The UAW bureaucracy is complicit

No police, no dogs, no undercover agents in our plants!

Build rank-and-file committees to defend our democratic rights!

Ford Rouge Workers rank-and-file-committee
16 September 2026

The following is a statement from the Rouge Workers Rank-and-File Committee opposing the security sweeps at Ford and other auto plants. To get information about building rank-and-file committees at your plant, fill out the form at the end of this article.

Brothers and sisters,

What began in January 2025 as a police raid on Michigan Assembly Plant (MAP) has metastasized into a permanent police-state regime inside Ford Motor Company and across the auto industry. Tracking dogs, undercover security agents and warrantless searches are now daily reality for autoworkers from the Rouge to Sterling Heights Assembly and Kansas City Assembly. The UAW bureaucracy is not merely standing by. It is an active participant. In July 2026, Ford launched a 90-day "pilot program" at MAP, stationing dogs trained to detect firearms and explosives inside the factory.

Under the Fourth Amendment, no government agency, corporation or individual has the right to conduct unreasonable searches and seizures of our property or persons. We do not surrender our constitutional rights when we pass through the factory gate.

There is a direct line from the Ford Service Department of the 1920s and 1930s to the Global Security Task Force of 2026. The methods are updated—dogs, undercover agents, secret surveillance—but the class relationship is unchanged. The Service Department's methods were murderous. In 1932, when unemployed workers organized the Ford Hunger March to demand jobs and relief, Harry Bennett's goons and the Dearborn police opened fire on the unarmed marchers, killing five workers and wounding dozens.

The history runs deeper. Henry Ford was the single largest financial supporter of Adolf Hitler and the Nazi Party. His newspaper, the *Dearborn Independent*, published "The International Jew," reviving the Czarist forgery "The Protocols of the Elders of Zion." Ford's relationship with the Nazi regime was also financial and operational. Ford-Werke, its German subsidiary in Cologne, was never confiscated, and throughout the Third Reich the plant produced army trucks using slave labor. Ford was among the greatest beneficiaries of the Nazi forced-labor system.

The close relationship between Bill Ford, Jr. and Donald Trump is not political convenience—it is the contemporary expression of the same class alliance that bound Henry Ford to Hitler. This was on full display at the Rouge in January 2026, when Trump and Bill Ford, Jr. toured the factory together, plotting the transition to military production. TJ Sabula, a UAW Local 600 assembly worker, denounced Trump to his face as a "pedophile protector"—a reference to his association with Jeffrey Epstein—and Trump responded with rage, cursing and raising his middle finger as he walked away. Within 24 hours, GoFundMe pages set up by co-workers to defend Sabula, who was suspended without pay, received more than $800,000 from over 30,000 contributors. The outpouring of support forced the company to reinstate Sabula despite the refusal of the union apparatus to lift a finger in his defense.

When police first swept through MAP in January 2025, UAW President Shawn Fain said nothing, and is silent still. Scott Elliott, shop chairman of UAW Local 900, has publicly backed the company's crackdown from day one, distributing a memo in July 2026 supporting the searches. He speaks for Ford management, not for the men and women who work the line.

This is the real face of the UAW apparatus. The bureaucracy that presents itself publicly with "Eat the Rich" slogans is, inside the plants, working hand in glove with Ford's spies and the police to intimidate, discipline, and fire workers. Where Bennett's Service Department used brass knuckles, the UAW bureaucracy today uses contract

© World Socialist Web Site

language, zero-tolerance policies, and collaboration with corporate security and police dogs—modernized methods for the same end: suppressing independent working-class organization. The clubs and brass knuckles are being held in reserve.

This summer, parts workers at Nexteer, Dana, American Axle and other companies fought back to reverse decades of cuts in wages, health benefits and pensions. They rejected sellout tentative contracts pushed by the UAW bureaucrats and voted overwhelmingly to strike. The union officials refused to call strikes except at American Axle in Three Rivers, where they isolated the workers, called off the strike after 10 days, and pushed through a pro-company deal.

UAW President Shawn Fain has entered a de-facto political alliance with Trump, endorsing his tariff program—an instrument of economic nationalism subordinating the working class to the needs of American imperialism as it erupts in world war. This is the political counterpart to the police-state measures inside the plants. A workforce searched at will by dogs and undercover agents is a workforce that can be forced to produce weapons of imperialist war. Ford does not care about worker safety. It cares about suppressing worker resistance.

At the UAW Constitutional Convention in June, Mack Trucks worker and socialist Will Lehman was nominated for UAW president on a program of abolishing the bureaucracy and transferring power to rank-and-file committees. Ford and the other automakers see this militancy and they are afraid: the dogs, the undercover agents, the zero-tolerance firings are the response of a ruling class that knows the working class is stirring and means to crush that movement before it grows.

The UAW apparatus will not defend us. It is part of the apparatus of repression. We must defend ourselves. The Ford Rouge Workers Rank-and-File Committee declared in its February 2025 founding statement: “We are not going back to the conditions of industrial slavery, enforced by Ford’s Servicemen goons, that existed before our fathers and grandfathers built the union.”

We demand:

- Immediate removal of all tracking dogs, K-9 units, and undercover agents from every plant—MAP to DTP, SHAP to KCAP, Chicago to Kentucky Truck
- An immediate end to all warrantless searches
- Disbandment of Ford’s Global Security Task Force
- Reinstatement of every worker fired under these unconstitutional measures, with full back pay
- No collaboration with ICE. An injury to one is an injury to all
- No conversion of auto plants to war production. Conversion instead to socially useful production under democratic working-class control
- Build rank-and-file committees in every plant, independent of the UAW apparatus, to control shop-floor conditions and mobilize the working class

These demands cannot be realized through the union apparatus. They require a new organization of the working class, built from below on the basis of international solidarity within the framework of the International Workers Alliance of Rank-and-File Committees (IWA-RFC).

This fight is not a local grievance. It is a fight against the drive to dictatorship and world war, winnable only through the independent mobilization of the rank and file, united across national boundaries, on a socialist and internationalist program.

Take up the fight! There is no time to lose!

Abolish the union bureaucracy!

Join the Ford Rouge Workers Rank and File Committee!

Build the International Workers Alliance of Rank-and-File Committees!

Workers of the world, unite!

To contact the WSWS and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact

© World Socialist Web Site