

Kaiser workers: **VOTE NO** on the TA!

Win REAL gains! Don't believe the TA scams!

This TA gives management power over our union's political freedom of speech! Defend the independence of our union!

The Tentative Agreement (TA) we are being asked to ratify is a sordid compilation of take-aways, misrepresentations, and our union abandoning the principles that are the source of our power. We cannot allow this TA to go through. We are so strong, but this TA makes us look so weak.

This TA is presented to us as a series of memorandums of understanding that have no title to even tell the reader what the different memorandum are meant to address. The only reason why we've been given memorandums of understanding rather than copies of our last contract including changes in the proposed contract with concessions our union has made, is because Kaiser management and our union leadership recognized that if those concessions were stated clearly that contract would never be ratified by the union membership.

As things stand now, we have no idea how these memorandums of understanding relate to our existing contract. So, for example, in these memorandums of understanding which discuss several issues that pertain to job loss and the elimination of whole classifications of workers, the word "seniority" never appears. What role seniority will play in determining who gets to keep their job and who will face lay-offs is left completely unclear.

The TA gives Kaiser management the power to overturn our unions' and union members' basic free-speech political rights

We cannot give up our First Amendment Constitutional rights. It is a fundamental principle of our union to be able to act independently of any management to fight for social and political policies that benefit our members. Presumably Kaiser management and our bargaining committee must have counted on us never getting through the TA, since they saved the worst for last.

Buried in one of the last memorandums of understanding is the following:

Members of the LMP [labor management partnership] including KP [Kaiser Permanente] and all individual local unions with the CKPU [Coalition of Kaiser Permanente Unions] shall not pursue, sponsor, or support legislation or ballot initiatives which are specifically targeted at and the primary purpose of which is to harm a member of the other party.

If this tentative agreement is ratified, our union will be forced to give up its long tradition of supporting equal rights for all workers and progressive legislation. Obviously, our union could not support single-payer health plans, because every blood-sucker and shark who comprise the Kaiser board of directors would be "harmed" if

those initiatives passed. Our union would also be barred from fighting for equal rights for immigrant, undocumented, black, Latina/o, and other oppressed groups because Kaiser management didn't like those measures.

Trump supporters in Kaiser management will claim that any actions by our union to promote basic rights like extending healthcare benefits to undocumented workers would be aimed at harming them. On this score they would be right, after all we want Trump out of the White House, and we want the racist management who support him out.

One of the greatest strengths of our union is that we have led the way in the union movement for equal rights of all workers. We were the first large national union to organize undocumented workers and to build locals that included workers with and without papers. Our union was in the forefront in the fight to attain and preserve DACA. We cannot allow Kaiser management to put a gag on us and to demand that we give up our First Amendment rights. We are far too strong to be treated like a second-class, company union incapable of defending the most basic principles we are proud to stand on in the past.

Equal pay for equal work

Another defining principle of our union is that every worker doing the same job should receive the same rate of pay. Some of our contracts allow senior employees to receive step increases which are based solely on the number of years they have worked for the employer. SEIU-UHW has touted this contract as providing 3% wages across the board. Our union leadership has also stated that this contract does not allow for Kaiser to implement a two-tier wage system. Both of these two claims are lies. Workers in Colorado, Hawaii,

MEMBERSHIP ACTION COMMITTEE

The Membership Action Committee (MAC) is a caucus of workers at Kaiser fighting for a new militant leadership for our unions. Join us!

Email MAC.KPLAMC@gmail.com or contact Adam Lerman at 323.474.8222

mid-Atlantic states and Washington DC will receive 3% wage increases in the first year of the contract and 2% wage increase in the other 3 years of the contract. These workers who are already paid less than their brothers and sisters in California and the Northwest can receive lump sum pay outs at the end of each contract year based on their productivity. In other words, the more these union members are prepared to put up with back-breaking speed-up, the more money they will make.

The places in which Kaiser workers will receive smaller wages are the places that Kaiser is planning to expand. Kaiser plans to hire thousands of new workers in these areas and the new workers they hire will be paid at a lesser rate, because of the de facto two-tier wage system this Tentative Agreement allows.

