

“It should be all or nothing”

Stellantis Jeep and Ford Dearborn Truck workers join call for all-out strike

WSWS reporting team
3 October 2023

Sign up for text message updates on the auto contract fight by texting AUTO to (866) 847-1086. Join the next online meeting of the Autoworkers Rank-and-File Committee Network to discuss uniting Big Three and Mack Trucks workers for an all-out strike! Register here to attend.

Striking workers at the Stellantis Jeep complex in Toledo and workers still on the job at the Ford Dearborn Truck plant spoke to reporters from the *World Socialist Web Site* in recent days about the issues in their struggle. Many expressed opposition to the “stand up” strike policy of UAW President Shawn Fain—which has kept the vast majority of plants operating—and supported the call for an all-out strike.

The workers at the Toledo Jeep Assembly Complex, the only Stellantis assembly plant called out by the UAW, are in their third week of strike.

A young temp worker responding to the call by the Warren Truck Rank-and-File Committee for an all-out strike said she was “skeptical” of the “stand up” strike. When told that workers at Warren Truck were calling for an all-out strike, she said, “That is amazing. What are we paying them (UAW International) for?”

Another temp worker explained she had been working for Stellantis six years and still has not been given a full-time position. “There were 350 hired when we came in and they said we’d be turned over to full time. We were working 60-hour weeks when I started, but I was excited because I thought I could do well here like my aunt, she’s been here 30 years. At three years they still hadn’t switched me to full time, they promised me again that they would, but they didn’t. On top of that, they’re only letting me work 20 to 30 hours a week.”

A third worker said she agreed with the call for an all-out strike. “This is my first strike. The first week I thought ‘this is not a real strike. If we are on strike, why isn’t everyone on strike?’ Right now, you don’t know what to believe or expect. We should all be on strike. This will keep going on as long as we are not all standing together as one.”

Another worker who has nearly 20 years seniority said, “They are making record profits but don’t want to give any of that back. I have had a lot taken; it would be good to get a lot of that back. The last couple of negotiations it didn’t even look like they were trying to get a good contract.”

When a WSWS reporter explained why all plants should be on strike, he said, “We have been trusting there is a method to the madness (the “stand up strike”). I would love to see everyone go out on strike to get as much leverage as we can. The strike hasn’t made the same impact it would if we struck the big plants.”

Another worker said, “I’m hoping for things to turn out. But all this seems kind of fake to me. They only let a few plants go out and all the rest are still making profits for the companies. How’s that supposed to get us what we need?”

William said, “I worked nine years at Belvidere (Illinois plant closed by Stellantis last year). I’ve been around long enough to know the bureaucrats can’t be trusted. Remember Marchionne (former Fiat Chrysler CEO) and the UAW corruption? I’m telling you, there’s a lot of history that got us here, and it’s not a very good history.”

Another worker with 30 years experience said, “When I started in 1993, I was making \$16.69 an hour

and my rent was \$200 a month. Now they are starting people at \$15.77 an hour and rent is probably \$1,200. How do you justify that? That doesn't make sense. It shouldn't take five or six years for temps to be rolled over.

"The corruption in the UAW has caused a lot of this. The last contract should have been null and void; they all went to prison," he explained, pointing to the fact that the UAW leaders who negotiated the sellout agreements in 2015 and 2019 were convicted and sent to prison. It's not just the company that's screwed us, it's our own UAW for years."

A worker from the Stellantis MOPAR parts distribution center in Centerline, Michigan, outside of Detroit, also spoke to the WSWs. Workers at the facility were called out on strike September 22. "We don't need trickle down, we need a storm," she said, referring to the "stand up" strike. "It's not hurting the companies, it's hurting the people. If you are going to strike, then strike!"

Speaking of President Biden's recent visit to a UAW picket line she said, "Biden's a joke. They bailed out the companies with our tax money. I think they have it all worked out. This is about saving the companies money and keeping the bigger union peoples' pockets full."

WSWS reporters also spoke to workers at the Dearborn Truck Plant outside of Detroit. The workers assemble the top-selling and most profitable vehicles in the Ford line-up, the F-150 and all electric F-150 light trucks.

A worker entering the plant with the C Crew for the night shift said, "This is the dumbest thing I've ever done," referring to the "stand up" strike. "It should be all or nothing."

A young new hire on the A Crew at REV-C (Rouge Electric Vehicle Center) added, "Why didn't we strike the Dearborn Truck and REV-C? These are the money-makers. The UAW is working in Ford's favor. Put these electric trucks on pause. We would have had a contract by now. This would have been the perfect plant to strike."

Another young worker on the super-automated electric vehicle line added, "We need to cut off all their money. Every one of us should be on strike. The main ones they should have shut down are DTP and REV-C because these are their money-makers. We were all

ready to strike. I thought I was going to be part of history. We were going to help the people who have been here for years and years to get back what they gave up. Instead, it's just the opposite. The union ties our hands.

"Since they made REV-C, they have been cutting jobs from the beginning. They made our time to complete jobs shorter and shorter. A timer set for five minutes was made shorter and shorter until now all we have is a minute and 15 seconds. The big bosses are standing over you all the time harassing you."

A co-worker added, "I am not happy with how the strike is going. They are still allowing the company to make money. We are working with no contract. It's not right."



To contact the WSWs and the
Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact