The Phyllis Schlafly Report

“Social Justice” Demands 4-Day Work Week

By John and Andy Schlafly

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The Democrat takeover of Michigan in the last election is yielding more harmful consequences. The Detroit-based United Auto Workers (UAW) union has a new far-Left, anti-Trump president, who was elected by fewer than 500 votes in the runoff after losing the first ballot.

This new UAW President Shawn Fain has unleashed a first-ever strike against all three Michigan automakers. While denying that he is wrecking the economy, Fain declared last week that “the truth is we are going to wreck the billionaire economy,” and he will “go the distance to win economic and social justice at the Big Three.”

Fain’s demands on the Detroit Three would double their labor expenses, which are already far higher than at Tesla and other auto manufacturers. About half of cars sold in the U.S. are assembled at foreign-owned plants whose American workers have consistently rejected the UAW’s attempts to organize and represent them.

A central demand by the militant new UAW leadership is to shrink to a 4-day work week while insisting on full 5-day pay. This would harm the competitiveness of the Detroit automakers, and set the precedent for a broad reduction in other services to the American public, such as reduced mail delivery.

Last month this radical new UAW president Shawn Fain declared that “billionaires in my opinion don’t have a right to exist. The very existence of billionaires shows us that we have an economy that is working for the benefit of the few, and not the many.”

“The auto workers are being sold down the river by their leadership,” President Trump said before the strike that President Biden failed to avert. The UAW leadership should be demanding an end to Biden’s electric car mandates and subsidies, which are wrecking jobs at Detroit automakers.

On September 27 Trump will address union workers rather than participate in a second Republican debate against rivals who have no chance of winning. Trump has vowed to enact a “complete and total repeal of Democrats’ catastrophic EV mandate,” referring to electric vehicles, on Trump’s first day back in office, to save Michigan and American jobs.

One-third of U.S. auto workers voted for Trump in 2016 and 2020. But instead of representing his politically divided membership, Fain has lashed out against Trump and thereby given away any political leverage the UAW might have had with Biden.

The Wall Street Journal editorial board observed on Friday that "the underlying cause of the auto walkout is the Biden Administration's forced electric-vehicle transition." Democrats cannot broker an end to the strike unless they stop crippling the Detroit auto industry with demands for electric cars that use components from China.

Democrats are mandating that electric vehicles become two-thirds of the Detroit automakers' sales by 2032, even though they are less than 3% today. The car companies' profits that liberals cite in this strike are being plowed back into money-losing electric car development that few genuinely want.

Disappearing jobs in Michigan and the Midwest would result from the EV mandate that favors Tesla's manufacturing with cheaper labor. Ignoring this, the UAW's headquarters in Detroit is called "Solidarity House" while their new leader is a throwback to prior strike waves that destroyed Motown as the engine of America's prosperity.

This UAW strike is music to the ears of far-Left Senator Bernie Sanders (I-VT), who quickly piled on by deploring "the outrageous level of corporate greed." His comrade in the U.S. Senate, the foul-mouthed John Fetterman (D-PA), joined picketing strikers.

CNN reports that union members, once uniformly Democrat in voting, have increasingly shifted to vote Republican. Impervious to this, Fain warned prior to the strike that "either you stand for a billionaire class where everybody else gets left behind, or you stand for the working class, the working-class people vote."

It is not the billionaire class that is choking off growth in auto workers' wages, but the war against the traditional car that is being waged by liberals in California and the Biden administration. California has banned sales of Detroit's traditional cars beginning in 2035, and California recently sued the oil producing companies on which cheap gasoline depends.

One study by the University of Michigan estimated that a four-week strike against the Big Three – General Motors, Ford, and Stellantis (formerly Chrysler) – would cause a loss of 161,000 jobs in Michigan itself. Already this strike involves 13,000 workers, with ripple effects harming far more, and before long this work stoppage could mushroom to harm hundreds of thousands of families primarily in the Midwest.

The future for American workers is Trump's consistently strong stance against losing automobile jobs to China and against subsidizing electric cars that Detroit cannot afford to make. Rather than be left behind due to their outdated class warfare rhetoric, the UAW leaders should catch a ride with Trump to attain employment growth with good-paying manufacturing jobs.

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