

Oppose the suppression of anti-genocide protests by the UAW bureaucracy and the Biden administration!

Will Lehman
26 January 2024

Will Lehman, the Pennsylvania Mack Trucks worker and socialist candidate for United Auto Workers president in last year's union election, issued the following statement denouncing the dragging out of pro-Palestinian protesters at the UAW's conference endorsing Biden for president this week.

My name is Will Lehman. I'm a rank-and-file worker at Mack Trucks in Macungie, Pennsylvania. I emphatically denounce the anti-democratic attack on pro-Palestinian protesters at the UAW's CAP ("Community Action Program") conference this week.

Shortly after President Biden took the stage at the conference, several UAW delegates stood up and chanted "Ceasefire now!" calling for an end to Israel's genocide in Gaza.

The union bureaucrats assembled at the conference immediately began shouting, "U-A-W," in an effort to drown the protest out. The protesters were then surrounded by UAW thugs and Secret Service agents and violently dragged from the hall while Biden and UAW President Fain looked on.

This flagrant violation of freedom of speech and freedom to protest was aimed not just at the protesters but all UAW workers.

Because opposition to the genocide in Gaza is so widespread among workers, the UAW executive board was recently compelled to adopt a resolution nominally supporting a ceasefire. But the endorsement of "Genocide Joe" by this same executive board shows that their ceasefire resolution was nothing but a cynical fraud.

Somewhere between 25,000-35,000 have been killed in Gaza, mostly women and children, and it wouldn't have been possible without Biden and the US

government's military and financial support of Israel.

It is a grotesque lie for the UAW leadership to claim that it is advancing the cause of workers in the US, while endorsing Biden, who is responsible for genocide in Gaza. It is impossible to support the interests of workers in the US while supporting a president and political party which are responsible for the mass murder of workers and youth in any other country.

The same ruling class that is carrying out genocide in Gaza is attacking our wages and jobs in the US and in other countries. And the reality is that workers can't fight for our rights here in America without standing up to defend the rights and lives of our class brothers and sisters around the world.

The decision by the UAW bureaucracy to endorse Biden for president was completely illegitimate. It was made by the UAW executive board without any say or involvement by rank-and-file workers. It is a further confirmation that Fain's administration has nothing to do with bringing "democracy" or "reform" to the UAW apparatus.

Workers have been forced to listen to Fain proclaim the glories of the "stand-up strike," but we see the reality of the contracts being pushed through, and we see through the lies. Biden is a lifelong defender of corporate America and is being presented as a supposed friend of the working class for spending a few minutes at the picket lines. Who can seriously believe this?

After the CAP conference, Fain reportedly told the press that the protesters were "exercising their democratic rights," but gave no explanation of why they were forcibly removed.

As a rank-and-file worker and UAW member, I demand that the UAW leadership provide a full

accounting of who made the decision to drag the pro-Palestinian protesters out of the conference and how that decision was made.

I also restate my support for the appeal by the Palestinian General Federation of Trade Unions, which called on workers internationally to “refuse to build weapons destined for Israel ... refuse to transport weapons to Israel ... [to] take action against complicit companies involved in implementing Israel’s brutal and illegal siege.”

In a video I posted in November that was later shared hundreds of thousands of times, I demanded that the UAW cease production of all equipment intended for the Israeli military and that all workers affected by such shutdowns be provided their full incomes by the corporations.

The attacks on our jobs and wages and war cannot be stopped by supporting or appealing to big business politicians, whether Biden or Trump. They will only be stopped by workers around the world uniting our struggles for our common class interests.



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