

Mack Truck Workers Rank-and-File Committee issues statement of solidarity with Dana auto parts workers

Mack Trucks Workers Rank-and-File Committee
25 August 2021

To join the Mack Truck Workers Rank-and-File Committee, contact them via text at (484) 466-8841.

Dear Dana Workers,

The announcement of the formation of a Dana Workers Rank-and-File Committee comes as good news to everyone involved in the struggle of the working class to make working conditions better for each other (If the reader has not seen the most recent statement of the Dana Workers Rank-and-File committee, it can be found here). It is an essential fight that you are organizing yourselves independently of the unions, and you have the support of the Mack Truck Workers Rank-and-File Committee .

Workers at Dana are being forced to vote blindly on a tentative agreement agreed to between the United Auto Workers and United Steelworkers union and the Dana Corporation. Even now, with voting scheduled to begin over the weekend, they refuse to reveal its contents! Dana workers are facing the threat of increased shift times, Alternative Work Schedules which will take them away even longer from their families and the outside world, and slave labor-like conditions in their factories.

We formed the Mack Workers Rank-and-File Committee after witnessing the United Auto Workers' sellout of the Volvo workers at the New River Valley plant in Dublin, Virginia. The strike of almost 3,000 workers began in April, but the UAW shut down the strike and forced them back to work after announcing a new Tentative Agreement, without even giving workers the chance to review the deal before tearing down the pickets.

What followed was a rebellion by the rank-and-file. The workers at NRV voted "no" by over 90 percent

margins on two consecutive TAs that tried to tear up retirees' health care benefits, increase health care costs and bring extended hours and work weeks into the plant. After these unprecedented "No" votes, the UAW was forced to go back out on strike.

Throughout the strike, the only voice that articulated a strategy for victory, based on the demands of the rank and file, was the Volvo Workers Rank-and-File Committee. Formed in the heat of battle during the strike, this committee gave workers at Volvo a means to fight back against the company and UAW's effort to railroad them to defeat.

Over the course of the strike, the UAW sought to isolate Volvo Trucks workers from their brothers and sisters at other automotive companies, enforcing a total information blackout and refusing to even acknowledge the strike's existence. But the VWRFC, with the assistance of the *World Socialist Web Site*, punctured this blackout, building support for the strike in auto plants in Detroit and among workers across the planet. Significantly, when a WSWs campaign visited a Volvo plant in Ghent, Belgium to inform workers of the strike, workers at the plant carried out a wildcat strike against a union-sponsored plan to increase the length of their work week.

Throughout the struggle, the UAW tripped over themselves lying to the workers, claiming that each new tentative agreement was both an improvement on the last and as good as the union could ever get. When they came back with a third deal lasting six years, which resolved none of the key demands of workers and contained wage increases below that the rate of inflation, the deal was rejected again in a third vote by 60 percent of workers.

After the third rejection and an all-out declaration of war by the company, who said they would negotiate no further and unilaterally impose the agreement, the UAW forced workers to re-vote on the contract which they had already rejected the week before. The union claimed, under dubious circumstances, that the contract passed by a mere 17 votes.

But while the struggle of Volvo workers was betrayed by the UAW, it has not been defeated. The role which the VWRFC played during and after the strike has inspired confidence among workers that they do not have to accept the treachery of the UAW and that they can fight back by building their own organizations. Indeed, it was the example of the Volvo committee that convinced us to form our own committee at Mack Trucks.

Decades of union betrayals--the AFL-CIO's isolation of the PATCO air traffic controllers strike in 1981 to the UAW's betrayal of the workers at NRV 40 years later--illustrate the necessity of workers taking their struggle into their own hands and fighting for what they deserve.

The main lesson of these experiences is that workers need to develop their own independent initiative through their new organizations of struggle, and to educate themselves and their coworkers. Dana workers who agree with this perspective should contact the WSWS today to learn how to join the Dana Workers Rank-and-File Committee.



To contact the WSWS and the
Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact