

UAW to workers: “get back to work!”

UAW declares indefinite contract extension after Dana workers vote down tentative agreement by huge margins

Eric London
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After Dana auto parts workers overwhelmingly rejected a concessionary tentative agreement, the UAW and USW have announced they are forcing workers to keep working under the old contract indefinitely.

The UAW’s first official statement following the vote reads in its entirety: “The Tentative Agreement (TA) was rejected and we’re continuing to work under a day-to-day extension. We are starting to meet with the locals to identify issues.”

Workers at Dana plants across the country are livid that the UAW and USW are making them stockpile parts under the old contract.

One worker at Fort Wayne, Indiana, told the *World Socialist Web Site*: “This is BS. What is there to work on except to strike? This speaks volumes about what the unions think of us. It just reaffirms what we all think, which is they’re conspiring with the company to try and give us a sell-out deal. They just want to keep our dues coming in to pay their absurd salaries.”

To add insult to injury, workers at Fort Wayne and Paris, Tennessee, received notice that they are mandated for work on Saturday and possibly Sunday. Every hour that the unions force workers to stay on the job is an extra cushion for the corporation. One worker from St. Clair, Michigan, said the UAW is forcing workers to stockpile so much product that the parts are filling up the plant. A worker in Paris, Tennessee, said, “Even though they are running out of material and can’t run presses, they’re still forcing us to work without rest.”

There are growing concerns among workers that the unions are conspiring secretly behind their backs to

override the “no” vote and impose the same contract workers just rejected.

Workers at several different plants contacted the *World Socialist Web Site* to report that local unions were convening meetings that they feared were intended to discuss forcing through the same TA. One local union official reportedly told workers in Danville, Kentucky, that the company had refused to negotiate any further. The worker said, “We figure the meeting is to force the contract through,” and explained that workers were not allowed at the meeting.

Another worker in Fort Wayne told the WSWS that the UAW, USW and Dana held a conference call Wednesday to plan their next move against the workers.

On Wednesday, the *World Socialist Web Site* contacted USW Communications Director Jess Kamm Broomell, who claimed she “did not know” the result of the vote. Kamm Broomell requested written questions but then did not reply to them.

The WSWS also contacted UAW Public Relations Director Brian Rothenberg, who said workers’ reports of meetings between the UAW and Dana were “factually inaccurate,” but provided no additional information. The WSWS then wrote Rothenberg the following questions:

- Is a strike deadline set? If so, what is the date. If not, why not?
- Will the UAW stop mandating workers overtime?
- Have negotiations resumed? If so, what specific demands is the UAW raising this time?
- Is there a maximum number of days the old contract

will be extended day-to-day, or is the extension indefinite?

Rothenberg did not respond.

There is every reason to suspect that the UAW and USW may attempt to force through the TA despite the “no” vote, or else force a revote on a new TA that is substantially the same as the old one.

Workers in St. Clair, Michigan, report that Dana demanded the UAW call a re-vote after 97 percent of workers at the plant voted “no.” In Lima, Ohio, eyewitnesses report that UAW Local 1765 President PJ Meyer became hysterical and assaulted a worker who had asked whether the UAW was planning to override their “no” vote. The worker apparently touched a sensitive nerve. Workers in Lima report that Meyer has returned to work, implying he was not punished.

Workers are getting badly hurt as a result of the UAW and USW’s decision to extend the old contract. In Fort Wayne, witnesses tell the *World Socialist Web Site* that a worker slipped on oily ground and banged her head hard against the concrete floor. This injury should not have happened, because workers should not be working at all after the old contract expired on August 18. The UAW and USW have transformed the old slogan “no contract, no work” into a new one: “no contract, *more work!*”

On Tuesday, the Dana Workers Rank-and-File Committee issued an open letter to the UAW and USW. The letter reads, “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.”

The open letter concludes by demanding the UAW and USW: (1) immediately refuse all company requests for mandated overtime, (2) call strike votes by Friday at plants that have not yet held such authorizations, (3) announce any strike will involve all the plants together, (4) set strike pay at 100% of workers’ wages, and (5) livestream all future meetings with the company and allow rank-and-file representatives to attend and supervise such meetings.

Workers are raising their heads after decades of betrayals to confront not just Dana but the forces that stand behind Dana: the Big Three, the banks that fund them, the network of wealthy shareholders and ultimately the entire corporate establishment that runs the two parties and the government. Dana’s treatment

of its workers parallels the treatment of the entire working class by the ruling elite during the coronavirus pandemic. In the US as in almost every capitalist country, the ruling class is sending workers’ children back into schools as the Delta variant soars and has sent parents to work with no regard for their health, just to fuel corporate profits. A united movement of the working class against massive levels of inequality is a historical necessity.

To unite with Dana workers in a common fight, join the Dana Workers Rank-and-File Committee. Email danawrfc@gmail.com or text (248) 602-0936.



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