

...Laid-off Nabisco workers promote boycott of Mexican-made Oreos

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up \$46 million a year in concessions. The union refused to consider that ultimatum, saying it would amount to a \$29,000 cut in compensation per worker. Mondelēz moved ahead with the new production lines in Salinas, and laid off 251 of its Chicago production workers on March 23. Jackson was in that first wave. Another 43 were laid off May 27.

“It is an older facility,” Jackson said, “but if you go by the numbers, it wasn’t like we were bottom of the class as far as the plants go. This is being done strictly for corporate greed.”

A disabled U.S. Navy veteran supporting three daughters, Jackson says it won’t be easy for him find a job with similar pay and benefits. Jackson, 39, was making up to \$26.08 an hour plus benefits under the union contract, after four-and-a-half years working at Nabisco’s flagship industrial bakery. Layoffs targeted the least senior workers, so all the workers who remain have been at the Chicago Nabisco plant more than nine years.

Jackson says on their final day, he and his laid-off co-workers were escorted out of the plant one-by-one by security guards.

“I guess you could say it was like a funeral procession,” he said. “Even though we saw this day [coming] it was another thing when you actually are in the moment.”

Adding insult to injury, Jackson said the Monday after his layoff, Nabisco required the remaining employees to work overtime.

BCTGM has dubbed the laid-off workers the “Nabisco/Mondelēz 600,” but so far, just 294 Chicago Nabisco workers have been laid off — not 600, as the company had announced. Since the second wave of workers was shown the door May 27, there’s been no third layoff notification and no talk of a third wave. BCTGM leaders don’t know why, but speculate it may have to do with an unexpected wave of retirements, adverse publicity, and even a failure to plan.

Meanwhile, the BCTGM union contract covering 2,000 Nabisco workers in five states expired Feb. 29, and the two sides haven’t reached a new

agreement. For the union, bargaining stalled over Mondelēz’ proposal to withdraw from the union pension plan and instead contribute the same amount to a 401(k)-style defined contribution plan; and to replace the current fully-paid healthcare plan with a plan that requires workers to pay 10 percent of costs. Mondelēz presented the union with what it called its “Revised Last, Best and Final Offer” on April 8.

Nabisco may have thought Americans wouldn’t care about one more company shifting production overseas, but the layoffs became an issue in the presidential campaign. Presidential candidate Donald Trump said he’d never eat another Oreo. Hillary Clinton visited the union office across the street from the Chicago Nabisco plant. And Sen. Bernie Sanders sent a surrogate, former Communications Workers of America union president Larry Cohen, to deliver a message of solidarity.

Now BCTGM is focusing on publicizing its boycott of Mexican-made Oreos and other Nabisco products. Jackson and other laid-off workers have visited over a dozen cities to get the word out.

In Portland, Jackson and BCTGM international organizer Nate Zeff joined Bakers Local 364 members (and supporters from United Food and Commercial Workers and the AFL-CIO) in a June 16 picket outside the Nabisco plant on North Columbia Boulevard, where Local 364 represents about 200 workers.

And on June 17, they addressed a meeting of the Oregon AFL-CIO executive board.

“Even though this fight is centered around Mondelēz, it’s actually bigger than Mondelēz,” Jackson says. “We have to fight this fight against Mondelēz and all the other corporations that are running to Mexico. We must make this fight so hard for Mondelēz that the rest of the companies will see that and say it’s not worth it.”

How to support the boycott

BCGTM and the AFL-CIO are calling on consumers to buy only U.S.-made Nabisco products: Check the label, and if it says Made in Mexico, don’t buy it. Also, ask your grocery manager to stock only American-made Nabisco snacks; they’re made by union workers.



POSTAL MINIONS National Association of Letter Carriers Branch 82 once again took part in Portland’s Starlight Parade, entering a crowd-pleasing float in which letter carriers dressed up as “Minion” characters from the movie *Despicable Me* — and retrieved priority mail packages that were spit out of a chute from a house resembling the house in the movie. Branch 82 has taken part in the Starlight Parade every year for the last 27 years; this year’s entry was organized by Branch 82 member Abe Redcloud. It won a third place plaque in the community group category of the official PGE/SOLVE Starlight Parade Awards. There were 90 entries altogether in this year’s parade, which took place June 4. IBEW Local 48 also took part this year.

Labor Council backs Bernard, Humbertson in Clackamas County

Clackamas County politicians Jim Bernard and Ken Humbertson have been endorsed by the Northwest Oregon Labor Council

in their respective races in this fall’s general election. Bernard, a sitting County commissioner, is seeking to unseat County chair John Ludlow. Humbertson is running against incumbent County commissioner Tootie Smith. Ludlow and Smith are anti-union, and both received a “no endorse-

ment” from the labor council in the primary. A no endorsement means the council actively campaigned to defeat them.

Bernard was the top vote getter in a four-person primary race. Humbertson finished second to Smith, who got nearly 47 percent of the vote.



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