

# UAW working with Ford to ensure minimal impact of possible strike in Kansas City

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2 October 2015

The UAW is conspiring with Ford Motor Company to crush any strike at Kansas City Assembly before it even begins.

On Tuesday, UAW Vice President James Settles announced that the 7,500 workers at the Missouri facility may begin an isolated strike at the plant over local contract issues beginning Sunday. However, according to *Automotive News*, the UAW is allowing Ford to move parts to Dearborn Truck so that production can continue at the same pace in case of a strike. *Automotive News* cited UAW Local 249 chairman Todd Hillyard, who wrote on Facebook that “Given the situation at [Kansas City Assembly] production was sent to keep [Dearborn Truck Plant] running, and it is within the company’s right to do so.” The two plants both produce the F-150.

The UAW is also allowing Ford to schedule overtime at Dearborn. According to the report, “The UAW disputed Ford’s ability to schedule mandatory overtime in Dearborn but determined it was allowed because Ford is within two weeks of a model-year changeover for the F-150 at the plant.”

In recent weeks, workers have also reported to the WSWS that speed-ups in production in Kansas City have allowed the company to stockpile resources that would allow it to remain profitable during a limited strike.

According to reports from workers in the plant, the union has even allowed the company to work pre-production workers 80-plus hours per week.

“I was told recently that I’ve been called in for mandatory 12 hour days, 7 days a week, and the union made it happen,” a worker at KCAP told the WSWS. “And they also sped up the line—we watched them speed it up. It’s blatant.”

In other words, the UAW is working directly with

management to make sure a strike in Kansas City has no impact on Ford’s bottom line.

These maneuvers are further proof that the UAW is allied with the corporations in a conspiracy against the workers. Settles’ proposal for a strike in Kansas City has been revealed as another trick pulled by the UAW to isolate autoworkers, sap their energy, and make it look like the UAW is willing to fight.

The UAW *is* willing to fight—for the company against the workers. By attempting to force workers at Kansas City onto strike pay of \$200 per week, the UAW thinks it can break down the fighting resolve of the workers so that it can better push through a sellout contract.

These maneuvers come in the wake of the overwhelming “no” vote by workers at Fiat Chrysler, who seized the momentum by rejecting the UAW-FCA sellout deal. The UAW was shocked by the depth of the opposition and announced the possibility of a strike in Kansas City as part of efforts to better posture in the run-up to any vote at Ford.

The UAW has on several occasions used isolated or limited strikes as part of a strategy to enforce the demands of the companies.

In 2007 the UAW called a six-hour strike at some FCA plants and a two-day selective strike at General Motors before announcing a massive concession contract that institutionalized the two-tier wage system and established a union-run health care fund for retirees aimed at reducing costs for the companies. These strikes came to be dubbed “Hollywood strikes” because they were intended for show only.

In September 2014 the UAW called off a strike of 760 auto parts workers in Hammond, Indiana after just one day. It then forced workers to accept a three-tier system of pay, with new hires making as low as \$11 an hour.

Earlier this year, the United Steelworkers pursued a similar strategy, organizing a strike of less than quarter of the 30,000 oil refinery workers in the USW, withheld any assistance from the union's strike fund, and starved out workers until the union could impose a pro-company contract.

Workers should resist all these maneuvers by the unions. The organization of any genuine struggle of autoworkers would require the mobilization of the entire industry, not a limited strike at a single plant launched from the beginning with the intention of having as little impact as possible on the company's bottom line.

The UAW, which functions as a company union and labor police force, is incapable of carrying out such a struggle.



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