

Unite the rank and file for an all-out autoworkers strike!

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.

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The decision by President Shawn Fain and the rest of the UAW leadership to limit strike action to just two and a half assembly plants is illegitimate and a betrayal of the will of the rank and file. Workers must organize now to overturn this, unite the rank and file and build support in every plant to launch an all-out strike.

Autoworkers voted by 97 percent to authorize a strike last month, but Fain and the bureaucracy are forcing almost 97 percent of the membership to keep working!

The UAW is calling these “stand up” strikes, but a better description would be the “bend over” strike. The only outcome of this strategy is that the companies will win and workers will lose, with hundreds of thousands of jobs eliminated through the transition to EV.

Fain obscenely compares the UAW’s isolated “stand up” strikes to the pioneering sit-down strikers in 1936-1937. But that struggle was based on a polar opposite strategy. The sit-downers—led by socialist and left-wing workers—occupied GM’s plant in Flint, Michigan and stopped production by seizing the company’s private property and mobilizing support among the working class throughout the city. They stood up against state officials who called out the National Guard and set up machine gun nests outside the factory.

In the present, the UAW bureaucracy has called a

strike at only three assembly plants where the companies have stockpiled vehicles. They have ordered the vast majority of members to keep working without a contract. While they kept workers in the dark until Wednesday, Fain and the UAW apparatus discussed their plans behind our backs with management months ago, making sure any action would do as little damage as possible to their profits. The bureaucracy is doing everything it can to avoid using the \$825 million strike fund to actually support a real strike, instead of as a piggybank for the upper-middle class bureaucrats at “Solidarity House.”

This defeatist strategy has evoked an outpouring of praise from the corporate media and big business politicians, who are absurdly presenting this strike as “historic.” What they really mean is that Fain and the UAW are carrying out a historic betrayal.

Fain and the UAW have claimed they may still call an industry-wide strike at some unknown later date and that it’s still “on the table.” These are lies intended to pacify workers and keep us from taking the initiative. If the UAW did not call an all-out strike on September 15, then they never will.

We cannot allow these traitors to continue to determine our fate. Many workers have responded with shock and outrage to the UAW’s decision. This anger must be transformed into understanding and organized action. For there to be an all-out strike—which is what workers want—the rank and file ourselves will have to organize and prepare it.

Form rank-and-file committees at each factory and warehouse. 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.

These committees will provide a means for workers to communicate with each other and share information,

information which is being kept from us by the bureaucracy. They will provide a mechanism for us to link up across different plants and different companies, through the Autoworkers Rank-and-File Committee Network. They will also provide a way for us to unite with our brothers and sisters in Mexico, Canada and other countries, through the International Workers Alliance of Rank-and-File Committees.

Join the next online meeting of the Autoworkers Rank-and-File Committee Network to discuss a strategy to organize the rank and file for an all-out strike in the auto industry. Register here to attend.



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