

Dana workers: We should be on strike!

Dana Workers' Rank-and-File Committee
15 October 2021

Brothers and Sisters of the working class,

Nearly two months have passed since 3,000 Dana workers voted 90 percent “no” on the sweatshop contract the UAW and USW tried to force us to accept. With our vote, we expressed a sentiment that is even stronger today: We are ready to fight to end 84-hour workweeks with low pay in the middle of a pandemic that is spreading through our workplaces.

On Wednesday, 10,000 John Deere workers across the US went on strike after voting down a UAW sellout contract by 90 percent, just like we did. The strike at Deere makes clear that now is the time for Dana workers to stand up and unite until we win our demands for massive pay increases, the 8-hour day and workers control of Covid-safety and line speed.

UAW President Ray Curry issued a brief statement on the Deere strike, asserting that the Deere workers need “solidarity.” What a fraud!

In reality, the UAW has responded to the strike at Deere by suddenly announcing that a new tentative agreement has been reached at Dana. This after weeks of delay aimed at preventing us from striking, weeks in which the corporation has been desperate to keep us working as global supply chains break down.

The “new” TA, cooked up in secret as we have been kept on the job, will certainly be as bad or worse than the last agreement. After weeks of conspiring behind our backs, who among us is stupid enough to believe they brought back a contract that addresses any of our concerns?

As for “solidarity” from the UAW executives making over \$200,000 a year, the UAW is forcing us to scab on our brothers and sisters at Deere. John Deere has publicly stated it plans to run its factories with scabs. In a Thursday statement responding to the strike, it wrote, “Employees *and others* will be entering our factories daily to keep our operations running. Our immediate concern is meeting the needs of our customers, who work in time-sensitive and critical industries such as agriculture and construction.”

Dana supplies critical parts to John Deere, which recognizes Dana as a “Partner Level Hall of Fame Supplier,” the company’s highest supplier rating. This means the UAW and USW are forcing Dana workers to stay on the job to make parts for scab production!

We will not stand for this! We are in a position of enormous strength if we are prepared to fight. Especially in the auto industry, the flow of all of the world’s production has never been more reliant on just-in-time delivery and fast and flexible order fulfillment, which the parts companies guarantee through brutal hours, constant speed-ups and dangerous conditions.

For decades, this has been used to drive down our wages, take away pensions and hours restrictions, and transform more and more of us into temporary workers. But the same system set up to weaken us now places us in a very powerful position. Without our parts, production of cars, trucks, semi’s, tractors, bulldozers, or mining drills will slow substantially.

Workers throughout the country are beginning to stand up and fight back. In the US, 500 distillery workers in Kentucky who went on strike on September 11; 2,000 hospital workers in Buffalo, New York went on strike October 1; 1,400 Kellogg’s cereal workers went on strike October 5; and 2,000 Frontier telecom workers in California did so on October 6. More than 1,000 Warrior Met coal miners in Northern Alabama have been on strike since April, and over 100,000 more have either imminent strike deadlines or have authorized strikes.

The strike wave is international. Sixteen thousand South African metalworkers just joined the already-massive 155,000-person strike that began October 5. Teachers in the state of Michoacán, Mexico have been on strike for weeks and have blocked railroad lines over lack of pay, substantially reducing the northern flow of parts necessary for car production in all of North America. Across the world, teachers and parents took part in an October 15 school strike in opposition to the forced return to school as the Delta variant surges. The central aim of this back-to-school campaign is to force parents back to work to make

profits for Wall Street.

All of this greatly strengthens our position. This is not only a movement against one corporation or one boss, but against the whole network of corporations that dominate every aspect of life for billions of workers worldwide. Over four million people have died of Covid-19, and the ruling class is enriching itself on an unprecedented scale.

The growing strike wave is historical vengeance for decades of attacks on living standards and working conditions, and we must be a part of it.

If we strike, we want a strategy for victory. A strike must put forward the following demands:

- Massive wage increases, especially considering rising inflation and hikes to gas prices, rent and the cost of living.
- An 8-hour-day and 40-hour-week
- Workers control over Covid safety, with full pay for any shutdowns
- Workers control of line speed, with no speed ups
- New, clean machines, safety training and air quality
- Adequate air conditioning in all plants

We're only going to win what we need by fighting for it. We can only unlock our strong position in global supply lines by taking the initiative ourselves. It is time we rise up internationally to create a better world for tomorrow. Our rights as workers are being violated day in and day out! We must stand strong and defend our rights.

This means developing rank-and-file strike committees with the following aims: To organize strike action *now* and join our brothers and sisters at Deere, to open lines of communication between workers in all departments on all shifts in each plant, to establish connections between the plants, with John Deere workers, Big Three assembly workers and workers internationally to fight for democratic discussion and unity in action.

To contact us for advice and assistance, email us at DanaWRFC@gmail.com or text (248) 602-0936.



To contact the WSWs and the
Socialist Equality Party visit:

[wsws.org/contact](https://www.wsws.org/contact)