

## afa SNATCHES DEFEAT FROM JAWS OF VICTORY

Faced with the prospect of merging with US Airways, United management offered to reopen and renegotiate its 10 year F/A agreement, if the afa would agree support the merger. That was a very attractive offer, considering that the current agreement extends until 2006 and locks United F/As into average industry pay. The afa declined. It was not willing to agree to support the merger as a condition for reopening negotiations because, as the afa put it, ***“United owes us that!”*** Really? The afa negotiated, ratified and signed an agreement the afa characterized as “industry leading” so United is obligated to bail it out?

United offered the afa a golden opportunity to escape from its onerous agreement, but the afa refused. Is the afa really so dense that it thought United would spend tens of millions up front and be faced with demands for further concessions later to gain the afa’s support for the merger? With nothing to gain from renegotiating the agreement, United, quite understandably, walked away from its offer. The afa responded by appealing to arbitration. Here, courtesy of the afa’s internet web site, is the result:

### Panel Rules in Favor of United

**Flight attendants with United Airlines won’t get a raise in their contract** after an arbitration panel ruled against it. United announced Tuesday [May 15] that a three-person panel voted 2 – 1 against an increase in base pay last Thursday. A neutral arbitrator and a representative of United voted against the increase; a representative of the Association of Flight Attendants voted for it...

### No pay raise for United flight attendants

Flight attendants at UAL Corp.’s United Airlines **will not get a pay raise this year**, according to an arbitration ruling made public on Tuesday...

In retrospect, it looks as if agreeing to United’s offer would have been a freebe for the afa. The way things are going in Washington D.C., it seems unlikely that a United and US Airways merger will be approved. If it isn’t, chalk up a colossal blunder to the afa. Thanks to its brilliant ***“United owes us that!”*** strategy, United F/As chances of getting raises this year seem doomed. And to think United F/As are only having to pay \$12 million a year for such great “leadership.”

## DUCKLINGS OR SILLY GEESE?

Here’s another interesting item from the afa’s web. The afa is encouraging its supporters to make lists of pro-afa F/As at their bases because ***“we will need you to be the ‘duck’ for your ‘ducklings’...”*** Pro-afa F/As are ducklings? That seems like wishful thinking. Ducklings would make wonderful union members because they waddle around in single file and don’t get out of line. We think “Ostriches” would be a more appropriate name for them.