

Reject Dana-UAW-USW's "Pay Cut Contract"!

Dana contract details reveal pay cuts, no change to 70 to 84-hour workweek

Eric London
22 August 2021

According to details of the proposed Dana tentative agreement (TA) acquired by the *Autoworker Newsletter*, the company and two unions "representing" Dana workers, the United Auto Workers and the United Steelworkers, are proposing a highly exploitative contract that is far worse than what is now in place. The proposal itself is an insult and a provocation that shows Dana workers must unite and strategize for a real fight.

A leaked pay scale that includes figures for the Fort Wayne, Indiana and Pottstown, Pennsylvania plants shows pay for tier two will only increase between \$0.40 and \$1.00 each year through 2026. With inflation at 4 percent a year, this would effectively be a pay cut, and a massive pay cut if inflation and the cost of living rise higher. Tier two workers will top out at just \$22 an hour. Current employees making \$15.50 at present will make only \$19.25 in year six.

Pay for tier one will increase by just \$0.35 in years 1 and 3 of the contract and \$0.30 in year 5, with a taxable lump sum payment of \$1,750 in intervening years.

Workers should call this insulting TA the "Pay Cut Contract."

This TA is a full-scale attack on Dana workers at every plant, no matter their race, nationality or experience level. It is no wonder the UAW was withholding this from workers and giving them no time to think it over before they vote. It is a further confirmation, as the *Autoworker Newsletter* stated, that what the UAW and USW were doing with the company was not "negotiating" but conspiring together against workers.

As one worker at a Kentucky Dana plant put it: "The UAW is not for us. The people representing our plant

are nothing. They're not negotiating, they are in the bathroom on their knees before the company. These people who 'represent us' get weekends and 4 weeks of vacation."

The provocative character of the contract confirms that the company is preparing for a major showdown. It is time workers took the conduct of this struggle into their own hands to coordinate across plants, share information, and come up with a real strategy. This means establishing a rank-and-file committee.

The UAW and USW are conspiring to sabotage any struggle by workers. Despite the looming possibility of a strike, workers are laboring up to *84 hours a week* under conditions that resemble the 1800s. The UAW and USW are helping the company stockpile parts and trying to exhaust workers by pushing them to the physical and mental limit. Meanwhile, workers report that the company is bringing in scabs to prepare to run the Dry Ridge, Kentucky plant in case of a strike.

Dana can afford to provide workers with a significant pay increase and a 40-hour workweek, with guaranteed weekends off, air-conditioned plants and safe, clean, new machines. In the first quarter of 2021, after forcing workers to work during the COVID pandemic, it posted \$2.2 billion in sales and is making another round of dividend payments to shareholders. Dana's Trump-loving CEO made over \$10 million in 2020 as workers died of COVID and worked themselves to the bone.

It is an insult to the entire international working class that workers should be forced to endure conditions like those that Dana workers confront every day.

In Dry Ridge, Kentucky, a Dana worker died in July after falling asleep at the wheel after working *an 84-hour week*. She left behind six grandchildren.

Another worker from Dry Ridge passed away on June 2 after having a seizure on the shop floor. He died at home after being transported from work to a hospital. Coworkers were ordered not to give assistance as the man flailed around on the floor. The company kept the line working, and even sent the dead worker a notification that he had been mandated to work the following weekend.

There is a brewing mood of rebellion against these conditions, which are being maintained with the collusion of the unions, the workers' supposed representatives. Workers are angry and looking for a way to fight. Thousands of workers read the August 20 statement by the Dana Workers' Rank-and-File Committee entitled "Release the full contract! Workers have the right to know what's in the tentative agreement!"

Workers at other plants report they are also working 12 hours a day, 7 days a week, with mandated weekend work every weekend:

Paris, Tennessee: "We don't know anything about our contract. All we know is that there's a tentative agreement. They haven't told us anything. They told us 'details to come,' and we don't even have a time for our meeting next weekend. Our union reps told us we couldn't strike over money. It would have to be over health and safety issues."

Ft. Wayne, Indiana: "I have watched it go to complete hell. Our union doesn't do anything and by the looks of this contract they're trying to get us to vote on, they just [crapped] all over us. We have a two-tier system and that's not what it's supposed to be. It's supposed to be equal for all. We are all pretty pissed off here."

Lima, Ohio: "I work at Dana Lima plant. Our situation is similar to y'all's with not knowing anything with the contract we are just left in the dark. It would be nice to know what's going on. A few of our workers just came back from testing positive from covid and not once did they come out and clean the machine where they were working or let us know that they had covid. They're bringing in all these new hires with sign on bonuses and when we asked what about us we got told 'it is what it is.'"

St. Clair, Michigan: "We are just as outraged as you for the complete lack of communication. Our union chairperson has not been communicating with the

representatives on our shifts. Some of us think that the only reason they announced a 'tentative agreement' was because of your story. We are currently being made to work 12 hours a day 5-6 days a week with 8-12 hours on Sunday. We do not have to worry about the health issues like you have to, except for the extremely poor handling of Covid. I would love to have both our plants to come together in solidarity and stand up for ourselves against both the UAW and Dana."

Dry Ridge, Kentucky: "You can't ask or report anything to the union reps about anything and if you are pulled up to Trump Tower where you're written up or given a point for something, even if you know you're right the union doesn't back you up. Dana tells them to shut up let it go!! The union is weak in our eyes!"

A Volvo worker in Virginia who set up a rank-and-file committee during their struggle earlier this year had a message for Dana workers: "You've got to set up a rank-and-file committee. The UAW will get mad, but you've got to get information. There were lots of people who never thought or heard of anything different than what the union told us. But with a rank-and-file committee we got information out and got people to think outside the box. We organized ourselves. You should too."

To unite with us in a common fight, we urge our brothers and sisters to join the Dana Workers Rank-and-File Committee. Email us at danawrfc@gmail.com and text us at (248) 602-0936.



To contact the WSWs and the
Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact