

UAW President Fain’s “expanded strikes” will have zero impact on automakers’ production or sales

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In a Facebook live video Friday morning, United Auto Workers President Shawn Fain announced that autoworkers at Big Three assembly plants must continue working, producing relief on Wall Street and frustration among rank-and-file workers, 97 percent of whom voted for an all-out strike.

Instead of calling assembly or component plants out, Fain and the UAW bureaucracy called parts distribution center workers at only General Motors and Stellantis out on strike. These centers, called PDCs, are after-market facilities at the very end of the auto supply chain, supplying dealerships.

The strike at PDCs will have no impact on the Big Three’s production. Citing “real progress with Ford,” Fain also said there would be no strikes at Ford’s PDCs. This is notable, considering the Canadian union bureaucracy’s last-minute agreement with Ford to prevent a strike north of the border. Workers have been given no information about the deal and are being told to vote on it this weekend.

After Fain’s announcement, CNBC noted that the Big Three and their financial backers responded positively to news that the UAW would keep production running: “Many, including Wall Street analysts, expected the union to expand work stoppages to full-size truck plants of the Detroit automakers, which are crucial to the profitability of the companies.”

In announcing the UAW would not strike Ford’s

PDCs, Fain did not provide workers with any indication of what Ford was offering on wages. Instead, Fain said Ford would maintain profit sharing and would provide “income protection” for two years for workers who are fired through the transition to electric vehicles. This is merely sugar coating the fact that the company plans to lay off nearly half of its workforce through the transition. Ford CEO Jim Farley said earlier this year, “We absolutely have too many people in some places, no doubt about it.”

Fain claimed that Ford has agreed to the 2009 cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) formula and would roll over temporary workers. But the devil is in the details. Fain did not indicate whether the rollover of temps after 90 days would apply to only current workers or all new hires. During the 2021 John Deere strike, the UAW announced it had won COLA, but workers later would learn that the formula was far from adequate to keep up with inflation.

Many workers responded angrily to Fain’s order keeping the assembly plants working producing product for all of the Big Three.

A worker at Ford’s Kansas City Assembly plant told the *World Socialist Web Site*, “It’s BS. Both corporate and UAW are working together.”

Other workers commented on Fain’s Facebook Live stream: “He let Ford live to breathe another week. ... Ford still has nauseating corporate greed and is against us getting paid the way we should be ... hmmmmmm.” “Where is the assembly plants????” “Now the assembly line workers will get laid off and go on unemployment.”

During his announcement, Fain was chiefly concerned with ensuring workers stay on the job. “I

know more of you are ready to walk,” he said, imploring workers to “stick with us and be prepared.”

Fain continued, “I’ve also heard of members standing strong on the job,” promoting the lie that workers are “standing strong” while the UAW bureaucracy forces them to work without a contract to keep corporate profits flowing and help the companies stockpile product.

Fain also extended a friendly invitation to US President Joe Biden to visit a picket line, though this would be nothing but a stunt aimed at promoting illusions in the pro-corporate Democratic Party. Biden and Congress intervened last year to illegalize a potential railroad strike and force through a sellout contract that 100,000 railroad workers had previously rejected.

As the UAW bureaucracy and federal government conspire to suppress the rank-and-file movement, it is urgently necessary the strike be expanded across the Big Three. On Wednesday, the Autoworkers Rank-and-File Committee Network issued a statement calling for emergency meetings of the entire membership at each union local to be held, in order to discuss and vote on resolutions demanding an all-out strike across the auto industry.



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