

At Tennessee “informational meeting” UAW calls cops on workers campaigning against GM contract

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On Thursday, October 24 at 7:00 p.m. Eastern Time, the WSWs Autoworker Newsletter is hosting an online strike update call. To participate, visit wsws.org/autocall.

United Auto Workers local officials in Spring Hill, Tennessee called police on autoworkers campaigning for a “No” vote on the GM contract on Monday morning in an outrageous assault on the democratic rights of autoworkers.

Workers documented the incident in a series of social media videos posted to Facebook Monday. (The two videos can be watched [here](#) and [here](#)). A group of striking GM workers, who were encouraging fellow workers to vote down the sellout contract, were standing outside the entrance of the Local 1853 hall where local and national UAW officials were holding “education sessions” to try to convince Spring Hill assembly workers to swallow the four-year agreement.

The videos show the police confronting workers outside the union hall. The workers apparently relocated to the curb outside of the parking lot, and subsequent videos show police cars guarding the entrance to the lot.

The worker on the video says that local President Tim Stannard called the cops on them in order to stifle opposition. Only a few weeks ago, Stannard was one of five workers arrested on the picket line for blocking traffic in a move to boost his credibility among workers.

Rank-and-file workers denounced Stannard and the UAW for doing GM’s bidding. “I want everyone to think about it; a president calling the police on his own constituents,” the worker behind the camera says. “What’s that say about defending your rights inside the

plant?” Another worker demanded: “What do they do for us? [Ignore] our grievances! ... They are dividing and conquering us [with outsourcing]!”

There is broad opposition to the slave charter contract signed by the UAW, which provides for the unlimited use of temps and sets a new benchmark for exploitation in the auto industry and beyond.

Because of this, the UAW is resorting to the most undemocratic methods to ram the deal down the throats of workers. The informational meetings are nothing more than propaganda meetings. In Spring Hill workers are being told to vote on the deal right after the meetings, giving rank-and-file workers no time to seriously discuss the deal amongst themselves with the company stooges of the UAW lying and intimidating them.

Many workers have also warned that the UAW will resort to ballot-stuffing and vote-rigging, which Ford and other workers said was used to push through the 2015 deals. Those responsible for the sellout deals, including Norwood Jewell, were later exposed for taking company bribes. To add insult to injury, both of Jewell’s sons, Derik and Justin Jewell, are co-signers of the 2019 GM deal as UAW International reps.

UAW officials have long used thuggery and called the police against its political opponents, including supporters of the *WSWS Autoworker Newsletter*. Now they are doing the same thing to rank-and-file autoworkers opposing this pro-company deal.

That only underscores the need for workers to form rank-and-file committees and to organize outside of the dictatorial grip of the UAW, which does not represent autoworkers, but is a corporatist syndicate run by bribed agents of the corporations.

UAW officials who attempt to browbeat workers in the local informational meetings should be voted off the platform and out of the meeting so that workers can have a democratic discussion free from threats and intimidation. At the same time, workers should elect rank-and-file committees to oversee the balloting and certify the results in order to prevent a repeat of the type of fraud used to defy the democratic will of workers and ram through the 2015 sellout agreement.



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