

Dana Corp. announces closure of auto parts plant in Lima, Ohio, destroying 280 jobs

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Autoworkers: Speak out against the layoffs by filling out the form below. All submissions will be kept anonymous.

Auto parts maker Dana Corporation has announced it will close its plant in Lima, Ohio, by the end of 2025. The plant has stood for over five decades, and its closure will result in the loss of 280 jobs.

The planned closure is only the latest in a massive assault on jobs across the auto industry. Last month, Stellantis (formerly Fiat Chrysler) announced nearly 2,500 layoffs at its Warren Truck Assembly Plant near Detroit, raising the danger of the factory's eventual closure. Thousands of autoworkers have already lost their jobs over the course of the year in the United States.

But tens of thousands of layoffs have been announced across the world, including 25,000 potential layoffs at Fiat plants and associated parts suppliers in Italy, and the closure of a Volkswagen plant in Belgium. Over the next several years, hundreds of thousands of jobs are on the chopping block as the global industry shifts rapidly towards electric vehicles, which are less labor-intensive to build.

The Dana plant supplies the Ford Lima Engine plant, where the majority of its 1,300 workers are hourly production workers. This also raises questions about the future of the engine plant, whose current product, like all plants making gas engines, may soon become obsolete.

The closure of the Dana plant has an added significance given the role of Dana workers in the rebellion against the pro-corporate union bureaucrats. In 2021, Dana workers faced off against officials at the United Auto Workers and United Steelworkers, forming a rank-and-file committee to fight a sellout contract. That year saw other pivotal battles at John

Deere and Volvo Trucks, where workers also organized independently to reject sellout deals.

Last year, Dana workers at the nearby facility in Toledo, Ohio, organized against mass firings being implemented with the support of the UAW bureaucracy. And the following May, workers in Pottstown formed a rank-and-file committee to fight against intolerable working conditions.

The Lima plant is not the only Dana facility targeted for closure. Last year, the company announced plans to shutter its facility in St. Claire, Michigan, affecting more than 200 jobs. According to records with the state government, the closure was scheduled to have been largely completed through July 31 of this year.

Once again, the pro-corporate union bureaucrats have effectively backed the cuts. Sounding like an HR rep, UAW Local 2075 Recording Secretary Britt Munson sent links to job sites for workers being laid off from Dana. As of this writing, the UAW has not presented any statement in opposition to the plant closure.

Nor should workers expect any action, because the UAW bureaucrats are a key part of the attack on jobs. The announcement in Lima came as the UAW forced striking workers at the Dakkota parts plant in Chicago to vote a fifth consecutive time on a contract they already rejected. Those workers formed a rank-and-file committee to fight union sabotage and appealed for support from Ford workers at Chicago Assembly, which the Dakkota plant supplies, urging them not to handle scab parts.

Dana workers took to social media in opposition to the layoffs. "So much for the Union," one quipped. Another, laying the blame also on pro-corporate Democrats, said: "Considering the Union 'supports blue no matter who' and created 3 pay scales back in 2006, I blame them and greedy corporate executives!"

Other workers pointed to the Biden administration's role. "They're pushing these electric vehicles. They talk about all the jobs it will create and forget about the one it will eliminate. Electric cars don't have driveshafts."

Said a Dana worker from the plant in St. Clair, Michigan: "We got this announcement in October of last year. They're sending most of our work to Apodaca, Mexico. It's a giant, mostly empty plant. Our stuff doesn't even fill half of it. I'd expect more work to be moved into that plant, who knows what they'll send?"

A Lima worker described terrible conditions: "I live paycheck by paycheck and have meds that cost me \$150-200 without insurance. And to top it off, I need all four wisdom teeth pulled and may have a possible rotator cuff tear again. I need that insurance!"

As the WSWS warned in 2023, "There can be no 'just transition' to EVs under capitalism." These and other new technologies, which could and should be used to ease the burden of life, are instead used to ramp up exploitation by private corporations.

Last Sunday's online meeting titled, "For global action to defend jobs at Warren Truck and around the world," sponsored by the International Workers Alliance of Rank-and-File Committees (IWA-RFC), discussed a strategy to fight against the Warren Truck layoffs and the Dakkota parts workers' strike.

Will Lehman, a socialist and Mack Trucks worker who ran for UAW president against Shawn Fain, explained how the transnational corporations "scour the globe for the most exploitable sources of labor." He continued. "And in each country they use the national trade unions to pit workers against each other" by saying "that jobs can only be secured on the basis of accepting higher exploitation than workers in other countries."

At the meeting, a Flint Truck worker called on workers to take matters into their own hands through the formation of a global movement, independent of the union bureaucracy and the corporate parties. "The company and UAW have a strategic plan, which they are following through with. The auto companies communicate with their management across the world. We need to communicate with our fellow autoworkers and other working class laborers around the world, no matter what country, language, skin color or job, so we

have a plan to fight back, instead of making one up as the situation unfolds."



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