

Halt the “critical status” nightmare! Restore the 8-hour day! Prepare a national strike by all Stellantis, GM and Ford workers!

Warren Truck Rank-and-File Committee
18 July 2023

This statement of the Warren Truck Rank-and-File Committee calls for the mobilization of workers in opposition to the imposition of “critical status” at the Detroit-area Stellantis plant, which allows seven-day work schedules, up to 12 hour hours a day, in advance of a potential strike by GM, Ford and Stellantis workers. To get involved in the committee, call or text 248-919-8448.

It has been two weeks since Stellantis sprung its critical status schedule on us. We have faced uncertainty, speeding up and slowing down, and not knowing how long we’ll have to work each day. Last week we did 10-hour shifts in the stifling heat. With little or no time to sleep or be with our families, and with many of us having long commutes to work, the exhausting schedules are increasing the danger of serious accidents and even death.

On top of this, parents are being forced to make last-minute arrangements for their kids, workers continue to get victimized for taking PAA days (paid absence allowance), and we have even suffered the indignities of not having parking spaces because our shifts overlap, leading to workers having their cars towed or ticketed.

But management and the UAW bureaucrats could not care less. Everyone knows Stellantis wants to stockpile trucks in case of a strike. And the UAW is letting them get away with this. Together they are saying to us: “You have no life outside of Warren Truck and making profits for the company. You are going to do what we tell you no matter what!”

But we are human beings, not robots. We have to stick together and defend ourselves. Despite all their holiday speechifying about “solidarity,” the UAW Local 140 officials are helping management create

animosities between first and second shifts, between full-time and part-time, between workers from the Detroit area and those transferred from Belvidere, Dundee and other plants. They are doing this to break our morale and keep us under their thumbs.

They want us to believe that this shift or that shift is “slacking off” and adding more work onto the next line. But it’s the company that is piling up work and pushing us to our physical and mental limits. Far from opposing this, the UAW bureaucrats are helping them.

But it is not just the stooges in Local 140 who are responsible. This is coming from the top: from Solidarity House, UAW President Shawn Fain, UAW VP in charge of Stellantis Rich Boyer, and the rest of the UAW apparatus.

Last week, Fain and the media made a big deal that he wasn’t going to shake the hands of the auto bosses during the opening ceremonies for the contract talks. But why does Fain have to shake their hands when he is already kissing their butts?

Fain is a conman. He would have us believe that after 40 years of selling us out and collaborating with the corporations to cut our jobs, wages and working conditions, the UAW leadership has suddenly made a 180-degree turn because he and his slate are now in power.

He may talk a good game, as workers say, but the reality is very different. Fain was part of the same corrupt “Administrative Caucus” as Curry and his predecessors. He was elected to president not through a democratic vote of the membership, but a rigged election, which excluded 90 percent of the members, most of whom did not even know there was a vote.

Fain says he wants to abolish tiers and restore COLA.

As workers say, “He talks a good game, but the reality is very different.” Fain was on the UAW-Chrysler Negotiating Committee in 2009 that agreed to the elimination of COLA, the vast expansion of the hated two-tier system and the exploitation of SEs (Supplemental Employees) and TPTs (Temporary Part-Time).

Fain has already been put to the test during the 40-day strike by 500 Clarios workers in Toledo. Workers voted down two sellout contracts brought back by the UAW in April and May. Fain responded by starving these workers on \$500 a week strike pay, doing everything to keep other workers from learning about the strike, and allowing GM, Ford and Stellantis to use batteries produced by scab labor, despite opposition of workers in the Warren Truck Rank-and-File Committee, the GM Flint Assembly Workers Rank-and-File Committee and others. In the end, Fain and his stooges in Region 2B and Local 12 rammed through a contract that included a real cut in wages and a new 12-hour workday with no overtime payments.

This is exactly what workers should expect from the UAW bureaucracy in the current contract talks. These are not “negotiations” between two conflicting parties, but a conspiracy between the corporations, the UAW and the Biden administration to force workers to pay for the transition to electric vehicles through a massive attack on our jobs and wages.

We cannot allow this to happen. The Warren Truck Rank-and-File Committee calls on our brothers and sisters to overcome all the divisions the company and UAW are using to weaken us. We need to unite first- and second-shift workers, full-time and TPTs, Belvidere, Detroit, Toledo and other workers. We have to throw all the petty stuff out the window. We face a far bigger fight for our lives, for our families and for the next generation.

We urge you to join and build the Warren Truck Rank-and-File Committee to prepare a real, not a phony, fight against the companies. Our committee is fighting to transfer power and decision making from the corrupt UAW machine to the workers on the shop floor. We want to prepare an all-out strike by GM, Ford and Stellantis workers in the US and Canada in September.

We want to unite autoworkers with other sections of workers: at Flex-N- Gate, Magna, Lear and other parts

plants, at UPS, the public schools, the ports and railroads, with striking locomotive and freight car workers at Wabtec and National Steel Car, Los Angeles hotel workers and others. Just last week, 65,000 actors joined a strike of screenwriters in a fight against the Hollywood entertainment giants.

We are the ones who build these vehicles and make these profits. We have enormous power but we have to organize, communicate and coordinate with each other to fight. Join our committee today!

To get involved in the Warren Truck Rank-and-File Committee, call or text 248-919-8448. To get information on building a rank-and-file committee at your plant, fill out the form below.



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