

Autoworker outrage erupts over UAW-Fiat Chrysler sellout deal

Campaign for “no” vote grows

Our reporter
21 September 2015

The WSWS urges auto and other workers to sign up for the Autoworker Newsletter and leave your comments. Sign up for the Autoworker Newsletter Facebook page here.

Anger over the tentative agreement reached between the United Auto Workers and Fiat Chrysler (FCA) is expanding throughout the country.

Many have taken to Facebook to express their opposition and determination to vote “no.” Other workers are planning protest demonstrations. The dominant sentiment among autoworkers is that the contract must be voted down as part of a counter-offensive against both the company and the UAW.

The UAW is moving as quickly as possible to hold votes on the agreement, before workers have had time to review what is in it. A vote at Warren Truck Assembly Plant outside Detroit is planned for tomorrow and Wednesday, amidst behind-the-scenes discussions over plans to move production of the Ram pick-up out of the plant to pave the way for the layoff of higher paid tier-one workers.

Over the past two days, hundreds of workers have signed up for the WSWS Autoworker Newsletter, which is leading a campaign for workers to to reject the contract and form rank-and-file committees, independent of the UAW, to organize opposition. (See, “Reject UAW sellout! Build rank-and-file committees to fight the union-company conspiracy against autoworkers!”)

Many workers have left comments expressing their outrage at the UAW.

“The [UAW] International is far in bed with the Big Three,” writes a worker at GM Lordstown in Ohio. “It

makes me sick to my stomach. I'm third generation auto worker, same as my wife, and we are both outraged at what the UAW offered Chrysler.”

A worker at the Ford Flatrock Assembly Plant in Michigan wrote, “My grandfathers, both, fought for workers rights throughout their respective careers at Ford and General Motors. Both of them very were very proud union members. Today, if they were alive, I feel they'd both be disgusted with the current administration of the UAW for putting the wants of the company over the needs of the workers. Throughout my life, being an autoworker used to mean something. It used to mean you could support your family without just making it. It meant you broke your back turning gears, but you came home knowing your children wouldn't have to go without. You worked 30 years, but at the end when you could retire you didn't have to try to figure out how to make it. That's what the UAW used to mean.

“In a somewhat sick and sad way I'm glad both my grandfathers have passed so they don't have to see everything they fought and bled for be ripped away while greedy people, both within the company and the union, make out like bandits.”

“This is an outrage,” wrote a worker at the Claycomo, Missouri Ford Assembly Plant outside of Kansas City. “With all the concessions that the UAW membership has given over the last two contracts, to be presented with a contract such as this absolutely floors me. I suppose they think the membership is stupid, desperate, or just doesn't care. On the contrary.

“I feel that the UAW is becoming a business instead of an organization of representation,” writes a worker at the Ford NMPDC plant in Michigan. “It's sad to say

I held one of these positions and I had to resign because of all that I saw with the way they give into the company before fighting for the membership. They are making money by teaming with the company, not the people they are supposed to represent. It seems as though the auto workers of today have to represent themselves while the company and elected officials prosper.”

A GM worker at Fairfax Assembly in Kansas City wrote, “I am watching these negotiations very carefully. I have been with GM for 34 years, and I have seen quite a few contracts come and go. The worst thing to happen to the rank-and-file was when the UAW got in bed with the Big Three. My union is now in business with these corrupt companies.”

A Ford Kansas City Assembly Plant worker wrote simply, “This contract stinks. It is the worst contract I have seen in the twenty-two years I have worked for Ford.”

Many workers have expressed appreciation for the WSWS Autoworker Newsletter. “I think you are the only news source that is willing to tell the truth and not hide behind the wallets of Wall Street like our so called UAW reps,” wrote an autoworker in Toledo. “Why doesn’t the UAW tell us how much they’ll be rewarded out of this so called good deal contract?”

An autoworker in Missouri writes, “Your articles speak the truth of knowledge that the UAW does not want to arm their dues paying membership with.”

Both tier-one and tier-two workers have expressed their determination to reject the contract.

A tier-one worker at the FCA Belvidere Plant in Illinois writes, “Twenty-eight years, no raise for over a decade, work rules that violate current regulations, plenty of concessions that my retired brothers and sisters are rolling in their graves over. Enough is enough. The executive salaries, including the UAW international union, in this country are an embarrassment to the workers in this country. Our congressmen and women live in the pockets of anyone that will pay to play. Its a race to the bottom, and they are the reason. Enough is enough.”

“The tier-two people want and deserve Equality!” a worker at FCA Sterling Heights Assembly Plant wrote. “We work hard on these lines and now with this new contract proposal, if it passes, we will not see that! The 2011 contract highlights’ 25 percent cap on the number

of tier-two workers has been discarded like trash, even though it persuaded many people to vote in favor of that contract. I do not believe it would of passed if not for that particular promise to the people!”

“The UAW has a vested interest in GM healthcare and retirement,” writes a worker at GM Components Holding in New York. “This is a conflict of interest for the membership. When GM wins, the UAW wins. They don’t care about protecting the membership. They only care about protecting there own futures. The current deal with FCA only brings them closer to their main goal of total global market control. And the UAW wants to be part of that deal. At the cost of the membership. United we bargain. Divided we beg. If the membership doesn’t stand now, this will be irreversible by the next contract.”

“The proposed contract between the UAW and Fiat is completely unfair,” writes a worker at the FCA Indiana Transmission Plant 1. “My husband and I both work together and have four children. His two live with their mom, and my two stay with my mom 4-5 nights week so we can work. We never see any of them for very long, we are always tired and while our basic bills and needs are met, we cannot save for their college. Many of our coworkers are in the same predicament. We work hard, we never miss and we make quality products. Yet I can’t guarantee my family’s future. Equal pay would be a life changer to out family, and its what our legacy and retirees fought for.”



To contact the WSWS and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact