

Open letter from Dana workers to the UAW and USW: We demand a strategy for victory!

Dana Workers Rank-and-File Committee
7 September 2021

To join the Dana Workers Rank-and-File Committee, email us at danawrfc@gmail.com or text us at (248) 602-0936.

We Dana workers have officially voted down the sweatshop contract that you tried to force us to accept. This contract would have guaranteed more of everything we hate. It included more mandated overtime, more 12-hour days, more 7-day weeks, more unsafe conditions and wages that don't keep up with inflation.

In the face of your threats, your lies, and your attempts to get us to mark our "no" votes in erasable pencil, we workers stood up to reject this contract and the entire farcical "ratification process." At many plants, the "no" margin was well above 95 percent. In Toledo, Ohio, 435 of us said "no" and not a single one of us said "yes." This is a powerful sign that you can no longer keep us down with fear and division.

Now the situation is as follows. The company says it gave us its best offer and we rejected it. We have made it clear what we, the workers, will accept: An 8-hour day, 40-hour week, 75 percent pay increase, no tiers, safe COVID policies, no speed-ups, no points system, as well as functioning air conditioning and new, clean machines.

But you have responded to our powerful "no" vote by digging in against us. You have forced us to keep working, including mandatory overtime, even on the federal *Labor Day* holiday. You have transformed the old rule "No contract, no work" into a new one: "No contract, *more work!*"

You, the UAW and USW, are engaged in an ongoing conspiracy with the company against the working class. Our generals are making us dig trenches for the enemy. Since our contract expired on August 18, you have shown this in the following ways:

- You are forcing us to keep working to stockpile product and undermine our position.
- You are forcing us to work mandated overtime.
- You are enforcing speed-ups, and workers are getting injured.
- You are extending the old contract without ever consulting us.
- You are ignoring the near-unanimous strike authorization votes taken by many plants.
- You are refusing to call strike authorization votes at plants like Fort Wayne, where 90 percent of us voted "no" on the TA.
- You withheld the full contract from us.
- You lied to us with bogus "highlights" to trick us into voting "yes."
- You isolated us from our fellow workers by not telling us what other plants are even covered by the contract.
- You threatened us at informational meetings and told us there was no use in voting "no."
- Your representative, UAW Local 1765 President PJ Meyer, allegedly assaulted a worker in Lima, Ohio, simply for exercising the right to free speech.
- You are dragging this bogus "process" out endlessly and keep us in the dark while we keep working and you plot your next moves with Dana.

With each passing hour, these actions further undermine our struggle and help the company prepare.

Enough with actions guaranteed to secure our defeat, we demand a strategy for victory! To this end, we the rank-and-file workers of Dana make the following declaration:

First, we demand the UAW and USW immediately refuse all company requests for mandated overtime, effective immediately. The old contract was unfairly extended from above after we rejected it, and we should

not be held down by its terms. We demand no more speed-ups of any kind. Production must be slowed to a safe pace controlled by the workers on the line. Every minute of speed-ups and mandated overtime undermines our position by helping the company stockpile product. Every minute the UAW and USW force us to work overtime, they are forcing us to scab on ourselves.

Second, we demand the UAW and USW call immediate strike votes at all plants that have not done so by Friday, September 10, at the latest. Moreover, given the fact that overwhelming support for a strike makes these votes a foregone conclusion, the union must also set a deadline of Monday, September 13, to actually begin a strike. No more delays!

Third, such a strike must include all the plants. If there is a strike, we must all strike together, at all plants. If we strike, no plant shall go back to work until each plant has approved the corporation's global *and* local offers. An injury to one is an injury to all.

Fourth, we demand the UAW and USW set strike pay at 100% of our present pay. The strike fund is our dues money, and we are entitled to it. Withholding it constitutes robbery. The UAW and USW together have assets over \$2.7 billion—more than one-third of Dana's assets! If we strike, we do not intend to be starved out.

Fifth, we demand that any future meetings between the UAW, USW and the company take place via livestream for all workers to view. All negotiations must be supervised by a representative of the rank-and-file workers. We will not accept *another* contract proposal cooked up behind our backs, for the simple reason that this would only produce *another sellout*.

These are not requests but demands. We are prepared to fight for them.

The depth of both our anger and our resolve is derived from more than just your actions in the last few weeks. Under the UAW and USW, we have suffered a long series of abuses and betrayals, all aimed at establishing the tyranny of the company over the working class, not only on the shop floor but in all aspects of life. For 40 years you have helped the corporations cut wages, eliminate pensions and close plants. Whether it is health care, rent and mortgage, student debt, car payments or credit card bills, everywhere around us we confront the power of the banks and corporations.

We believe we are not only fighting for a better contract, we are taking a stand for the working class everywhere. In the middle of a deadly pandemic, millions of working people have been forced to work so the corporations can keep making profit. Now the ruling class is sacrificing our children by forcing them to go to school so we can go to work!

Decades of corporate exploitation and domination must come to an end. We appeal to our brothers and sisters at the Big Three, at other auto parts companies, and in schools and workplaces across the world: The strength of the working class comes from unity among the rank-and-file no matter our race, gender or nationality. We must all fight as one for what we deserve.

Sincerely,

The Dana Workers' Rank-and-File Committee.

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To contact the WSWS and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact