

Here is a creative approach to protesting GM's abuse of the controversial H1-B Visa program that was apparently developed by a group of GM employees. I applaud their activism. Information about a relevant HBO documentary regarding the closing of the GM Moraine, Ohio assembly plant that aired last night, "The Last Truck" follows.

http://pr-usa.net/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=260772&Itemid=31

PR-USA.net

An Open letter To Fritz Henderson - No More H-1B Visas at GM

Tuesday, 08 September 2009

This is an open letter to Mr. Fritz Henderson:

General Motors continues to retain H-1B Employees while US Citizens are getting laid off. H-1B employees are those who are here on a temporary work visa.

Approximately 4000 white-collared employees will lose their jobs by October 2009.

We are a group of technology workers who are also US citizens and are all unemployed due to issues faced by US automakers.

In spite of years of experience working in the information technology field, we are unable to find suitable positions. It is unfair then for GM and other companies to retain H-1B workers when US citizens cannot find jobs.

There is no job out there today that a US citizen cannot be trained to do. Mr. Fritz Henderson, we request you to review your employee files and determine why an H-1B employee is currently employed at GM when similarly or more experienced US Citizen workers are available in the market place.

We urge you to do the morally right thing for America and to replace your H-1B employees with US citizens or Green Card holders. This is an appeal that is being sent out to all the media so that appropriate attention is received.

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I watched the Labor Day **HBO documentary "The Last Truck" About GM** last night - and the above message to GM management complements the message from the HBO documentary (which I hope will eventually be offered for sale as a DVD.) The HBO website has some clips. Gene A. Nelson, Ph.D. Arlington, VA (214) 455 - 8065

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/09/06/AR2009090601994.html>

By Hank Stuever
Washington Post Staff Writer
Monday, September 7, 2009

The General Motors truck assembly plant in Moraine, Ohio, outside Dayton, closed a couple of days before Christmas last year, leaving 2,200 workers and 200 managers without jobs. By one calculation in the morose but absorbing documentary "The Last Truck," airing Monday night on HBO, each lost job at the plant caused the loss of five to seven more jobs nearby.

Which, of course, rippled outward to us all. In the days leading up to the shutdown, Paul "Popeye" Hurst, a 53-year-old toolmaker with a ZZ Top beard, drives around the plant's perimeter, forlornly noting the acres of parking lots filled with unsold SUVs: "Makes me sad to see all these vehicles sittin' here."

It's a striking sight, the end of several dreams at once, some more obvious than others. It's like an economic snuff film. Not just the plant dies; American notions of giant, expensive cars for all, endless oil, rural sprawl, etc., are now in doubt. "The Last Truck" gently visits these themes, following the Moraine shutdown to the point where the final vehicle rolls off the line. Ohio filmmakers Steven Bognar and Julia Reichert have given their tightly edited project a purposeful spareness, a gloom of recession fatigue.

But it's a gripping bit of microcosm. Many of the interviews are conducted in the plant parking lot, workers talking as they sit in their cars with the windows down, arriving for their shifts or leaving. There's a lot of talk about how America doesn't make anything anymore. (Which is not entirely true; we do still make HBO, but you get the point.)

We meet a handful of other employees more intimately, in their favorite bar or at their homes. Everything is painfully real -- especially Ohio itself in the dully depressing December light -- and absolutely mesmerizing. The autoworkers seen here are far from the stereotype of the entitled union crank. Like all autoworkers, they set us straight on the difficulty of factory labor and correct our math on what they actually take home in pay. They are gentle, given to happiness, easy to cry, and completely unsure of their futures. There's a lot of hugging on the factory floor, even before the last truck arrives.

Many of them are obviously in love with what is essentially a massive square building the size of the Pentagon. They arrive on their penultimate day to take home their tools and tool benches, which GM allowed them to keep (to build what now?). They are each given an aerial photo of

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the plant as a going-away present. At the final hour, as the last SUV makes its way to the end, the finished workers swell together and say their goodbyes. It felt "like this big, giant dragon [was] laying down," one worker notes, wiping her tears, "and taking its last breath."

Bognar and Reichert's narrative fails in only spot, at the end, not answering a question that seems answerable with a VIN and a dogged reporter: Where is the "last truck" now? Did anyone buy it?

The Last Truck: Closing of a GM Plant (45 minutes) airs Monday at 9 p.m. on HBO.

