

“It’s a no for me”: Ford workers denounce sellout contract as UAW bureaucracy organizes snap vote at Michigan Assembly Plant

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The United Auto Workers bureaucracy has organized a snap vote at UAW Local 900 in crude attempt to ram through its sellout contract on 4,800 Ford workers at the Michigan Assembly Plant (MAP) in Detroit’s western suburbs. The rushed ratification vote, which the local scheduled from 6 a.m. Wednesday to 6 a.m. Thursday, completely violated the timeline set out by UAW President Shawn Fain on October 25 when he and Vice President Chuck Brown announced the UAW-Ford deal.

At the time, Fain declared, “As you know, in our union, the members are the highest authority. That means we have a process for rolling out the details of the agreement and making sure every member gets a chance to make an informed decision.”

Before any ratification votes were held, Fain said, “We’ll hold regional meetings to walk through the agreements with local leadership, and then locals will hold informational meetings to get your questions answered. After that it will be up to the members to vote on the deal. We are going to let that democratic process take its course.”

In fact, voting began at Local 900 at 6 a.m. Wednesday, hours before before the local’s afternoon “informational” meetings.

On the Local 900 Facebook page, workers posted angry comments denouncing its rushed character. “Not

only does voting begin before the meeting starts. The meeting is ending the same time that afternoon shift starts so anyone that may want to stay from beginning to end is going to have to leave early if they are on afternoon shift.”

Another worker posted, “Why does it seem like they are rushing it? The voting starts before the info meeting even starts.”

Receiving no reply from local union officials, another worker wrote, “It’s funny, I’ve seen this comment more than a little bit about rushing but not yet any answers as to why.”

Most locals have not even announced their informational meetings and ratification votes, while others have scheduled them well into next week or beyond.

It is evident the UAW bureaucracy scheduled the snap vote in the hopes it could get MAP workers to swallow the sellout deal. The UAW strung MAP workers out on \$500 a week in strike pay for 41 days under Fain’s bogus “stand up strike.”

But many MAP workers who spoke to the WSWS said they were voting against the deal. “It’s a ‘no’ for me,” a veteran worker with more than 25 years at the plant said. “I’m more than \$16 an hour behind if you take all the lost wages and COLA we gave up. Another \$8 or \$10 an hour by 2028 isn’t going to make that up. I’ve been virtually living in that plant, working seven days a week, 12 hours a day. As for the younger workers, all they want them for is cheap labor.

“In my view, the UAW is going to try to get this through one way or another. Things haven’t changed a

bit with Fain. You get no representation from the union. Every day you see the UAW committeemen hobnobbing with management. When you need them, they're never there."

Another worker who left the informational meeting in disgust said workers in the plant were concerned about the attack on jobs coming with the transition to electric vehicles, including the passage in the contract that ominously refers to workers at the Rouge Complex in Dearborn, Michigan, as "surplus."

"We were reading over the contract in the plant and a lot of us are concerned about the Rouge plant," she said. "The rising cost of living is kicking our ass, and the raises and COLA are not enough. A lot of senior workers will be leaving in the next few years, and they backloaded the 5 percent raise at the end of the contract.

"There is so much lingo and hidden things in there to blindsides us, and they never give you a straight answer. The union is more pro-management than it is for the people. If you ask them about the smallest thing to protect you, they say, 'Management can do that.'"

Some temporary workers said they would vote for it because of promises to convert them to full time. They expressed concern, however, when supporters of the WSWS Autoworker Newsletter said that the company intended to make up for any minor increases in wages by laying off thousands of workers.

Another veteran worker who said he was voting 'no' added, "We should already be at \$50 an hour. I want the younger workers to come up to us, not us go down to them. Sometimes, I'm in here 84 hours a week. These Raptor Broncos are selling for \$80,000 to \$100,000, and even the low-end ones sell for \$60,000. How are these guys making \$21 an hour ever going to be able to afford the cars they build?"

"The union has been in cahoots with management for years. These companies are making billions off us."



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