone in to apply so far (as of about 10:30 a.m.) this morning. Many others honored the picket lines and left."

"I TALKED to some people as they were leaving who said they thought the job offer was ridiculous and turned down any possible employment," Karkick said.

Some perspective employees admitted they feared the prospect of crossing

the picket line to fill out a job application and some individuals waited in the parking lot to join others in crossing the picket lines in pairs.

Inside the DAV hall, job seekers sat at several long tables filling out the employment applications.

William Martin, vice president of operations for Standard Tube, estimated 100 persons had filled out job applications by about 10:30 a.m.

"I imagine that many have run off rather than confront the picketers," Martin said. "We intend to fill 75 to 100 employment positions."

He declined further comment on the labor dispute.

Karkick said that 125 of Standard Tube's retirees also are affected by the labor dispute because company officials are attempting to eliminate the pension plan as one of several contract concessions.

"COMPANY OFFICIALS want the federal government to pay for the employee pension plan and they intend to accomplish that objective by seeking the union's support in terminating the negotiated pension program," Karkick said. "They also want to substantially reduce wages of the hourly workers by as much as \$3 per hour off the base rate."

"Among other concessions company

officials have demanded include partial employee payment of dental benefits that are now paid in full by the company, elimination of our cost of living allowance and our dental plan, termination of the seniority structure and all union security provisions, and reductions in the number of holiday and vacation days," said Karkick.

The old three-year labor contract expired at 12:01 a.m. Friday, but employees were locked out last Thursday, he said.

"The lock-out violated our labor contract, which was still in effect at that time and now we've been told that he (Sachs) is going to pay us for that day to make his action legal," Karkick said. "He locked us out three years ago and we gave concessions in order to reach a contract settlement."

The agreement followed an employee strike.

"In 1981 he (Sachs) asked for more concessions and we requested that he justify the need by revealing the company's financial situation, but he refused," Karkick said. "Sachs said contract concessions were necessary because the company was losing money, but a UAW audit of the company's financial records indicated the company realized a profit of about \$150,000 at the time in 1981 when he had asked for the concessions."

"NOW HE'S asking for more concessions, but he can't justify the need," said Karkick.

The workers manufacture specialized tubing, some for the auto industry and boiler companies.

Only the salaried employees remained in the plant, located at 24400 Plymouth, west of Telegraph.

Marquette elects student government

Mary K. Goode, Wicklow Road, Farmington Hills, has been elected to the student government at Marquette University. She will serve a one-year term as Assistant Director of Student Services in the Associated Students of Marquette University.

Goode is a sophomore in the college of speech.

Library posts summer hours

The Farmington Community Library will be closed on Saturday-Monday, May 28, 29 and 30 in observance of Memorial Day.

The library will begin its summer

hours the week of June 6. Hours will be as follows: Monday through Thursday, 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. Friday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Closed Saturday.

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