



Pacific Media Workers Guild

THE NEWSPAPER GUILD - CWA LOCAL 39521

433 Natoma Street, San Francisco, California, 94103

415.421.6833

FAX 415.421.3751

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Dear Guild members:

Today's statement by Frank Vega covered a lot of familiar ground. We heard most of this at the bargaining table during the past year of negotiations. Mr. Vega is entitled to make a case for the company's proposal and his version of the facts. We called him today to congratulate him for issuing such a substantive account of Hearst's position.

We don't agree on the merits. We have raised many concerns about Hearst's offers to date. The company has shown little or no willingness to compromise for months. Most importantly, Hearst has refused to increase its contributions to our health plan, which haven't changed since 2005. The reason for any deficits, or instability, in our health care system is that Hearst's contributions have been stuck at \$148 a week per full-time employee for eight years, while the system's health care costs have skyrocketed.

Hearst's proposal would translate into deep pay cuts, or at best stagnating take-home pay, for most people, even after taking into account Hearst's proposed 1.5% annual pay increases. So far, this is all the company has offered. Is that the best Hearst can do?

We discussed all this with our members last week. The overwhelming reaction was against accepting the loss of our H&W Trust on these terms after the sacrifices we have made.

It appears that the company believes our members may be unaware of important aspects of Hearst's offer. The company seems to think that if our members did understand Hearst's offer clearly, they would accept it.

We are skeptical. That is why we are trying to convince Hearst to improve its proposal. We have offered bargaining dates in early April. At that time, we intend to push the company lawyers to be absolutely clear that we have Hearst's best offer. Once we are convinced that the company will do no better, we will then discuss putting this proposal up for a membership vote.

Until then, the Guild will continue to make our own position clear in every way we can to our membership and our allies in the community as we seek a just and fair contract.

In Solidarity,

Chronicle Guild Bargaining Committee