

The LOCAL NEWS

FORD LIVONIA TRANSMISSION and CHASSIS, LOCAL 182

A new transmission line is planned for early 1972 to produce transmissions for Ford's small cars. According to the company, all workers who were laid off will be called back by the end of the year, and additional workers will be hired when the installation of the necessary machinery and equipment is completed.

For the past several months production schedules have been set high with almost all departments working ten hour days, and many working six and seven day weeks.

On top of this, the transmission lines were speeded up from 126/hour to 137/hour about a month ago, making an output of 1370 transmissions per ten hour day (Dept. 90 has been on ten hour days for several months) for each line, and a total daily output of 3,740.

While all this overtime was being worked, many workers with less than one year seniority have been laid off. Because they lack the seniority to qualify for Supplemental Unemployment Benefits, these workers are forced to try to support their families on \$50 - \$60 a week, a trick which cannot be done. How can the company justify laying these men off and forcing the rest of us to wear ourselves out working so much overtime? Ford operates for profits, and more money is Ford's justification for this policy. But why has the UAW allowed Ford to get away with such an unfair practice - one that brings a hardship on its members? It is because at Local 182 the union will not challenge the company's total authority inside the plant.

If the union would decree that not one hour of overtime will be worked as long as there are other workers laid off, this practice would cease. Ford Livonia Transmission and Chassis is not the only place this goes on, it is standard practice for the Big Three and the UAW should be fighting it everywhere it occurs.

FORD ROUGE, LOCAL 600

Over 3,200 workers at the Dearborn Assembly plant were laid off Monday, Nov. 29, 1971, and were told to report back to work on Monday, Dec. 6, 1971. Unannounced lay offs have occurred at the Dearborn Stamping plant, where sources in the Labor Relations office have said that over 55 workers were laid off Monday, Nov. 29, 1971, and another 250 workers were laid off Friday, Nov. 26, 1971. It is still unclear as to how long Stamping plant employees will be out of work.

Production increases which began last August have resulted in enormous stockpiling of parts throughout the plant, making it necessary for some workers to be sent home now because of no work. Unsafe working conditions in Dept. 6883, the slippery floor near the hi-lo servicing area, continue to go uncorrected.

Increased pressure is placed on the worker to perform at higher levels by foremen such as Wilson Robinson, Dept. 6883. Foremen Robinson has, on several occasions, attempted to write-up workers for alleged slow-downs. General Foremen Kenny Baker threatened a number of part-time help, with the loss of their jobs, if "they don't work the way I want them to work." Part-time help are not protected by the Union, and are hired to combat absenteeism. In the midst of the above events, Ford Motor Co. announced plans to build a new assembly plant in Saigon, Vietnam.

DODGE MAIN, LOCAL 3

The annual pre-holiday lay offs, guaranteeing all Local 3 members a merry Christmas, have begun. Although many departments are already short handed, Chrysler still insists upon denying workers the much heralded six days paid holiday period. If there is truth in the rumors, backed by Popular Science magazine (November 1971) that the Dodge Colt will be produced at Hamtramck early next year, then that would probably insure an early call back, but only after the company has already been allowed to renege on a large sum of money, supposedly guaranteed by the contract.

The equity raises initiated last week in several classifications have also turned out to be less than advertised - some of these workers will be forced to take a cut in pay. Utility men, who were paid ten cents over the highest classification served, were supposed to have this increased to twenty cents. Chrysler side stepped this by changing job descriptions to have these workers serve only assemblers instead of relief and repair as has been the practice in the past.

This happened in spite of the fact that job descriptions are negotiated in the Local agreement and are not supposed to be changed in mid-contract.



photo by Chabor-King

Safety is a sign outside Chrysler plants. Faulty machines, speedup and poor ventilation reign inside.



Citizens Force Hearing on Taxes

Downtown Detroit is filled with agencies and offices where the interlocking between corporate power and government power become clear. Take the case of Chrysler Corporation. In 1967 Chrysler was granted a \$3,221,377 tax exemption from the Michigan State Tax Commission. The exemption was granted for the installation of equipment at the Huber Foundry. The purpose of the equipment was to be the control of air pollution in the surrounding community.

On Dec. 9, citizens of the Huber area attempted to testify before the State Tax Commission Chairman, Mr. Purnell, and Commissioner Clark. After having gone through months of effort to bring about a hearing to recall the Chrysler tax exemption, Detroit citizens found themselves manipulated and abused by the combination of grey-suited Chrysler attorneys and brown-suited government officials.

Citizens came to testify about the health and sanitation conditions they faced because of Chrysler Pollution in the area surrounding the Huber Foundry.

Ms. Barbara Fedorko brought a log of all the

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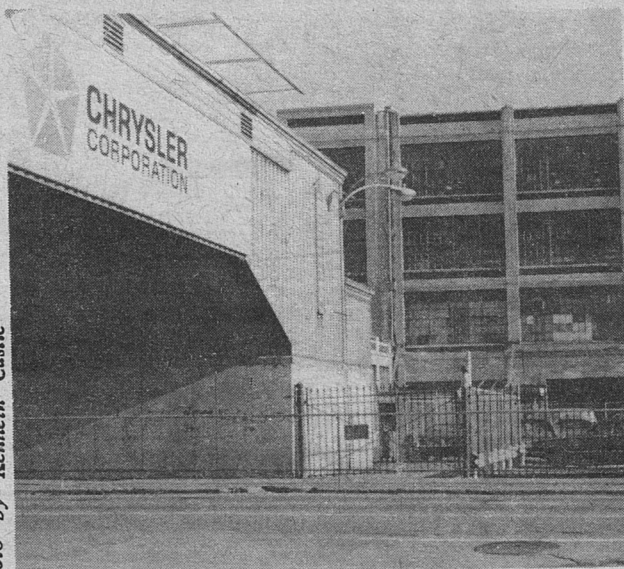


Photo by Kenneth Castle

Guess What?

Answer: Another Chrysler plant.

DETROIT FOOTNOTES

In January President Nixon appointed Grosse-Pointe attorney David W. Kendall as chairman of the Presidential panel charged with organizing the National Railroad Passenger Corporation - the government agency to develop rail passenger service. Kendall owns 19,598 shares of stock in Chrysler Corporation (worth about \$550,000). Is Mr. Kendall truly interested in "serving" the American people and providing competition for automobiles?

The Metropolitan Detroit Citizens Development Authority (MDCDA), which has handled or overseen most urban renewal programs in Detroit since 1966, is being dismantled due to a financial crisis in the organization. A New Detroit study cited "bad management" as the reason for MDCDA's crisis (and the result that a large number of redevelopment projects in Detroit have been left unfinished). It is interesting that poor management can be cited for an organization that has been run tightly by directors and officers such as Walker Cisler (Chairman of the Board of Detroit Edison and Fruehauf), Raymond Perring (Chairman of Detroit Bank and Trust), Ray Eppert (Director of Burroughs, Michigan Consolidated Gas and Michigan Bell), Ralph McElvenny (President of Michigan Gas), Henry Ford II, Joseph L. Hudson, Jr., and Max Fisher (Director of Manufacturers National Bank and Fruehauf).

Donald Parsons, Birmingham wheeler-dealer (and also a member of a Philadelphia first-line family), made the news recently when his financial empire collapsed. When it all was over, Parsons lost control of the Bank of the Commonwealth to Chase Manhattan Bank. But some people DO get their "come uppance" - Parsons was recently denied membership in the exclusive Bloomfield Hills Country Club because he was too much of a "maverick." Poor Donald - he had to be satisfied with membership in the Birmingham Athletic Club instead.

DuPont is not just a name on a paint can. The DuPont family not only controls DuPont Chemicals and Remington Arms (which makes the rifles used by infantrymen in Vietnam), but also holds a controlling bloc of stock in GM, which in turn controls the National Bank of Detroit. When the federal government thought such arrangements might be a bit blatant even for our monopolistic economy, they asked that DuPont sell their shares in GM. DuPont sold the shares - to Cristiana Securities Corporation, a holding company owned by the DuPonts! When this "sale" netted a handsome profit for the DuPonts, the family's lawyer, Clark Clifford (who later became President Johnson's Secretary of Defense), pushed a bill through Congress exempting the DuPonts from paying taxes on the sale.

by Mary Worth and Rex Morgan



photo by Chabot-King

Two Detroiters Take a Look At Chrysler

Interviews with Barbara Fedorko

From outside...

