



# insight

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## IAM Straps On the Gloves for Contract Negotiations with RTX

By Joe Durette

Last week, Seminole Machinists Local 971 in West Palm Beach, Florida posted the Last Best Final offer in its contract negotiations with Raytheon, with full negotiating committee recommendation for ratification. At first glance it looks like a strong contract, with highlights including a one-time \$2/hour equity wage increase right at the start, plus wage increases of 4%, 3.5%, and 3% for each year of the three-year agreement. The Machinists also won improvements in medical & dental benefits, bereavement, severance, and recall rights. Pensions received a whopping increase from \$84/month per year of service to \$100/month, a bump of nearly 20%. The downside, however, is that pension benefits will be frozen at that level, and with more Boomers opting for retirement, there will be less and less appetite to battle the company to rescind that clause. You can find the summary of the WPB agreement at Local 971's website ([www.ll971.org](http://www.ll971.org)), clicking on the Negotiations tab at the top and scrolling to the links at the bottom of the page.

power comes from the strength of our members' solidarity.

Management knows it has the upper hand when workers are faced with the difficult decision on whether to strike or not. After all, salary workers continue to draw their salaries, while hourly workers are forced to rely on \$200/week strike benefits if a strike lasts longer than two weeks, although time and time again they underestimate the will of our solidarity. Regardless, it's an uneven playing field, but efforts are underway to level that field. Last year, the Connecticut General Assembly came close to passing a bill that would've provided unemployment benefits for striking workers after two weeks on the picket line, the way it is in New York and New Jersey. The bill had the votes to pass the state Senate and likely the House as well, but House Speaker Matt Ritter got cold feet when he learned Governor Lamont had reservations about the viability of the state's unemployment coffer, so the bill was never brought to the floor. The CT AFL-CIO has made the bill its #1 priority in the upcoming legislative session, with the goal of overcoming the hurdles it encountered in 2023 and pushing it over the top into law.

The CBA between RTX and Seminole Machinists LL971 were the first of five negotiations slated between January 2024 and May 2025. Next up is Collins Aerospace and LL743 in Windsor Locks, and the District 26 negotiating committee is currently ramping up preparations for some hardcore bargaining with the assistance of the International. Our own contract expires in May '25, now less than 15 months away, and crunch time will be upon us sooner than we think. It's not too early to start thinking about what we would like to accomplish in our own negotiations, and to start preparing ourselves financially should we decide as a membership to walk the picket line in the face of an unacceptable Last Best Final offer from the company.



Freezing the pension benefits shows that RTX is eager to get out of the pension business once and for all, just as its predecessor UTC was. New hires after 2/1/2016 were not eligible for pensions and instead given enhancements to other savings plans like 401Ks, which are not guaranteed and subject to market influences. Mega companies have been trending away from pensions for years, but last year we saw a glitch in that matrix: in their rolling strikes against Ford, GM, and Stellantis, United Auto Workers were able to win historic gains including the reinstatement of pension plans for its workers. So it can happen. The question is how much are workers willing to sacrifice to win those benefits back. Big gains don't come from the generosity of executives, they come from the power of negotiations, and the power of the strike. And that



# Will Pratt & Whitney Be the Next Boeing??

By Therese Hervieux

We're seeing and hearing the news regarding Boeing Aircraft. "Boeing's quality-control process and company culture are being heavily scrutinized after the 737 Max Flight 1282 blowout," "Poor Quality Control, Race for Profits behind Boeing's troubles" "Boeing Finds Another Quality Problem on 787, delaying deliveries again." There are so many headlines regarding Boeing and Quality it raises flags and leads me to question if we at Pratt & Whitney are heading down this path to be the next Boeing.

"We will not agree to any request from Boeing for an expansion in production or approve additional production lines for the 737 MAX until we are satisfied that the quality control issues uncovered during this process are resolved," said FAA Administrator Mike Whitaker in a statement to CBS News. The attention on Boeing about their quality findings ought to make Pratt executives take notice and deeply examine its own quality program.

Here at Pratt & Whitney, quality inspectors and non-destructive test (NDT) inspectors historically reported directly to a quality chain-of-command. Quality supervisors and quality managers were kept in a separate decision-making sphere from production. Several years ago, however, EHRO shifted from this quality-centric mindset by changing inspection departments to report directly to a production chain-of-command. Those in charge of pushing parts through based on production schedules were also tasked with overseeing quality. Last year, our OEM side of the business decided to do the same. Now, across the campus, all of our quality departments report to production supervision. The push to get work out the door—to improve EBIT numbers and On Time Delivery—becomes the primary message. When the boss is pushing for work, and he or she is more concerned with "getting the work done," what message do quality employees hear? They hear "Find a way, get the parts out the door." When people are rewarded with Rstars or other awards, are they centered on quality and product safety? Or production success?

Actions speak louder than words. Our training is lax at best. Our new employees are eager to learn and do the job properly but we disrespect them by pushing them through the system. Having newly-trained workers train new hires is not a robust training program. It's a disservice



Pratt Engine Flaw to Idle Hundreds of A320 Aircraft for Years

Source: defenseaerospace.com

to the quality of our products and to our new hires to encourage quicker turnaround times in training. Asking people to train two to three employees at the same time doesn't allow for proper one-on-one training. And moving workers with less seniority into lead positions, bypassing more experienced qualified co-workers, not only violates our CBA, it begs the question, "Are these actions in the best interest of product quality and machinist training, and how do they impact the quality of the work that Pratt is willing to accept?"

The pressure on cell leaders to get employees their certifications and stamps as quickly as possible increases the risk that we are sacrificing the quality of our training to get product out the door. Of course, management will always tell you that quality is important. They talk a good talk, but utilizing annual online quality "training" and quality alerts instead of good old-fashioned in-person quality meetings to discuss employees' issues and concerns only widens the communication gap and erodes the knowledge base of the quality inspector.

The Cost of Poor Quality (COPQ) affects the bottom line of the company, but supervisors are under the gun in production meetings to get work out the door. The daily message is, "We need to get that part to the customer." But if we continue to dumb down the quality systems that have kept the eagle flying and made us the #1 engine in the world will only make it harder to remain #1 in the future. Again, actions speak louder than words. Boeing rank-and-file employees saw the warning signs as their management continued to change quality checks and systems. They were concerned, just as our brothers and sisters on the shop floor are concerned. Let's hope that Pratt & Whitney Management is watching what is going on at Boeing and acts to put quality before money and production once again. None of us wants Pratt & Whitney to be the next aerospace company in the headlines for all the wrong reasons.

## VOLUNTEERS WANTED

### Special Olympics

### Unified Floor Hockey



Saturday, March 2<sup>nd</sup> 2024, 8AM-4PM  
400 Main St. East Hartford, CT 06118 at  
Pratt & Whitney's Hangar  
Lunch provided – any volunteer under 15 must be accompanied by an adult  
E-mail: [c.pullen@live.com](mailto:c.pullen@live.com) for the direct link to sign up  
Contact the Union Hall with any questions  
860-568-3000

In the December issue of *Insight*, we had talked about the first two principles of HOP (Human and Organizational Performance): People Make Mistakes and Blame Fixes Nothing.

Very few people come into work with the intention of doing a bad job. Life can be hard enough, people want to get through the day with as few problems as possible.

We know that what is *planned* (operation sheets) and what actually *transpires* (tool availability, process function) can be entirely different things. The context of work contributes to deviations from a smooth and flawless day on the job.



### 3) Context Drive Behavior

People are influenced by the environment they work in. The decisions and actions they make are affected by what's going on around them. Everything makes perfect sense at the time, but after a negative event we might not do the same. It's important to understand the context behind behavior. A person who wants to understand the context needs to ask open questions, then listen and understand what the drivers were behind the event. Effective corrective actions will address the drivers that contributed to the negative event. This goes against the other practice of asking leading questions to confirm/reinforce a preconceived notion that the employee is the problem.

### 4) Learning and Improving is Vital

There is a shift that is starting to happen, Accident Investigations are being recognized as Learning Events. This makes perfect sense when the intent is to improve the work place and processes contrary to thinking processes are perfect and employees are the problem. Unfortunately, there is a direct relationship between how serious the impact from the event was and the level of resources put into learning from the event. With lessons learned, hopefully we can apply this to prevention. Learning, Improving and Prevention is Vital.



### 5) Leaders' Response Matters

Leaders, consider your actions, words and follow-through. How do you want to be perceived during and after a significant event? Are your first questions about the employees' well-being or are they about equipment or process first? Are your reactions and corrective actions based on collected facts or emotion and retribution? Are the corrective actions directly related to the break down in the process, will it reduce reoccurrence? Are you following through for completed tasks? How you respond matters. It matters to the employees, the functionality of the organization and it should matter on how you see yourself as a leader.