We are 80,000 workers strong. If we go on strike, our strike will be a national strike. It will be a strike that will be based in part on our determination to stop Kaiser from attempting to weaken our union. Our strike will be a defense of our rights as Kaiser workers but it will also be a fight to reestablish the dignity and power of all unions. It would be a strike to show that we refuse to enter into a slavish partnership with Kaiser that will permanently weaken us.

The debasement and subordination of our union to Kaiser management: this TA undercuts the ability of our stewards to defend union members

One of the strengths of our last contract is that it left ambiguous issues that are always contested on the shop floor. Our effective stewards have been able to get attendance write-ups thrown away, because questions concerning what constituted good or bad attendance under the concrete circumstances of a particular worker's life were not clearly defined in the old contract. Under this TA, there is a major emphasis on attendance. If ratified, the new contract will prevent stewards from getting attendance write-ups discarded. Some of our stewards are real fighters. Others function as an extension of management. Under this TA, every shop-floor steward will be required to enforce a mandatory attendance policy that will affect every worker's end-of-the year PSP lump-sum pay-out.

This TA would place our union in a "partnership" with management to lower absences by 2% each year. Everything

apart from vacation time is included in the computation of how many absences have occurred at a particular work setting. If we fail to make the 2% threshold, our members will receive less of the PSP bonus. *In other words, it will be the job of stewards to try to get new mothers on FMLA leave to come back sooner, to pressure co-workers who are absent from work because of injury to return more quickly. Our shop-floor leaders should not be required to participate in any "partnership" that pits workers against each other and turns even our best stewards into management lackeys.*

If this TA is ratified our union will be asked to participate in numerous powerless and worthless "partnership" commitments. We will, for example, be asked to "partner" with management to "improve efficiency and quality to avoid Kaiser management from subcontracting our jobs." We'll also be in a "partnership" in management new-worker orientations and town-hall change-your-attitude meetings. Kaiser management "generously" gives our union a one-hour slot in its new-employee orientation program. For the "privilege" to participate in these programs, our union must agree to say only positive things about Kaiser.

Kaiser management will "reciprocate" by remaining "neutral" on questions concerning union membership. Every worker who has ever attended a management-run orientation or town-hall meeting knows that they are boring and useless. Most workers prefer to skip these meetings altogether. Those who attend these meetings often do so only because of the opportunity to raise hell about how understaffed and overworked we are and to discuss the continuing decline of patient care. Under this TA it will be the job of the union leadership to round up members and force them to attend these meetings and only say nice things about management. Why would we ever agree to downgrade ourselves in this manner?

The TA scam on job security

Our union leadership has been so terrified about having to lead a strike that they are asking us to sign an agreement which does not provide us with job security. One of the most heralded selling points of the TA has been that we have stopped management from subcontracting our jobs. First of all, it's not true that we have stopped management from subcontracting our jobs, because we have agreed in this contract to allow our pharmacy warehouse jobs to be subcon-

tracted. We have also agreed that our IT members to also be subcontracted.

The memorandum of understanding titled "RE Subcontracting" lists a number of jobs that Kaiser management has agreed not to subcontract. These jobs include medical records, medical coding, patient billing, laboratory, home health, pharmacy and virtual visits. However, in the very next section titled, "Outsourcing" Kaiser is allowed to outsource these same jobs. In other words, the job losses the TA pretends to protect by limiting subcontracting, it specifically allows management to eliminate through outsourcing. This is just a scam. Any claim by our union leadership that it is protecting any jobs under these circumstances is just a lie.

Strike to win

If we strike we can unshackle our union from the stranglehold of the labor management "partnership," and instead of losing power on the shop floor, we could increase it by getting new language covering staffing levels, staff duties, work assignment, etc. The strength of our union is our members and our overwhelming patient and community support. Kaiser management understands that if we go on strike we will have the support of every union member who is a subscriber to Kaiser and the oppressed, poor, and middle-class communities we serve every day.

General Motors workers have shown the way forward. If we go on strike while the GM Workers are still out we can win a better contract for ourselves and the re-birth of a fighting union movement that can utilize its tremendous power for social good.

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