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Dr_Gene_Nelson wrote:

At least one decent Labor Day documentary on TV. It is going to be hard for the middle class to purchase goods or services if the U.S. does not make things any more.

While the propagandists have attempted to demonize advocates of protectionism, this nation's economic strength is worth protecting, IMO.

9/7/2009 11:32:12 PM

<http://www.facebook.com/thelasttruck?v=wall#/thelasttruck?v=info&viewas=1154814698>

Release Date:September 7, 2009

Studio:HBO Documentary Films

Detailed Info Website:<http://hbo.com/documentaryseries>

Directed By:Steve Bognar & Julia Reichert

Produced By:Steve Bognar & Julia Reichert

Plot Outline:This 40-minute documentary focuses on the workers of the General Motors Assembly Plant in Moraine, Ohio – which opened in 1981, and churned out an average of 280,000 small trucks and SUVs a year – from the announcement a year ago that the Plant will be closing, to its last day on December 23, 2008, just two days before Christmas. While the workers are shocked that they will be losing their jobs, we quickly see they are also losing much more: the pride they share in their work, the camaraderie built through the years, and the shared concerns about what their collective futures will hold. As the major industry in Moraine closes its doors for good, many see its demise as an indication of the changing American manufacturing landscape, which seems to be dying as products are increasingly being made elsewhere. The film offers a snapshot of a moment in America where we may be seeing the end of the blue-collar middle class.

http://www.daytondailynews.com/blogs/content/shared-gen/blogs/dayton/opinion/entries/2009/08/21/editorial_last_truck_captures.html

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Editorial: ‘Last Truck’ captures a story for our time

By [the Dayton Daily News](#) | Friday, August 21, 2009, 11:47 AM

“GM’s messed up. We were one of the best plants.” A Moraine assembly plant worker, in “The Last Truck: Closing of a GM Plant.”

It was a remarkable scene at the Schuster Performing Arts Center on Wednesday night, Aug. 19. Not exactly a celebration, to be sure. But not exactly a wake either. But some of both.

The event was the premiere of the movie, “The Last Truck: Closing of a GM Plant,” about the last days of the last real General Motors plant in metropolitan Dayton, as seen through the eyes of workers losing their jobs.

The movie was made by Dayton’s distinguished documentarians Julia Reichert and Steve Bognar. It was produced with HBO and will be shown on that network starting, appropriately enough, Labor Day. The workers and their families constituted most of the movie-goers in the packed house.

There were lots of tears and lots of laugh; lots of bad feeling and lots of good. What’s bad here hardly has to be noted though the movie’s documentation of it in dramatic terms is an experience worth having for anybody. It is most certainly worth having for any resident of this old car town, for anybody who wants to understand the place and its history.

By the thousands, good people have lost their livelihoods and their work families, their homes away from home. Saddest of all, perhaps, they have lost a good part of their confidence in the American dream.

Many were dedicated workers with physically demanding jobs that paid decently but not as extravagantly as legend has it. (Figure \$50,000 for a middle-aged person). They were full of pride in the jobs they did, fully aware of the importance of the workmanship necessary to turn out a safe family vehicle.

They are mainly high school graduates. They know that generations coming after them continue to include many people with similar educations, and that those people do not have the same shot at the good life as earlier counterparts.

The situation for these former workers at the Moraine assembly plant is even worse than it might have seemed during the making of the movie in 2008. At that time, the Dayton job market was already bad. But that was before the national collapse into the most severe recession in the lives of most Americans.

So what could possibly have been good about the evening? The fact that this story has been told well and respectfully and will be seen by millions of Americans.

Ultimately, it’s not just a story about Dayton. The same story has played out all across the

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country. That, surely, is why HBO was interested.

Often in its history, Dayton has served as a sort of symbol of what's happening in the country as a whole. For better and for worse.

So it was good to have a story about Daytonians told by Daytonians; good that Wright State University has the film studies program out of which the project grew; good that HBO has now come to Dayton twice this year for premieres, the other being for "They Killed Sister Dorothy."

"The Last Truck" is not the last word to be said about the GM workers. It's about loss, not about the recovering and adapting and reinventing that must follow.

The movie-makers spare us the usual talking-head experts about how people cope with loss or should cope. They spare us judgments about individual workers and debates about whose fault it all is (though they capture some workers' defensiveness on that score and some hard feelings toward management).

They tell what it's like to be caught up in economic forces beyond one's control, a story for our time.