



left to right: Liz Cipriano, Rumz Husein, Cam Sorrendino, Sally Mattison, Wanda Butchino

Six current Cintas partners who are also former UNITE members, wrote a letter to the editor of their local paper, the *Messenger*, after hearing that UNITE HERE was trying to stop Cintas from building a new plant in their community. Here are excerpts of their letter:

"We are here to say, "Enough is enough!" Several newspapers, based on information provided by UNITE, have portrayed Cintas as a sweatshop that pays poverty wages and does not offer affordable healthcare. It's time people hear the truth from those who have been on both sides of the issue.

At Cintas, we have excellent benefits. Our wages are very competitive. We have a 401K program that has been matched 20 percent by Cintas since we have been partners. We also have free life insurance and additional voluntary life insurance that covers spouses and dependants. We have sick days and vacation. As a matter of fact, we can earn up to four weeks of vacation as a benefit of long-term employment at Cintas. Does this sound like a sweatshop?

Unfortunately, some of us at Cintas have had the displeasure of having worked for a company where the employees were "represented" by UNITE. We didn't have a choice as to whether we wanted to be a union member or not. We didn't have the right to say yes or the freedom to say no.

You too have the right to speak out.

If you want to, just let your General Manager or local Human Resources Manager know.

We paid dues, which were raised every time we got a raise. Unfortunately, our raises were only pennies compared to our dues increases. If we had a disagreement with any of the employment policies and took our grievance to the union, they always seemed to take the company's stance.

UNITE did nothing to fight for us. They just relayed information from the company's management. We had limited health insurance and no dental insurance. We were only offered vision insurance a few years before our company went out of business. We had a union pension, which will give some of the 13- to 17- year UNITE veterans about \$34 to \$56 a month when we retire. We had a 401K through our former company which was matched at a colossal 3 percent.

To add insult to injury, after giving this union shop our hard work, our best effort and the major part of our lives, we lost our livelihood when the company went out of business. No benefits were extended to us and we were offered no severance packaged. How is that for having a union behind you?

We don't want the union. We don't need the union. We don't need someone to speak for us. Cintas wants to bring more jobs to the community. In a country where so many jobs have been lost, isn't this a step in the right direction? Why then all of the Cintas bashing?"

The Right to Say Yes and The Freedom To Say No.