

your plant does?

Green: Our plant is a major production source for metal-stamping parts to do with General Motors. We have parts on just about every vehicle that General Motors makes. . . . There's 2,250 hourly folks, approximately; 300 salary folks along with engineers. . . . We do floor plans, doors, roofs, body side outers, and many, many internal parts. We've got quite a capability of producing dies there. It is General Motors' number one die-build source. We build, at our plant, approximately 40% of the General Motors North American dies that they build.

EIR: And now this plant is part of the restructuring that General Motors has announced?

Green: Market share's been shrinking. They want to align manpower capacity: At the end of November, they had mentioned about 12 plants closing in North America. Therefore, it affects our die-build numbers, our parts producing numbers at our plant. We have an Oklahoma plant that's closing, effective Feb. 20, 2006. We stopped shipping parts to them, back Feb. 6. That's about 15% of our volume in our plant, so it's a very significant thing. There's going to be parts that we're not producing, layoffs because of it, and these other 11 plants haven't even shut down yet. So, it's going to be a trickle-down, through everybody. They align manpower with parts moving out, so everybody'll be hit. . . .

When you mention infrastructure, there's a lot of things that could be done, and as a country, I hope we're heading that way, because there is a potential. And I see the plans right now, to reduce the die-making industry—just in General Motors; and I know Ford and Chrysler are all looking at the same thing—of reducing that industry by about 40% of [its workforce]. So, there is going to be an awful lot of knowledge, and a lot of people potentially sitting out there, that could be doing something constructive like that.

Just in the small town I live in, there's areas that bridges have been closed, because of things looking to fall down. I mean, we've been running this country on such a slim budget and not reinvesting in infrastructure, it is scary. Somebody needs to take charge, and I believe who we have in there right now, is *not* doing the job! And somewhere there's got to be starting putting the horse before the cart, and let's have a future in America. Because, right now, it's living day to day.

And, I think as far as infrastructure goes, the die-making base, or the plastic injection molding base, they're going to be critical in that, and they're going to have to—or, we're going to be producing stuff that we need in this country over in China, or over in India, and having it shipped over here. And I'm not looking for isolationism. I know it's a computer age right now, where we can hit a button and send information back and forth to places. But, there's got to be a line somewhere, that once we pass, we're giving up stuff that we can't return.

And, I'm hoping it's not in the next five years: I've got three young kids. I want to see that they're still here in America, and that we're still on somewhat of a manufacturing base here in America.

Interview: Joe Joseph

'There's No Reason for These Plants To Close'

Joe Joseph, president of UAW Local 1970 in Dearborn, Michigan, represents Body Cad Design workers.



Joseph: I've worked for Ford Motor Co. for 40 years. And I've seen it go from designing on boards that are like 16 feet long on Mylar material, to three different updates in the computers that we use to design. There's been a lot of advancement and changes in the way we do our business. . . .

My feeling is that there's no reason for these plants to close, which was caused by this free trade. The American automobile industry has been left behind, and overshadowed by the foreign vehicles that are coming in. I think that something should be done about it. We have the facilities, we have the plants to manufacture parts. We have the design capability to design such items as mass transit, a high-speed rail system, which we'd be capable of designing, and also manufacturing in those plants which are becoming idle and may be sold—which would create jobs, for us, for suppliers. Just a numerous amount of jobs associated with the industry. . . .

EIR: Where do you think the future is, in the automobile industry? Do you see any possibility for diversification of the industry?

Joseph: Yes, I do. I see an open door there, to be able to diversity. We've got a lot of foreign car manufacturers coming into this country—actually it's increasing day by day. And, we all can't survive, I mean, there's just so many vehicles that you can sell. But, I think we need to switch, by the help of the government—the Democrats most certainly need to do something to help us out to diversify, by doing things such as that mass-transit railway system, and other things, that can be funded by the government, to help create more jobs and get the economy back on its feet. And without that, I think we're going to be lost!