

INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPERS BULLETIN

JOURNAL REGISTER and 21ST CMH DECLARE WAR ON EMPLOYEES and UNIONS. THERE IS NO OTHER WAY TO SEE IT.

Journal Register Company (JRC) and 21st CMH Acquisition Company have declared war. JRC owns Independent Newspapers, Inc., publisher of the Macomb Daily and Daily Tribune. 21st CMH is the proposed purchaser of all the assets of JRC, through the bankruptcy proceeding.

JRC and 21st CMH declared war in **FOUR** ways:

1. On February 22, JRC gave notice to all the unions at the Macomb Daily and Daily Tribune that it was ***terminating all collective bargaining agreements***. The termination of contracts would be ***effective March 31***. JRC is doing this because it claims it will no longer be the employer when 21st CMH becomes the owner of the newspapers on April 17.
2. JRC has ***refused to live up the successor clauses*** in the collective bargaining agreements. It has refused to require its purchaser, 21st CMH, to accept the current union agreements.
3. In Philadelphia and New York, 21st CMH proposed ***union-busting contracts***. It proposed contracts that eliminate all protections regarding work jurisdiction, subcontracting and outsourcing. Those proposed contracts give 21st CMH management the right to change terms and conditions of employment at any time – insurance, work schedules, compensation, etc.
4. When the Philadelphia and New York unions would not to agree to the union-busting contracts, 21st CMH sent letters to JRC employees telling them they could ***apply for their own jobs*** when 21st CMH becomes the employer. 21st CMH would ***selectively hire*** some employees. The new ***terms of employment*** by 21st CMH, according to the letters, include:
 - 15% pay cut.
 - employees pay 50% of health insurance cost and 50% of future premium increases.
 - elimination of all pension plans.
 - reduced vacation schedule.
 - reduced severance pay if jobs are eliminated.

This is the JRC and 21st CMH game plan. At our joint union membership meeting this Sunday, we will be discussing our response, including:

- We will not accept union busting contracts.
- The tactic of dividing employees through selective hiring will not work.
- Current employees must be retained as a group and their seniority must be honored.
- We will do what it takes to protect jobs, contracts and bargaining rights including advertiser boycotts, hand-billing, picketing, and other job action.
- If JRC and 21st CMH continue on this war path, we expect to seek and obtain strike authorization.

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