

The “No” vote by John Deere workers shows Dana workers must overturn the illegitimate UAW-USW-Dana contract!

Dana Workers' Rank-and-File Committee
3 November 2021

Fellow Dana workers:

On Tuesday, 10,000 Deere workers voted by a 55 to 45 margin to reject a sellout contract that the UAW tried to force them to accept. They did so despite the UAW using the same dirty tricks as the UAW and USW used against us Dana workers in recent weeks.

Just like at Dana, the UAW refused to give Deere workers the full contract and tried to rush through a vote while claiming the offer was the company’s “best” and threatening that another rejection would lead to a long, purposeless strike. Deere and the UAW dangled a large signing bonus (\$8,500) to bait workers into accepting a rotten six-year deal that would guarantee higher corporate profits than ever. At ratification meetings, the UAW pulled the mic on workers and refused to let them express their hostility to the contract.

But Deere workers said “no!” and sent a powerful signal to autoworkers and the working class as a whole that they are standing firm to guarantee a contract with an immediate \$10 hourly wage increase, fully paid retiree health care and pension benefits.

Now is the time for Dana workers to join Deere workers and all auto workers to overturn the fraudulent contracts signed by the UAW in recent months and years.

These contracts are illegitimate. They were agreed to by corrupt union executives who accept bribes from the corporations. They are forcing us into conditions of deeper economic hardship while corporate profits and CEO pay soar to unthinkable heights.

The process through which the UAW and USW claim the second tentative agreement at Dana was “passed” was illegitimate and unacceptable. The Dana Workers

Rank-and-File Committee (DWRFC) declares the contract null and void. We are only now beginning to learn some of the rotten details that were withheld from us when we were blindfolded and forced to vote last month.

The second TA evidently gives the corporation immense power to undermine full-time workers by transforming the Dana workforce into an army of temp workers with no rights.

In Louisville, Kentucky, the company paid temp workers \$25 an hour and forced them to sign non-disclosure agreements to hide this information from us. We only learned about this because temps courageously told us, and were then promptly fired *en masse*. This establishes that the company lied to us and forced through this contract through deception. Workers in Louisville say the UAW knew about this and did nothing. This goes beyond one plant. In Fort Wayne, Indiana, workers report 60 temp workers have been hired in at \$18 an hour, more than many full-time workers make.

Reports from Dry Ridge, Kentucky make clear the corporation and unions lied to workers about who would qualify for the \$3,000 signing bonus. One UAW representative admitted to workers that Dana told them Dana “wanted to buy this election by offering \$3,000 because they know people would say yes.”

Even though many workers did vote “yes” out of economic desperation, this attempt to “buy” the election through economic coercion is illegitimate and based in part on false promises. According to workers in Dry Ridge, Kentucky, Dana will not pay the signing bonus to workers who hired in after July 1, even if those workers are past a probation period and are

paying union dues. Countless workers would have voted “no” had they known this before voting!

In Fort Wayne, a USW official told workers that the new local agreement was put in effect even though workers at the plant rejected both the local and global agreement. Other workers report that they have not been informed of this, but that the USW is meeting to consider overriding the “no” vote and forcing the local agreement through.

This is doubtless only the tip of the iceberg. Had we known these details before voting, there is no question the global contract would have been rejected. Now we know why the UAW and USW would not let us see the full contract. If we knew the truth, we would have overwhelmingly voted “no” for a second time. Dana, the UAW and USW treat us as sub-humans who have no rights, but we know that a contract is not legally enforceable if reached through fraud and coercion.

Dana, the UAW and USW were desperate to shut us up and keep us on the job to stop us from joining the historic strike wave now unfolding across the world. Tens of thousands of workers in the US and hundreds of thousands throughout the world are currently on strike.

The UAW and USW blow a lot of hot air about “solidarity,” but workers at Dana plants in Danville, Kentucky, St. Clair, Michigan and Sterling, Illinois report that the UAW is forcing them to produce parts for John Deere that are being used by scabs.

We should be striking with the Deere workers, not producing parts for scabs working behind picket lines! A 56-year-old Deere worker, Richard Rich, was killed by a vehicle last week on his way to picketing a parts facility in Milan, Illinois, and the UAW “honors” his memory by having our parts plants running at full speed?

The resolve of the workers at Deere shows that our fight is not over. The Deere strike shows what can be accomplished: the offer Deere workers rejected included an \$8,500 signing bonus and a 10 percent wage increase in the first year of their contract, with cost-of-living adjustments (COLA) every three months.

It is not too late for Dana workers and all autoworkers to stand up for our rights and organize against the implementation of this fraudulent contract, come to the aid of our brothers and sisters at John Deere, and join this historic strike movement to win our demands for

massive wage increases, the 40-hour-week and 8-hour-day and oversight of proper health and safety conditions on the shop floor. This means building worker-controlled rank-and-file committees to share information, organize democratic discussion on our demands, and plan common action.

To join the Dana Workers Rank-and-File Committee, email DanaWRFC@gmail.com, text (248) 602-0936? or complete the form below.



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