

Enough is enough! For an all-out strike of all Big Three autoworkers!

Autoworkers Rank-and-File Committee Network
29 September 2023

Join the next online meeting of the Autoworkers Rank-and-File Committee Network to discuss uniting workers for an all-out strike across the auto industry. Register here to attend.

Sign up for text message updates on the Detroit Three contract fight by texting AUTO to (866) 847-1086. To discuss joining a rank-and-file committee or share your thoughts, fill out the form below.

Two weeks into our strike, it is high time for an all-out offensive against the Big Three. In the face of the intransigence of the companies, we must mobilize our full strength. We cannot win this fight if the UAW bureaucracy is keeping one of our hands—or, indeed, both hands—tied behind our backs.

The Network of Autoworkers Rank-and-File Committees calls on workers in every plant to demand emergency local meetings to pass resolutions calling for an all-out strike. We must take control of the battle ourselves and transform the UAW’s phony “stand-up” strike into a genuine strike. Every assembly plant, every stamping plant, every engine plant, every parts plant—every work location—must be on strike if this fight is to succeed.

UAW President Fain’s “expansion” of the strike on Friday is another stab in the back. Only two plants with a total of 7,000 workers were called out, the Ford Chicago Assembly Plant and the GM Lansing Delta Township Plant. This leaves 83 percent of us “standing up” on the job, without a contract, vulnerable to victimization, producing inventory and pumping out profits for the auto companies.

Significantly, no new plants were called out in Detroit, the center of auto production and therefore the center of our power. None of the companies’ main profit-making centers—Ford Dearborn and Kentucky Truck plants, which produce the F-150s, the GM Flint

and Fort Wayne plants, which make Chevy Silverados, and Stellantis Warren Truck and Sterling Heights Assembly, which produce Dodge Rams—were called out.

Fain specifically ordered the GM Lansing Regional Stamping plant to keep working Friday, despite being in the same complex as Delta Township, because it would have had a powerful and swift impact on production throughout GM’s operations. The Lansing stamping factory supplies GM’s assembly plants in Flint, Lansing Grand River, Fort Wayne, and Oshawa in Canada.

This week, Fain tells us that “significant progress” is being made at Stellantis, so no Stellantis plants were called out. Last week, it was Ford that was showing “progress,” so Fain took no action against Ford. Instead, the UAW announced strikes at GM and Stellantis parts distribution centers, which supply dealerships and have no impact on production.

Every week, Fain provides fewer and fewer details about what is being “negotiated” behind our backs. We are being told nothing of substance about the core demands of workers—a massive increase in wages, the restoration of COLA that fully keeps up with inflation, an end to tiers, the conversion of all current and future temps to full-time workers, full health care and pensions for all, and, perhaps most important, securities against the jobs bloodbath the companies are preparing as part of the EV transition.

Instead, we get empty rhetoric and deliberately ineffective action. The media and financial analysts, who calculate the impact of our strike in dollars and cents, are gloating over how it is having next to no impact on corporate profits.

We must take the visit by Biden to the picket lines this week as a warning. Fain and the UAW apparatus

present his tourist stop as some sort of great victory. And will the leopard also change its spots? This is the same president who intervened last year to block a rail strike and, with the support of both Democrats and Republicans, imposed a contract that workers had rejected. This is the same person who, as part of the Obama administration, oversaw the restructuring of the auto industry in 2009, accompanied by the expansion of tiers, the halving of wages for new hires, and the destruction of tens of thousands of jobs.

More important than Biden's 87-second "speech" on the picket lines was what the UAW apparatus, the White House and the companies are conspiring to do behind the scenes. They are preparing to announce a sellout, inevitably packaged as a "historic" agreement, which they hope can be forced through after we have been isolated and divided in this phony strike.

We must also take a warning from what is happening across the border in Canada. There, the Unifor apparatus announced the passage of an agreement at Ford by a razor thin 54 percent margin, in a vote that was marred by irregularities. Many workers were unable to submit a ballot, since the vote was conducted online and required up-to-date email addresses. More egregious still, the contract was voted down by skilled trades workers, and Unifor is overriding its own constitution to declare it ratified anyway. This is exactly what the UAW did in 2015 at GM.

An all-out strike cannot be delayed any longer! Every day that the overwhelming majority of Big Three workers stay on the job without a contract, more workers are victimized, and the companies stockpile more and more inventory.

This weekend, the contract expires for our brothers and sisters at Mack Trucks, and there is an enormous determination for a fight. But we can't let workers at Mack take to the picket lines while the vast majority of Big Three workers are kept in reserve.

Workers at non-striking plants are being made to feel as though we are scabs. Workers want to join the walkout, but we have to develop the means to overrule the biggest strikebreakers of all—Fain and the rest of the UAW bureaucracy.

All the justifications from the UAW apparatus for why we can't all be out are a pack of lies. We are told that the "stand-up" strike is keeping the companies guessing, but it is we that are left in the dark. They

claim that we have to preserve the strike fund, but the fund was built up with our dues money precisely for such a moment. It must be used to sustain all workers in a united battle, not pay out the six-figure salaries of union officials who will fight for nothing.

Brothers and sisters: If we are going to win this fight, we must take control of it! Demand local meetings to pass resolutions for an all-out strike. And if the UAW won't organize meetings, call them yourselves.

The UAW bureaucracy is completely hostile to any action which would actually be effective against the companies. Therefore, workers require rank-and-file committees in every plant and warehouse so that the will of the majority for an industry-wide strike can be realized.

Join a committee or get one started: Distribute this statement as widely as possible. Talk with your coworkers on the line, on breaks, after work and on social media. Share information and communicate with each other on different shifts and at different plants. There is no time to lose!

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Fill out the form below for more information on establishing a committee at your plant.



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