Abolish two-tier wage and restore all pay and benefit concessions!

Reject UAW sellout at Chrysler! Establish rank-and-file committees to prepare strike action!

Socialist Equality Party (US)
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Supporters of the Socialist Equality Party are distributing this statement to Chrysler workers calling for a rejection of the new four-year agreement being pushed by the UAW. We urge workers to download this statement *and circulate it.*

Workers at Chrysler should organize now to defeat the sellout contract signed by the UAW and take the leadership of all auto workers in a struggle to abolish the two-tier wage system and restore all pay and benefit concessions.

UAW President Bob King claims the deal is a victory for workers. He is lying and workers know it. The agreement is not the result of genuine collective bargaining, but rather a conspiracy by the companies, the government, the banks and the UAW to drive down even further the conditions of auto workers and increase their exploitation.

The Chrysler agreement is modeled on the UAW-GM and UAW-Ford deals, which increase labor costs by only 1 percent, the smallest rise in four decades.

There is widespread opposition among auto workers to these rotten deals at all three companies. The UAW succeeded in pushing through the Ford contract, but only after an all-out campaign of intimidation, accompanied by the threat of plant closures if the contract was voted down. Already, several locals have voted down the Chrysler agreement.

Like the GM and Ford deals, the pact with Chrysler substitutes profit sharing and "competitive awards" for wage increases. In addition to robbing workers of future pension payments, this will lead to speed-up and a wave of industrial accidents, and will further cement the UAW's role as a wing of corporate management. On top of this, 10 percent of the profit-sharing checks will be diverted into the retiree health care fund controlled by the UAW.

The goal is to permanently end "middle class" wages by ridding the industry of higher-paid workers and replacing them with a cheap labor workforce. The UAW boasted that as a result of its sellout deal, Ford will "in source" work from Mexico and China. At Chrysler, the union is hailing plans that will supposedly add 2,100 jobs—with new hires coming in at the rate of $15.78 an hour.

Chrysler workers will get an even smaller bonus than Ford and GM workers—only $3,500, and of this $1,750 will not be paid out until Chrysler is deemed "financially stable."

From the beginning of the discussions with the Big Three, King has insisted the UAW would not increase the automakers' "fixed costs." In doing so, the UAW is abandoning any conception that workers have interests that must be defended regardless of the profits for the corporations.

Indeed, the negotiations have been little more than a conspiracy between two business entities that have a vested interest in wrenching ever-greater profits off the backs of workers. More poverty-level jobs mean millions more in dues income for UAW executives like King and General Holiefield, whose six-digit salaries and expense accounts shot up 24 percent between 2009 and 2010. More profits also boost the value of the Ford, GM and Chrysler shares held by Solidarity House.

The Socialist Equality Party calls for the formation of

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rank-and-file committees elected and controlled by the workers themselves. These committees will have the task of establishing lines of communication with workers in every Chrysler factory to begin the campaign for a national strike.

Chrysler workers must not fight alone. Appeals for solidarity action should be issued to GM, Ford, nonunion and auto parts workers who face the same attacks on jobs and living standards.

All threats by the auto bosses and the Obama administration to use an anti-strike clause signed by the UAW should be answered with mass demonstrations and factory occupations. The right to strike is the right to fight.

The poisonous "buy American" nationalism promoted by the UAW must be rejected and a special appeal made for a joint struggle with workers in Canada, Mexico, Latin America, Europe and Asia.

Throughout the world there is a growing recognition that workers must fight the global attack on jobs and oppose the race to the bottom in wages and benefits. In recent weeks, auto workers have launched militant strikes in India, Australia and France, a year after Chinese auto workers rebelled against brutal conditions at Honda and other automakers.

Voting down the contract is only the first step. As workers' rejection of the 2009 Ford contract showed, the UAW apparatus will not bow to pressure from below under any circumstances. Instead, it will use every means at its disposal—lies, vote-rigging, intimidation, threats of government intervention and plant closings—to impose the will of the corporations and the banks.

Despite the claims of phony dissident groups like Auto Worker Caravan and Soldiers of Solidarity, the UAW cannot be reformed. New organizations of struggle are needed together with the fight for an entirely new political perspective.

Workers are in a fight not only against one company but against the entire profit system and both big business parties that defend it.

The Obama administration did not intervene in 2009 to save workers' jobs, but to use the threat of liquidation to destroy the gains of generations of workers and secure the profit interests of the banks and financial institutions. Three years after the crash, the corporate and financial elite are again raking in billions while mass unemployment, low wages and permanent job insecurity has become the "new normal" for the working class.

Seventy-five years ago, left-wing militants and socialists led a rebellion against the pro-company AFL union and established the UAW in the sit-down strikes in Flint and other cities. The militant and socialist traditions that animated those struggles should be revived and combined with an understanding of the political limitations of that movement, which was ultimately aborted by being tied to the Democratic Party and the profit system by Reuther and other CIO leaders.

Workers must be organized as an independent force to conduct an industrial and political fight to break the stranglehold of the financial elite over society. Economic life must be reorganized according to a rational plan, drawn up democratically by those who produce society's wealth, in order to satisfy human needs, not private profit. This includes transforming the auto industry into a publicly owned utility as part of a planned socialist economy in the US and internationally.

The Socialist Equality Party calls on auto workers who see the necessity to begin this fight to contact us, study our program, and help build the SEP as the new leadership of the working class.

To contact the WSWS and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact

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