

“It’s a smack in the face!”

After mass layoffs, Ford Rouge workers denounce union-sponsored “Going Away Party”

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11 April 2024

After conspiring to carry out job cuts at the Ford Rouge complex in Dearborn, Michigan, the United Auto Workers (UAW) and management are holding a “Going Away Party” Saturday for workers who are being put out of work. The UAW claims the event will “Honor Our Membership.”

At the end of March, Ford laid off 1,400 workers at the Rouge complex west of Detroit. The cuts were announced in the wake of the sellout contract rammed through by the UAW last fall that had been sold to workers as a “historic” agreement that would protect jobs. However, before the ink was dry on the deal, the company announced that layoffs would begin immediately.

First, workers were told the layoffs were to be only temporary. Then, they were told that only a single shift at the electric vehicle center would go. Then, the layoffs were expanded to include two shifts.

Both the UAW and Ford claimed that workers would be transferred to other facilities, and no one would lose his or her job. But by the time the layoffs actually hit at the end of last month, fully one-half of the 1,400 to be terminated were forced to take a permanent buyout of \$50,000, and even the terms of that agreement remain unclear.

Workers are understandably angry, confused and disgusted with the UAW, which has done nothing to fight the cuts. In an effort to cover up its betrayal, UAW Local 600 has organized a “Going Away Party.”

However, the invitation announcing the event is written in a manner that honors the company, not the workers. It states, “Our membership ... kept the F-150

legacy thriving & made the F-150 Lightning 2023 Truck of the Year.”

A supporter of the Ford Rouge Workers Rank-and-File Committee, who spoke with the *World Socialist Web Site* after the party was announced on Wednesday, expressed his disgust. “They [the union] had knowledge long before the strike that all this was coming,” he said. “The plant chairman said nothing about it. Then after the contract was signed, he said there would be layoffs at REVC. But nothing could be done about it, he said; nobody saw it coming.”

He was outraged that the union was trying to make a celebration out of a series of events in which workers were repeatedly misled before being summarily terminated. “That’s very disrespectful,” he said. “It’s a smack in the face. When they were voting for the contract, they [the rank-and-file workers] didn’t realize they were voting themselves out of a job.”

On Wednesday, April 10, the night the party was announced, United Automobile Workers President Shawn Fain and his wife attended a state dinner at the White House in honor of Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida that was hosted by US President Joe Biden and First Lady Jill Biden and attended by a number of billionaire supporters of the Democratic Party.

The worker commented, “I saw Fain when he was attending the State of the Union address. He had that smile on his face as if to say, ‘Oh, I made it. I’m the man.’ When he was showing his grandfather’s check stub, I said to myself this guy is a fake.

“When we were on strike, everybody should’ve been

out. Now we have so many people who are lost and have to go to food pantries. The union knew the true agenda from day one. Fain was always on the news complaining about the billionaires. Now, after all that political posturing, he feels like he's one of the elite. He got his position because people believed him; now he wants to be with the elite."

On the same Wednesday evening, April 10, the company circulated a notice of a "TOTAL TRUCK TAKEOVER." It read, "Join us for a Ford Truck Celebration April 11 from 12:00PM - 12:50PM." The lunch on offer included BBQ Chicken Slider, Mac & Cheese, Cookies, Bottled Water and Lemonade; and the flier suggested, "During the event, enjoy free lunch and live entertainment."

After months of being lied to, stonewalled and ghosted by the union apparatus, to add insult to injury the event flier concluded with the following comment, "This Thursday isn't just about a new Model Year launch; it's THE BIGGEST TRUCK LAUNCH IN FORD HISTORY. Be part of this historic moment and experience the future of trucks in a way that only Ford can deliver."

Since well before the "historic" stand-up strike betrayal, Shawn Fain was working closely with the Biden administration to place the union in lockstep with both the preparations for the jobs blood bath and the Biden march to world war. As these latest announcements came over social media at Ford Dearborn, Fain was invited to the White House to wine and dine at a State Dinner as he grooms himself to enter a Biden war cabinet.

Mass layoffs, war and social distress will only be ended when workers take matters into their own hands, organize independently of the union apparatus and the political parties bought and paid for by the billionaires and join with their brothers and sisters throughout the world to fight for the socialist reconstruction of society.



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