

Mobilize the rank and file against the UAW sellout!

Will Lehman
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Will Lehman is a rank-and-file autoworker at Mack Trucks in Macungie, Pennsylvania. He ran for president of the United Auto Workers on a program of abolishing the UAW apparatus and transferring power to the rank and file.

Lehman issued the following statement in response to the announcement by UAW President Shawn Fain Wednesday that the UAW would only call isolated “stand up strikes” when the contracts expire Thursday.

Join the next online meeting of the Autoworkers Rank-and-File Committee Network to discuss the latest developments in the contract fight and the rank-and-file strategy for workers to win their demands. Register [here](#) to attend.

Sign up for text message updates on the Detroit Three contract fight by texting AUTO to (866) 847-1086.

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By announcing Wednesday that the UAW will only call limited “stand up strikes” at a few plants even without a contract, UAW President Shawn Fain has made it clear that the UAW bureaucracy is selling out the rank and file.

We should understand what this is. Fain is not calling on workers to “stand up.” He is demanding that we lie down and accept what the companies want. He has gone from saying there would be a first-ever strike at all three companies, to a strike at only a few plants. The only outcome of this is that these workers will lose their pay and the companies will win, putting hundreds of thousands of jobs at risk through the transition to EV.

The aim of this is to divide the membership and break our unity. A small number of workers will be striking, while the vast majority of workers will be used as scabs, producing vehicles and profits for the companies. If workers in the non-striking plants take any action to support their striking brothers, they could be victimized because Fain has let the contracts expire.

The decision of the UAW bureaucracy is not legitimate. It violates the will of the rank and file, which voted 97 percent to strike all three companies. It was taken behind the backs of the rank-and-file membership, at the behest of the corporations and the Biden administration. It was announced by a president elected through massive voter suppression with the support of only 3 percent of the rank-and-file membership. Most workers never even received a ballot to vote last year.

We cannot afford to leave things in the hands of these traitors! The strike fund was built up with our dues money and must be used to carry out a decisive battle against companies that are determined to destroy tens of thousands of jobs. A line in the sand must be drawn.

The UAW bureaucracy has made clear what side it is on. This means we, the rank and file, must organize ourselves. Hold emergency meetings in your factories and warehouses tonight and tomorrow to democratically discuss and plan how to countermand this betrayal and what collective action is needed. Don’t listen to the bureaucrats, listen to your coworkers. Elect leaders from the shop floor and get your entire shift on the same page. Talk on the line, on breaks, at lunch and in the parking lots about what we, the rank and file, want to do. If there is no contract at midnight on Thursday night, we cannot be separated, as Fain wants, we must all stand together—on strike!



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