

Ford relocation will not benefit US workers much

Sir, One protectionist trade fallacy that you failed to mention is the myth that protectionism will significantly increase domestic employment ("The protectionist trade fallacies of America First", editorial, January 5). The aborted Ford plant in Mexico was slated to employ 2,800 workers, while the Michigan plant which will now assume its production will employ only 700. Why the difference?

No doubt the Michigan plant will substitute machinery for the cheaper labour that Ford might have hired in Mexico. This will be the trend of the reshoring of American businesses: substituting robots for human labour. American workers will hardly benefit to any significant degree by this relocation, while the labour-intensive economies of emerging markets will be deprived.

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