

Biden promotes Fain's sellout at Daimler Truck as another "historic" win

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30 April 2024

Daimler Truck workers, what do you think about the tentative contract? Contact the World Socialist Web Site by filling out the form below. All submissions will be kept anonymous.

In the days since the 11th hour deal reached Friday between the United Auto Workers and Daimler Truck, the tentative agreement is being widely trumpeted as another supposed victory for workers. The four-year contract covers over 7,000 workers at plants in North Carolina, Georgia and Tennessee.

In reality, even from the few "highlights" that have been revealed, it is clear that the deal meets none of workers' basic demands. In agreeing to the tentative deal only hours before a strike deadline, UAW President Shawn Fain and the union bureaucracy have run roughshod over the 96 percent strike vote by the membership.

The total 25 percent wage increase over four years hardly makes up for price rises since the last contract, let alone puts workers ahead. The bogus cost-of-living formula only provides pennies on the dollar. The claim that the contract eliminates tiers is equally false. In fact, workers will have to work three years to get top pay.

The same forces which promoted last year's contract for the Detroit automakers as an historic victory, are now saying the same about Daimler. But only weeks after that contract was ratified, the automakers began laying off thousands of workers, while the UAW and its backers maintained a guilty silence. It has even emerged that the UAW agreed to remove limits on mandatory overtime, with workers at Toledo Jeep now working 70-hour work weeks.

Among those promoting the Daimler deal was President Biden, who issued an official statement applauding the settlement as "a record contract." Others praising the sellout deal include Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders, who claimed Fain won a "historic contract" and North

Carolina Democratic Congressman Wiley Nickel III, who, speaking on the floor of Congress, claimed workers won a "record pay increase."

Also hailing the deal were pseudo left publications like *Labor Notes*, Workers Strike Back and others who are professional promoters of the UAW apparatus and the Democratic Party. These groups were all thrown into rapture by the recent unionization vote at the Chattanooga, Tennessee Volkswagen factory, where workers voted in favor of UAW recognition. But while the "yes" vote reflected a desire by VW workers to fight against the company, their illusions that the bureaucratic-controlled UAW will organize such a fight will be quickly shattered.

What these forces were really celebrating is the continued credibility of the UAW, promoted relentlessly by themselves as well as at the highest levels of the government, in spite of historic betrayals.

The reaction of rank-and-file workers to the Daimler contract stands in marked contrast to the official celebrations. No sooner had Fain announced the deal than posts began appearing on the message board expressing outrage and calling for a "no" vote.

Some of the comments read:

- "5258 (Mount Holly Freightliner Truck plant) was forgotten about," one worker said.

- Another posted, "Let's talk about the mass layoffs going on at Stellantis" and "I wonder what kind of raise Fain got?"

- One worker asked "Did they get a pension? Did they get their medical after they retire?"

- Yet another demanded, "Fain needs to fix the Stellantis plants NOW!"

There was another livestreamed event with Fain on Saturday in North Carolina after the strike was shut down, in which not a single new detail was revealed. The comment section revealed frustration and distrust from

the workers:

- “OK now give us the details” asked one viewer;
- “All I hear is TBD, what about Mount Holly?” posted another.
- And another, “Don’t be fooled people, read the fine print!”

To fight against this sellout and win their demands, workers should build rank-and-file committees in each plant to organize the widest possible “no” vote. These committees, democratically run by workers themselves, should hammer out their own demands and organize to enforce them against the sellouts in the UAW bureaucracy, drawing in the widest possible support from autoworkers in Detroit and across the world.

Fain’s Saturday livestream also had foul nationalist overtones. The no-doubt carefully vetted audience broke out into chants of “U S A, U S A” after Fain claimed that the new contract would assure the company would not relocate jobs to Mexico.

Fain also wore a sweatshirt displaying the silhouette of a B-24 bomber, with the slogan “Workers are the Arsenal of Democracy” on the back. Fain has worn this in every official appearance since he spoke at the *Labor Notes* conference last month.

The term “Arsenal of Democracy,” which Fain has borrowed from President Biden’s speeches, refers to the mobilization of American industry to fight World War II, with the help of a no-strike pledge by union officials. Under conditions where the US is actively supporting genocide in Gaza, a bloody proxy war in Ukraine and preparing for a future war with China, this can only mean that Fain is offering up autoworkers as fodder for a third World War.

While Daimler Truck is not currently a major military contractor, it is an important heavy manufacturing company, with critical links to supply chains, which the White House treats as a national security issue.

The fact that Joe Biden and Democratic Party leaders are supporting the tentative agreement speaks to the real character of this deal. Biden has continuously praised Fain as a “great labor leader” after appearing alongside him to promote the sellout auto contract last year. The so-called “most pro-union president in American history” is the same man who worked with Congress to outlaw a strike by railroad workers in 2022, and who is overseeing a police crackdown on anti-genocide protests.

Biden is actually vying for the title of most *pro-union-bureaucracy* president in US history. He is building up a wartime alliance with the union apparatus to suppress the

growing strike wave and prepare the “home front” for war.

Responding to the announcement of the Daimler agreement, rank-and-file Mack Trucks worker and socialist Will Lehman, who ran for UAW president against Fain, said, “People who are anti-war generally don’t wear sweatshirt with air force bombers on them, nor use their position as the head of a union to endorse a presidential candidate who has earned the nickname ‘Genocide Joe.’”

Last fall, workers at Mack Trucks waged a bitter fight in the teeth of UAW sabotage, with the UAW ultimately forcing through a sellout contract that met none of their demands by threatening that workers would lose their jobs if they did not vote “yes.”

Lehman noted that while Fain’s pay saw a 43 percent boost with his election to UAW president, workers at the Big Three got only 25 percent over 4 and a half years.

He continued:

The workers at the plants who have already been through these struggles have seen how the lies that Fain has peddled play out. He only wants the workers back to work, and wait for another four years until he pretends to do something for them. The thing he’s proudest of accomplishing that’s actually the truth, is securing new dues bases to fatten the UAW’s coffers. Workers need to examine the tentative agreement and take a real assessment of how far their buying power has fallen. What CEO or shareholders have lost money as the result of Fain’s contracts? He has yet to cut into the bottom line of any of the owners of the plants.



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