### Do's and Don'ts in a Workplace Emergency

In the event of a fire or chemical release:

1. **Do** Immediately evacuate to your designated assembly location, if you pass a Red Emergency pull box, Pull the box on the way out the door, Do Not stay at the Pull Box, keep evacuating. The F.D. can find the smoke. Only use your cell phone to call (860-565-1111) from a Safe location.
2. **Do** notify the Emergency sweeper of any observations or special conditions you witnessed.
3. **Don't** go back for your keys or other belongings. Try to hide a key somewhere on your car. This will help you get home and also avoids "lock outs". Personal belongings can be replaced.
4. **Don't** attempt to extinguish a fire on your own. Do not jeopardize your personal safety in order to save property or process equipment. East Hartford P&W has full time professional Fire Fighters trained for Emergency response and proper use of firefighting equipment.



### How to get Help for an Injury or Medical Emergency.

1. To call from an inside phone, call **5-1111**. Cell phones should call **860-565-5111**. Be ready to provide the location of the emergency, Building I.D., column number, and the nature of the injury or medical condition.
2. Red Emergency pull boxes can be used for Medical Emergencies. Please stay at the box once it is pulled, You will need to bring the emergency responder to the person in need of help. Responders will go to the location of the pulled box.
3. Do not bring the person to Medical or the Fire Department. Let the responders come to patient.
4. If you are the person in medical need, please listen to the Emergency Responders. If additional medical care is offered, (i.e. a trip to the hospital or medical care center), please consider going. It's better to play it safe and get treated sooner than later. Take care of yourself—you couldn't do it for a better person!
5. For an injury, Please report it when it happens, Even on the off shift or weekends the Fire dept. is here 24/7, 7-days a week. Don't wait to see if it gets better. If it doesn't get better, you delayed



The next Monthly Meeting will be held on February 11th in Grace Baker Hall at 11 a.m.



  
**Remember Our Troops Red-Shirt Fridays!!!**

**IT'S PLAYOFF TIME!**

PLAYED BY UNION PLAYERS



CALLED BY UNION REFS

FILMED BY UNION VIDEOGRAPHERS



**January RIDII Winners**



Andrew Bednarz	Rosetta McCovey
Mario Sierra	Shanta Cribbs
Nicholas Onofrio	Steve Chasse
Robert Couch	Thomas Tassmer



**WEBSITES:**

[www.iam1746.org](http://www.iam1746.org)  
[www.iamdistrict26.org](http://www.iamdistrict26.org)  
[www.goiam.org](http://www.goiam.org)  
[www.ctaflcio.org](http://www.ctaflcio.org)

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**AFL-CIO Celebrates Black History Month**



This Black History Month, we at the AFL-CIO want to recognize that Black history is not a *separate* history; it's not a single month. **Black history is also America's history**, and it's America's labor history, too.

Black workers have always been a crucial part of the fight for justice in the labor movement, from helping to organize the meatpacking industry to the Pullman strike to the sanitation workers striking in Memphis, Tennessee.

So this month, we celebrate great labor leaders like [A. Philip Randolph](#), [Hattie Canty](#), [Bayard Rustin](#), [Arlene Holt Baker](#) and [Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.](#), who won historic victories for Black working people.

But Black history is not just the past—it's also the present. It's also Black joy. It's a celebration of culture and community. It's coming together to fight for freedom and justice.

That's why we'll be celebrating a new generation of Black labor leaders and activists as well, featuring workers from across the country. **And it's why labor will always be on the front lines of fighting against racism in the workplace and systemic racism and exploitation in our economic system.**

To that, our Civil, Human and Women's Rights Department has put to-

**Recommended Readings**

- [South to America - Imani Perry](#)
- [Until I Am Free: Fannie Lou Hamer's Enduring Message to America - Keisha Blain](#)
- [Walking the Way of Harriet Tubman: Public Mystic and Freedom Fighter - Therese Taylor-Stinson](#)
- [You Mean It or You Don't: James Baldwin's Radical Challenge - Jamie McGhee and Adam Hollowell](#)
- [Black Folk: The Roots of the Black Working Class - Blair Kelley Ph.D](#)
- [Stony the Road: Reconstruction, White Supremacy, and the Rise of Jim Crow - Henry Louis Gates Jr.](#)
- [To Shape a New World: Essays on the Political Philosophy of Martin Luther King, Jr. - Edited by Tommie Shelby and Brandon M. Terry](#)
- [The Warmth of Other Suns: The Epic Story of America's Great Migration - Isabel Wilkerson](#)