



# At the Crossroads: Middle America and the Battle to Save the Car Industry

*Abe Aamidor, Ted Evanoff*

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# At the Crossroads: Middle America and the Battle to Save the Car Industry

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**At the Crossroads: Middle America and the Battle to Save the Car Industry** Abe Aamidor, Ted Evanoff The U.S. auto industry has struck a brick wall. Can it get back on the road to recovery? At the Crossroads: Middle America and the Battle to Save the Car Industry argues that the Obama administration missed an historic opportunity in 2009 to launch a Manhattan Projectstyle effort to save not only Detroit, but the entire manufacturing base in Middle America. Abe Aamidor and Ted Evanoff explain how Washington's intervention fell short and how it is holding back American economic recovery. The authors take a thoughtful look at the root causes behind the auto industry's crash, including disastrous labor contracts such as the 1950s<sup>1</sup> Treaty of Detroit,<sup>2</sup> which set the stage for crushing legacy costs; Wall Street's predatory financial practices ushered in under the Reagan administration; and a largely unregulated free trade regime that undermined the competitiveness of American manufacturing. At the Crossroads tells the story of Detroit's collapse and a failed national industrial policy from the point of view of those most affected by it ? the factory workers, small business owners, and mayors of small manufacturing towns like Kokomo, Marion, and Bedford in Indiana, the number two auto manufacturing state after Michigan and the number one manufacturing state overall based on a percentage of population. Washington could debate the pros and cons of a national industrial policy and an auto industry bailout ad nauseum, but it was the people in small towns in Middle America who would live or die by the policy decisions of their distant national leaders.



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