

## USW Goodyear Reach Tentative Agreement

(Pittsburgh, PA) -- The United Steelworkers (USW) and the Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company today reached tentative agreement on a new three year contract that the union said “secures retiree health care benefits and dramatically increases Goodyear’s investments in union facilities.”

“This agreement validates the solidarity of our members and their families, who wouldn’t allow the company to walk away from obligations earned through a lifetime of hard work and loyalty,” said USW President Leo W. Gerard.

“We owe a debt of gratitude,” he added, “to the entire labor and activist communities, which rose with unprecedented solidarity to challenge Goodyear’s assault on our members.”

“By securing solid medical and drug benefits for current members and retirees in the midst of today’s health care crisis,” said Thomas Conway, USW Vice President and the Chair of the union’s Goodyear negotiations, “our bargaining committee was able to

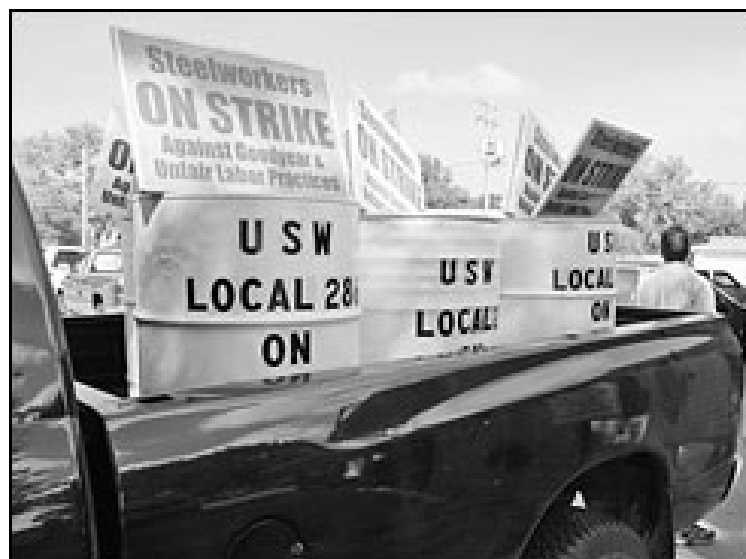
drive the proverbial wolf away from the door for tens of thousands of retirees and thousands more workers who are nearing retirement.”

The Tentative Agreement was endorsed by the USW’s Goodyear Policy Committee, made up of local union leaders from the company’s master contract facilities throughout the U.S. Members at these locations will vote at ratification meetings in their communities on December 28.

Although details of the tentative agreement will not be released until USW members at Goodyear have voted in a ratification election scheduled for next week, the union said that the agreement addresses three crucial areas of concern by:

- Establishing an innovative company-financed trust of more than \$1 billion that will secure medical and prescription drug benefits for current and future retirees;

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Local 1999, Unit 09

## INFORMER

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- Enhancing the ability of USW-represented plants to meet the challenges of global competition by having Goodyear triple its capital investments to at least \$550 million in those plants; and,
- Maintaining affordable, high quality medical and prescription drug coverage for active members and retirees.

In addition, the tentative agreement requires Goodyear to rescind its demand for immediate closure of its Tyler, Texas plant, and instead provides for a one-year period of transition during which workers will have the opportunity to take advantage of sizeable retirement buyouts.

The Tyler plant came out of the 2003 negotiation as the one unprotected facility, but despite determined efforts by international and local union leaders and strong support from the community, plant security could not be won beyond the end of 2007.

“Though we’re not entirely happy with the outcome at Tyler,” Conway said, “we were able to ensure that as long as Goodyear stays in the market for the tires built at Tyler, those tires will have to be produced at USW-represented plants in the U.S. The company simply won’t be able to outsource that work or service this market segment with imports from China or anywhere other than a USW facility.”

“What we achieved would never have been possible if we hadn’t struck.” said Ron Hoover, USW Executive Vice President

Negotiations between the USW and Goodyear began in June of this year. With a contract expiration date of July 22, 2006 approaching, a day-to-day extension agreement was reached that gave both parties the option of terminating the agreement upon delivering 72-hour notice. Lack of progress in bargaining talks forced the USW to deliver notice on October 2 and 15,000 USW members in 16 plants throughout North America struck on October 5.

The ratification vote will be taken following informational meetings at each location. A majority of the majority principle applies meaning that a majority of the locals as well as a majority of the overall membership must vote to accept the Tentative Agreement as the new contract.

The USW represents more than 850,000 members in the U.S. and Canada. Some 70,000 are employed in the tire, rubber and plastics industry.

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