

On eve of strike deadline at John Deere

Dana workers call for joint action with John Deere workers

George Kirby
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On the eve of a midnight strike deadline for 10,100 John Deere workers Wednesday evening, workers at auto parts maker Dana Inc. expressed their support for joint action with workers at the agricultural equipment maker. The strike deadline was announced by the United Auto Workers last week after Deere workers voted down a sellout contract, which would have included the elimination of pensions for new hires, by a 90 percent margin.

Dana auto parts workers in the United States voted down a sellout contract of their own by a similar margin more than a month ago, but the UAW and the United Steelworkers (USW) are keeping workers on the job on a day-to-day contract extension, working for 12 hours and seven days a week in many cases. Talks between the unions and Dana management have been dragged out for weeks, giving the company time to stockpile parts and complete the changeover to producing parts for next year's vehicle models.

"I know what you're going through," a tenured production worker at Fort Wayne stated. "Requests aren't being met. We need more unity; we need to take hold of workers' destiny. We need to let companies know we're not scared of them. Dana walked out of the negotiations. You need to be 10 times stronger. We need all Dana plants and Deere to cease production.

"I remember PATCO. [The] whole system needs to be changed top to bottom. Corruption [in the union] is ridiculous ... it's in your face like it's normal. As long as these officials are sucking up to the company we're screwed every time. They have boats and yachts, they're not even workers. They're all for the companies.

"Union officials are like outside contractors. The

tactics like erasing votes and the other trickery has to stop. Wages haven't been going up for a decade, but all other things are going up. The amount of bribes is so great that you can't get a foothold in the union.

"I'm on board for workers taking control of negotiations [and] getting rid of union [bureaucrats]. We need solidarity with other plants in [the] auto industry and elsewhere. This will make a statement to the companies. There's an old saying 'strength in numbers,' we need everyone on board."

A tier worker spoke to the *World Socialist Web Site*, "Stick together. There are more of us than them. We all have to stick together."

When asked what he thought about the negotiations between Dana and the unions, one Fort Wayne worker responded, "What negotiations? It's a farce. A big 'ol bunch of BS. We're supposed to hear about the negotiations when the committee comes back Monday or Tuesday. Honestly, I don't know what to think until they bring back the contract. They [the USW] expect us to sign, honestly? I don't think it's going to be anything better than the last one they brought back."

"[The first contract] was definitely crap!" another worker said. "The only good thing on that was giving everyone the same point system. ... Everything else was worse."

She continued, "There's no updates on COVID due to no information by the union. No one knows anything about the contract. It's likely they will try to split the vote times for plants. It will be turned down like the Deere contract. Two weeks ago on Friday, the third shift workers didn't even see the USW proposal. I'm not alone with the suspicion of the union. I'm telling everyone to vote no."

Workers at Dana have formed the Dana Workers Rank-and-File Committee (DWRFC) to fight for their own interests. In order to reverse the decades of attacks on workers, the DWRFC is appealing to workers across the auto industry and in the working class internationally to establish lines of communication to fight for a common strategy.

To join the DWRFC, email them at danawrfc@gmail.com or text (248) 602-0936?.



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