Ms. Barbara Fedorko has lived 37 years on Marjorie Street within a block of the Huber Foundry. She has been actively involved in fighting the foundry's pollution - dirt, noise and fumes - since the Fall of 1966 when the foundry opened. Here she speaks not just as an individual but as a representative of the community.

Q: What was your feeling about the neighborhood before the foundry was built?

Ms. Fedorko: It was a very lovely area. We moved here as we were near the schools and bus lines. The area where the foundry now stands was an athletic field which made it very nice for our children. I have observed aggravating conditions almost daily since the foundry opened in 1966.

Q: Did Chrysler tell you they were going to build the foundry? How did you feel about it?

Ms. Fedorko: The people didn't like it very well, but we were assured at a meeting in the Fall of 1966 how nice it was going to be. They unrolled the plans and the photos all across the stage and showed us the landscaping and how beautiful it would be. When this foundry opened, we more or less had expected a little bit of something because foundries aren't clean as a rule. However, in two or three weeks, all over we noticed this dirt on the porches. The dirt kept coming out.

I will tell you a remark that Ed Williams (of Chrysler's Community Relations Department) made in this 1965 meeting. He said the air would be cleaner and purer than the air we were breathing at that time.

Q: What was the first reaction after complaining to Chrysler?

Ms. Fedorko: They just kept stalling us off. At this meeting in December 1967, one of their engineers said they could not close the plant down on account of these malfunctions, that production must go on. It was the only plant producing and manufacturing this block for the engines and they could not under any circumstances close the plant.

Q: What did you think about that?

Ms. Fedorko: You would think that people's health is more important; people's health has been affected. Respiratory conditions are increasing daily. People are moving out. After five years we're still suffering. The smoke isn't as bad from the stacks since last June when they had that malfunction for 11 days. We lived in fear. We didn't know whether or not we were going to survive until morning because there were sparks flying out of the stacks.

Q: Do you feel that local officials have done their jobs properly - Wayne County Air Pollution Control Division, the mayor, anybody?

Ms. Fedorko: They come out here and keep telling us they're trying but it doesn't appear that way. They keep telling us that as for the odors there is no remedy. How are we to live here? These obnoxious odors are sickening and you get short of breath even in your own home. Where are we to go?

Q: One of your neighbors was telling me that Mort Sterling (of Air Pollution Control) came out here checking the neighborhood driving a Chrysler. Is that true?

Ms. Fedorko: Yes. I heard that he was on the radio yesterday saying the Huber Foundry is supposed to be 85 to 90 per cent pollution free.

Q: What do you think about that?

Ms. Fedorko: They've got a long way to go.

Q: Can you tell me about the demonstration at the Huber Foundry?

Ms. Fedorko: I think it was April 22, 1971. We had something like 200 people.

Q: What was the workers' response?

Ms. Fedorko: They waved to us from the foundry. Even when we passed out the bumper stickers a year ago, they asked for them. They said, "You're suffering outside and we're suffering inside, and we could use those too." I actually saw the bumper stickers in their parking lot on employees' cars. The women in the neighborhood passed them out and they had them on their homes. It said: "Chrysler Pollutes Our Homes, Don't Buy Chrysler."

Q: Is it true that Chrysler management is trying to say that the reason the area is getting bad is that black people are moving in?

Ms. Fedorko: Chrysler is saying that we just want to get enough money out of the corporation to be able to move away from the black neighbors. This is not correct, because the black neighbors can't take this kind of living in this area either. They keep moving out; maybe they will live here a year and go. So what difference does it make? Black or white or what? This type of living isn't good for anybody. It isn't fit for any race or color or creed to live in.

Q: It's been suggested that you start another petition drive to the mayor. What's he going to do about it?

Ms. Fedorko: That's the thing - what is he going to do about it? There are laws alright, but by the same token the foundry doesn't even have a permit to operate. They allow them to build a plant, and now they won't issue them a permit. I can't understand it.

Q: Can't Chrysler keep stretching out court actions in the damage suit and put the burden of work on the people?

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"The Huber Foundry is supposed to be 85 to 90 per cent pollution free. They've got a long way to go."



Photo by Chabot and King

photo by Chabot-King

Detroiters a Look Chrysler

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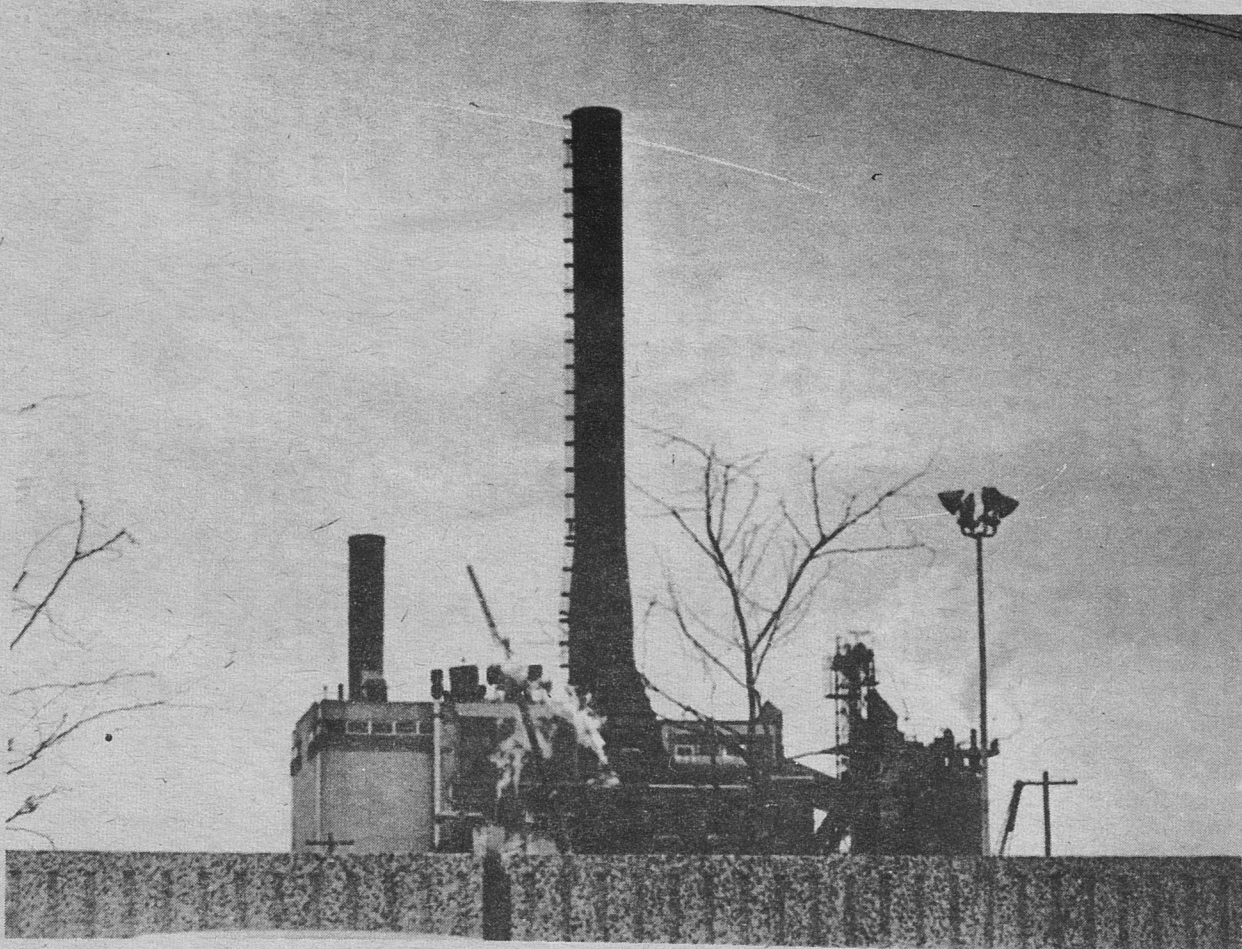
Photo by Chabot and King



photo by Chabot-King

"It's the struggle of
little people everywhere
— bucking big
business and trying to
cut into the profit
dollar."

Photo by Kenneth Castle



...and inside

The following is an interview with Jordan U. Sims, candidate for office of president in the upcoming Local 961 runoff elections at Chrysler's Eldon Avenue Gear and Axle plant. During the last 20 years he has achieved an outstanding reputation on the shop floor, fighting for the rights of his worker-constituents. His persistence, particularly as chief committeeman, has led to an attempt by Chrysler to eliminate this militant unionist, later discharged in May, 1970. In spite of this, he has maintained a successful struggle to promote militant unionism within the Eldon plant.

Q: Do you think air pollution is a problem for workers at Chrysler?

Sims: Yes, but there is a distinct difference between outside and inside air. The workers feel that a person outside definitely has better conditions than those inside the plant. They are exposed to a greater volume - you get five cubic feet of gas and you are stuck into a four cubic foot area. This is the way the worker feels about polluted air because within his factory he is in a container. This container is more confined than the world at large.

The intensity varies inside the plant, but there is a certain type of weather where everything seems to be pushed down more. You can tell this inside the plant because the air doesn't move and all the smoke, vapors and gases just sit right there and hang in the air. It is like trying to look through a London fog.

This has been true in the last three or four years in the Eldon plant and the Eldon plant is not a foundry. It is a machine and assembly plant and they are supposed to have blowers out there. We fought like hell to get blowers, but they don't have a maintenance program on them.

Q: Why is there no maintenance program?

Sims: It costs too much money. After all they can't afford to hire skilled tradesmen to just walk around there and keep up something that is going to benefit workers. This won't add to the productivity as far as the company is concerned. They figure that these people have worked in this kind of atmosphere under these kind of conditions and have made production anyway.

They say that labor costs are going up and they contend this justifies raising the prices on the cars because it costs more to make them. I know it's a lie just like they do.

If a machine catches on fire and there is smoke billowing all over the department, as soon as that fire is out you go back to work because they feel you are in no immediate physical danger. In other words, the machine isn't going to blow up and kill you on the spot. You

have to be able to prove that is going to happen before they will pull you out - but you can't leave until it does happen most of the time - you stay right there and you work.

Once last summer it got so hot in one department where they fabricate the housings, a big forging process where the fire and smoke billow all the time, that a great amount of oil had condensed on the roof - it caught on fire - but do you think they didn't keep them people working?

As long as there are no flames licking at your feet you have no justifiable reason to leave your job, because they have got the situation under control. They'll call the fire department, but to hell with the smoke - that will dissipate after awhile - we've got to get this production out. That is the Chrysler attitude, and I believe that it is also the basic union attitude in many high places.

Q: What does the union do?

Sims: Well the UAW is now big enough to be recognized as part of the establishment, a real functioning part of the establishment. They have great political and financial power and can wield a great deal of influence when they choose to. If the UAW chooses not to represent their people inside the plant in the areas of ecology and air pollution, what kind of political leverage do you expect them to exercise outside of that particular area?

Q: The UAW constitution sets up the CAP (Community Action Program) which is to specifically help the workers in their community.

Sims: That's good.

Q: Why aren't they doing it?

Sims: What the UAW president says is very seldom heard or realized in any real sense at the base level. . . the level where the workers are.

How often has Woodcock toured the plant? How often does he find out what his workers, his constituents, think?

I'm not sure about Woodcock's specific history. I know it is very seldom when top officials will come in even on critical negotiations. About the only time you will see the UAW really taking a firm position, is when you threaten to close down a corporation. When you threaten to strike about welfare or health conditions or anything else they have no interest.

They are only concerned when you threaten to violate that damn contract and close that plant without their permission; then they'll come out in force. You can see the Woodcocks, the Grayhouses, the Merrellis and all the rest of the bureaucrats very upset. It makes you

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