

Volvo workers to UAW: Show us the contract!

Volvo Workers Rank-and-File Committee
6 July 2021

This statement was drafted by the Volvo Workers Rank-and-File committee after the United Auto Workers announced a new agreement with Volvo Trucks to end the strike of 2,900 workers in Dublin, Virginia. Volvo workers can contact the Volvo Workers Rank-and-File Committee at volvowrffc@gmail.com or by text to (540) 307-0509.

Release the full contract! Workers have the right to know what is in the tentative agreement!

The Volvo Workers Rank-and-File Committee demands that the UAW release the full tentative agreement to Volvo workers and give us 10 days to dig through the details.

The UAW claims that this contract contains “major gains” for workers. From what we have been able to determine from the highlights and various documents released so far, however, we see that it 1) includes significant increases in health care costs and wage increases that are far below soaring inflation levels, with no COLA escalator clause; 2) requires six years for new hires to reach top pay; and 3) reduces lump sum payments to less than what we have lost due to the strike.

We do not want to have to guess or interpret what we are signing. This contract will determine the next six years of our lives and the lives of our families. We must have access to the full contract, with all memoranda of understanding and side agreements, before any vote.

If this contract is so good, why can't we all really examine the whole thing? What doesn't the UAW want

us to see?

The UAW is telling us that we can look at the contract at the local union hall, but cannot take it home to study it. But the TA is not a priceless document like the Declaration of Independence, which is stored in a special 50-ton vault at the National Archives Building in D.C. There is no reason why every worker should not have the full deal.

We further demand that workers have adequate time to study the contract before any vote. Scheduling the vote on Friday, only one week after the TA was announced and after the July 4 weekend, is clearly aimed at forcing through a vote before workers have had the chance to study and discuss it.

We demand 10 days after the release of the full contract before any vote is scheduled. Even for the last two TAs, which we rejected by 90 percent, workers were given two weeks before the vote. We can't help but conclude that one factor in the scheduling of the vote is that we were working during the previous two votes, helping Volvo build up inventory that has been used to undermine our strike, whereas now we are on strike and Volvo is hurting with each passing day.

We further demand three mass membership meetings to have our questions answered in detail. Workers have the right to question and understand every paragraph, sentence, word and punctuation mark that will affect the next six years of our lives.

The rank-and-file committee is independent of the pro-corporate UAW, so that workers can organize their own struggle.

The UAW, evidently scared of opposition, has not called a single mass meeting to discuss the contract. Instead, it is telling workers that they can, individually, come to the union hall and ask questions. This is aimed at atomizing us and preventing any collective

discussion and response to the contract.

The Volvo Workers Rank-and-File Committee is calling for a “no” vote on this TA. It does not meet the needs of Volvo workers and it is being proposed to shut down our strike just as it is getting broad support, including from Mack Trucks workers who are eager to join the struggle.

Whatever one thinks of the contract, however, one thing is clear: We have the right to study all of it and discuss it before a vote!

Workers have the right to know what is in the Tentative Agreement! Show us the contract!

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To contact the WSWs and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact