

Labor
3-year
contract
asked

Associated Press
DETROIT — The United Auto Workers Union selected Ford Motor Co. Tuesday as its strike target for forging an auto industry pattern settlement on new three-year contracts this fall.

In announcing the target, UAW President Leonard Woodcock said the nation's No. 2 automaker was tagged primarily because it is Ford's "turn" — the company was last chosen in 1967.

The union chief also said he saw no "insurmountable" problems that would block a settlement with the company when the current three-year accord expires at midnight Sept. 14.

Woodcock said he would begin joining negotiations at Ford on a regular basis Wednesday. Talks with

all companies started in mid-July. Under the UAW's "target" strategy, bargaining at other companies virtually ceases until a settlement is reached with the selected firm. If there is a strike, the other companies would continue uninterrupted production.

In 1967, the union reached a settlement with Ford following a 66-day strike. General Motors, the target in 1970, was struck for 67 days, and Chrysler, picked in the last triennial round of contract talks, was shut down in 1973 by a nine-day walkout.

Asked if the UAW would avert a nationwide strike this fall for the first time in a dozen years, Woodcock responded, "We certainly can. There is nothing insurmountable, no complicated or technical problems standing in the way, and we certainly are

going to do everything we possibly can to conclude a settlement on both sides of the table before the 14th."

Ford's top negotiator said he, too, is confident of averting a fall walkout. Labor Vice President Sidney F. McKenna said his company always bargains with the UAW on the assumption it will be the target.

The UAW, which represents 160,000 U.S. hourly workers at Ford, expects to have a record \$175 million in its strike fund when the current agreement expires, enough to sustain a four-month walkout against the company.

Industrywide contracts covering 680,000 workers at the Big Three companies and American Motors Corp. all expire in mid-September.

Rubber
The United Rubber Workers and

Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co. reached tentative agreement Tuesday on a new three-year contract providing a 36 per cent wage boost. If the contract is approved by union members, it will end a strike which went into its 126th day on Tuesday, the longest walkout in industry history.

The proposed pact includes general wage increases totaling \$1.35 an hour over the length of the contract and an uncapped cost-of-living adjustment that Goodyear estimated would total 69 cents an hour over the three-year period.

The pact provides for an immediate 80-cents-an-hour wage hike.

The URW scheduled a ratification vote Friday at Akron and said votes at the other 16 Goodyear plants

would be scheduled later. Goodyear said production could resume at normal levels about two days after acceptance of the contract.

There was no immediate word of similar agreement being reached in continuing negotiations between the URW and Uniroyal Inc., B. F. Goodrich Co. and Firestone Tire & Rubber Co.

All four manufacturers were struck by the URW, the first time the union struck all of the Big Four simultaneously.

URW members walked out April 21 when the contracts covering 60,000 workers expired at 47 Big Four plants across the nation. About 10,000 other URW members joined the strike in July as their contracts with smaller firms expired.

The tentative agreement reached

with Goodyear on Tuesday closely followed terms of the tentative resolution of major economic issues reached with Firestone about two weeks ago. Those terms were considered to set the pattern for the industry.

In addition to increased wages and the cost-of-living adjustment, the Goodyear pact provides improved pension, health, Supplemental Unemployment Benefits and life insurance programs, the firm said.

Under the old contract, general wages averaged \$5.50 an hour industrywide with benefits adding an average \$3.55. There was no cost-of-living adjustment.

Rank-and-file members and local union officials predicted ratification of the new contract proposal by the end of the week.

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