

UAW plans new vote on GM Indianapolis wage-cutting contract

A letter to all auto workers

September 15, 2010

On Tuesday, Indianapolis GM stamping plant manager Gary Malkus sent an internal memo to salaried workers saying that UAW Region 3 and International Union representatives told management that a vote will be conducted on the wage cutting deal reached with JD Norman. The memo says the UAW has elected to use a mail-in ballot process and will employ a third party to oversee the ratification vote." Where in the contract does it say this is a legal process?

The reason for a mail-in vote is that the UAW knows that if workers come together we will reject this deal like we have done three times before. The UAW says a "third party" will count the votes. We the workers will have no way of checking the vote results. There is nothing to stop the UAW from stuffing the ballots and saying a majority voted for the deal. They are keeping this from the press and media because they know what will happen. We stopped them last time because of all the attention. We can do it again.

The letter says there will be no membership meetings at the union hall. Instead International UAW representatives will be in the auditorium in the plant on September 20 to "answer questions." The UAW officials want the meeting in the plant so that management can protect them. They don't want another scene, filmed by news crews and spread all over the Internet, of UAW bureaucrats being thrown out of a union meeting. If you look at the send and receive dates there won't be enough time to get all the votes in. And it is our understanding that if your vote is not received it will be counted as a "yes." This is just another way to get their "yes" votes and get what they want out of all of this. If this plant is so bad off it needs to be closed, how come they are breaking all the laws to keep it open?

The UAW is working against us, not for us. They want to protect their six-digit salaries, management perks and golf courses by doing the dirty work for GM and Norman. They are taking our dues. That is a paid contract to protect us, not sell us out and still take our money.

Bob King, Mo Davison and the rest of the UAW tops have nothing but contempt for our democratic rights. Their plan is to force us to vote until we "get it right." If our local tries to defy them, the International can put it into receivership and remove the elected officials. By accepting the pay cut and all other cuts, the only thing we are accomplishing is making them a large bank account while ours go dry.

If they push through this vote we will not accept it as legitimate. The next generation of auto workers has the right not to live in poverty and we will protect that right. No amount of threats will stop us.

We call on all workers who want to fight against this betrayal to join the Rank-and-File Action Committee. We reject the "choice" between a 50cent wage cut and the shutdown of

the plant. We must prepare for a fight against both. For those who have everything they have worked for their whole life at stake, this is legal robbery. For those working for their future this is slave labor. Is this the American way now?

If we are going to fight against this attack, we have to organize independently. We must unite all workers in the plant, young and older, full-time and temporary. We call on all auto workers throughout the country to support our struggle. Copies of this statement will be sent to many GM plants. They have a say-so in this also. It may be them facing the same struggle that we are facing now. Many is a very powerful thing. If we know we are not alone in this we know we are strong.

It is our responsibility to our children and their children not to let this happen. They will know history as it has happened and will know that we had a voice in this to prevent them from living a life of struggle. We must not let them down. This fight was fought years ago, and we as adults are proud of our predecessors for fighting the fight. Now it's our turn to be looked upon the same in our future. History does repeat itself.

Signed,

The Indianapolis GM Stamping Rank-and-File Committee