

UAW president holds meetings at Mack Trucks to rein in rank-and-file rebellion

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United Auto Workers President Shawn Fain paid visits to striking Mack Trucks workers in Pennsylvania and Maryland on Saturday in an effort to get control of the growing rebellion against the UAW bureaucracy. Last weekend, nearly 4,000 Mack Trucks overwhelmingly rejected a UAW-backed sellout offer, voting it down by 73 percent.

During his weekly livestream Friday, Fain said, "This weekend, I'm heading to Pennsylvania to spend some time with our union family at Mack Trucks." Fain continued to talk out of both sides of his mouth, declaring the rejected TA "had bigger general wage increases than anything at Mack in recent memory" but that "members at Mack decided together that there was a better deal out there and that they were ready to strike to get it."

Rather than working to build support for the strike of 4,000 Mack Trucks workers, the aim of Fain's visit was to deploy the UAW bureaucracy to smother the growing strike movement among autoworkers.

The Fain administration has been put on the defensive after previously giving glowing praise to the sellout offer. In a personal letter included with the UAW's "highlights" of the contract, Fain had praised the deal, calling it a "record contract for the Heavy Truck industry."

The UAW had announced the tentative agreement at the 11th hour, minutes before the previous contract expired on October 1, in order to prevent a strike by Mack Trucks workers from encouraging calls for all-out strike action by auto and parts workers. Workers at Stellantis, Ford and General Motors have thus far been constrained to extremely limited "stand up" strikes by

the UAW, allowing the companies to continue making profits largely unimpeded.

Indeed, Mack Trucks workers knew there was a "better deal out there" than the UAW's sub-inflation raise of 19 percent after five years, no cost of living increases or protection of job security and a lengthening of the workday.

The hastily organized union hall meetings had little turnout from rank-and-file members, many of whom are contemptuous of the Fain administration's face-saving exercises after having tried to force through a pro-company tentative agreement only a week earlier.

"It was a joke," remarked a worker from Mack Truck's facility in Macungie, Pennsylvania, of Fain's visit. "The man had no clue about our contract offer." Other workers said the visit was intended to give "false promises for the weak-minded."

In union hall after union hall, Fain sought to play dumb, claiming he had been misled about the offer. Fain said "he didn't know much about our contract," a worker commented on Facebook. According to his account, Fain "endorsed it because he was going on what he was told."

Such an explanation reveals the UAW bureaucrat's contempt for workers' intelligence. Fain was obviously aware that the deal did not contain cost-of-living adjustments (COLA), and that the 19 percent pay increase over five years—an amount which averages 3.8 percent annually—would be more than eaten up by inflation.

"I just find it hard to believe he had no idea [what the TA had in it]," said a worker of Fain's comments. "Since he's preaching accountability he should then call out those people and hold them accountable," the worker added.

At the events, Fain continued to defer to the officials

supposedly responsible for misleading him about the rotten offer. “@ShawnFainUAW is telling UAW Local 171 that ‘we’re not trying to sell you anything’ while [Local 171 president] Bobby Keller literally argues in favor of a contract the workers ALREADY REJECTED IN THE VOTE,” wrote a worker on X.

Notably absent from Fain’s remarks was any indication that the UAW would pursue the type of strategy needed to win workers’ demands, such as mobilizing all Big Three workers on strike or increasing strike pay.

Instead, he promised more backroom negotiations, this time with his direct involvement.

Rather than assisting the Mack workers on strike, the UAW bureaucracy is marshaling all its resources to prevent the workers’ struggle from expanding beyond the picket lines at Mack Trucks.

The Mack Trucks strike is the cutting edge of a mounting rebellion against the UAW bureaucracy. The union leadership is currently using its “stand up” strike policy to isolate and wear down Ford, GM and Stellantis workers, calling out only a fraction of the UAW members at each company.

The “stand up” strike is increasingly being met with disgust from workers who have been forced to continue working without contracts, essentially compelled to stockpile inventory for the companies and weaken their own strike.

While Fain visited Mack Trucks to stop the mounting rebellion from reaching Detroit and the Big Three, Will Lehman—a rank-and-file socialist worker at Mack Trucks in Pennsylvania and presidential candidate in last year’s UAW election—visited Detroit this weekend to build support for an all-out strike.

Last week, members of the Mack Trucks Workers Rank-and-File Committee responded to Fain’s phony statements of support with an open letter demanding that all UAW Big Three members be called out.

“You say that it is our ‘solidarity and organization that will win a fair contract at Mack,’” the letter asked of Fain. “That begs the question: Why are you doing everything you can to block the solidarity of all autoworkers in our fight against the companies with your ‘stand up’ strike?”

The letter declares:

“We know that we face a bitter struggle at Mack Trucks against corporate executives determined to

protect their profits against our just demands. We also know that our fight would be enormously strengthened by a united fight with all our brothers and sisters in the Big Three. And their struggle would be enormously strengthened by a united fight with us.”

It concludes with a list of demands, calling for:

- All workers at the Big Three be called out immediately

- All negotiations be conducted on the basis of demands that meet our needs

- \$750 a week strike pay for all workers

- Rank-and-file control over negotiations



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