

UAW propaganda videos: An exercise in psychological warfare

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The two videos published on the UAW's Facebook page over the last two days are evidence that the union is using its big money propaganda firm BerlinRosen to wage a campaign of psychological warfare against US autoworkers.

In one video local union officials—who gave their full-throated support for the first sellout deal—claim they are thrilled that workers voted it down because it allowed the UAW to come back with a better agreement. In another, workers close to the UAW, including a “team leader” at the Jefferson North Assembly plant, describe why workers who voted “no” on the first contract are changing their minds.

The videos are intended to convince workers who are opposed to the second contract that they are isolated and that it is hopeless to resist. In fact there is widespread opposition to the deal, which in fact, is worse than the first. The UAW would not need a New York City public relations firm if it were any good.

“For whatever reason,” Local 7 team leader Frank Gennero says in one video, “[tier 2 workers] felt they were betrayed by the company because they couldn't get top pay.”

How stupid does the UAW think the workers are? In reality, workers expected their enemy at Fiat Chrysler to go on the offensive—the betrayal came at the hands of the UAW.

What's more, workers will not get to top pay for eight years under the second deal, and nothing stops the company from taking this away after the contract expires in 2019. The new agreement maintains multiple tiers, with new hires reaching just \$22.50 by the end of the contract and the percentage of low-paid temps being doubled. New Mopar hires will reach only \$21 after four years, with axle workers making it to just \$19.86. Current temporary workers will max out at \$21 and

new temp hires will be hired in at \$15.78.

In the second video, Marylyn Bonds says, “I believe the ‘no’ vote actually brought us together as a union. I believe the ‘no’ vote sent a message to Sergio (Marchionne) that we are serious about our livelihood.” Later, Bonds says she hopes the deal “can pass and we can move forward with our lives and build a good product for the next four years.”

This is an interesting statement since it comes from the recording secretary of UAW Local 140 at the Warren Truck plant in suburban Detroit. Workers at that local accused the UAW of rigging the vote on the first agreement. Workers were forced to revote due to a defective ballot and the local initially reported the wrong vote count for skilled trades who defeated the deal. After local officials claimed the deal narrowly passed—making it the only major plant to supposedly ratify it—workers demanded a recount—a demand, which the UAW promptly ignored.

The claim that the UAW was strengthened by the “no” vote is, of course, utter nonsense. After all, these are same bureaucrats who, working on behalf of “Sergio”, tried to ram the first agreement down the throats of workers. The UAW called the police on supporters of the *World Socialist Web Site Autoworker Newsletter*, threatened them with violence, shouted down and tried to intimidate rank-and-file critics of the sellout.

Judging by the dozens of comments left by workers on one of the UAW's video Facebook postings, plenty of workers aren't being fooled by the UAW's foray into the world of cinema.

“Wow, a video post with Real people! Well it must be true then...still no recovery for lost 3% annual raises. Lost cost-of-living raises (COLA). Lost equal pay for equal work. 2-tier started. Lost break time. Lost

overtime after 8 hours. Lost traditional work schedules. During all the years of concessions, the excuse for taking away from us was that the auto companies were not making as much profits as they wanted. But for the past 4 years, the auto companies have been making record profits. There is no excuse now. Now is the time to get everything back. If we don't get it back now, we will NEVER get it."

Another worker put it more succinctly: "One word: propaganda!!!"

"VOTE NO!!!!!!!" said an additional commenter. "Brothers and sisters we have been flat out lied to by the people who are supposed to be representing us!"

Another autoworker said, "The UAW sure is spending a lot of time, money and effort with PR. Maybe they should spend this much time really negotiating ... It's simply two businesses both with hidden agendas trying to sell a bad deal."

These comments highlight the real feelings of workers who are not very confused over who is betraying them.



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