

New update in the contract fight

US autoworkers' outrage mounts over UAW news blackout

Eric London
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The WSWS will be posting updates on the contract negotiations throughout the day. Sign up for the Autoworker Newsletter to stay informed.

The United Auto Workers is forcing 37,000 Chrysler workers to work after imposing an hour-by-hour extension to the contract at midnight last night. Meanwhile, the UAW continues to operate with unprecedented secrecy, fearing that the release of any information about its plans to impose another sellout contract would lead to a rebellion by rank-and-file workers.

What is taking place between the UAW and the corporations in Detroit is not negotiations between adversaries but a conspiracy by two business entities against workers. For this reason, the UAW is trying to keep workers uninformed, divided, isolated, and unrepresented.

As it blocked Chrysler workers from striking to improve wages, benefits and work conditions, the UAW signed contract extensions with GM and Ford. An autoworker at Ford's Kansas City Assembly told the *World Socialist Web Site* that the union and the company are now forcing workers to work 12-hour shifts indefinitely, with some forced to work 12-hour shifts 7 days a week.

In other words, the union is helping the companies squeeze every bit of profit out of the workers in the face of widespread opposition to the contract extensions. This also allows the companies to stockpile vehicles in the event of a strike or lockout.

News outlets reported sporadic walkouts at a Chrysler parts distribution center in Los Angeles, with workers taking to Facebook to denounce the UAW. "People were ready to go," Mopar parts worker Trey Durant

told the *Detroit Free Press*. "There are people who want to walk."

Another worker wrote on Facebook: "Pathetic. Communication from the union toward the membership has been nonexistent, and now this? Give me a break." The comment has received over 100 "likes."

"Everyone is in the dark," a Ford worker from Louisville told the *World Socialist Web Site*.

A GM worker speaking to the WSWS described the situation in the Wentzville, Missouri plant: "Everyone has their own speculation on why and how the UAW is going to screw the members but no one believes they are not planning to."

Another worker wrote on Facebook: "A bunch of BS deals being made behind closed doors without any membership involvement."

Workers cannot oppose the relentless demands of the companies with their hands tied by the company agents of the UAW. New forms of organization, democratically controlled by rank-and-file workers and free from the dictates of the UAW company union, should be formed to unite workers everywhere against the union-company conspiracy.

Contact the Socialist Equality Party and join the fight for rank-and-file committees.

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