

For a national strike to fight 20,000 more job cuts at UPS!

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Shipping giant United Parcel Service (UPS) announced Tuesday that it will eliminate 20,000 jobs and shut down 73 facilities in the US by June, as part of a sweeping cost-cutting drive laid out in its first quarter earnings report to investors. The move is the latest in a global wave of mass layoffs, both within UPS and worldwide.

The cuts will have devastating consequences for an already extremely exploited workforce. UPS workers are overwhelmingly young, largely part-time, with little opportunity to move up to full-time or stable positions. Many are forced to live with multiple roommates just to make ends meet. Full-timers, desperate to retain their status after job cuts, are sleeping in their cars between split shifts at some facilities. Delivery drivers face harassment from management, which still refuses to install air conditioning in vehicles.

The layoffs are part of a wider social counterrevolution, spearheaded by the Trump administration. With the support of his Democratic Party enablers, who also serve Wall Street and are more afraid of the working class than fascism, Trump has cut over 100,000 federal jobs, is imposing sweeping consumption taxes on workers in the form of tariffs and is slashing Medicaid, food stamps, Social Security and other key social programs.

Trump is gutting regulatory agencies, installing corporate figures such as former Amazon and UPS “safety” executive David Keeling to “lead” the destruction of Occupation Health and Safety Administration (OSHA). The pick of Keeling was hailed by the Teamsters bureaucracy.

More than that, the fascist-minded president is erecting a dictatorship in order to crush domestic dissent.

The immediate justification for the UPS layoffs is the

impact of Trump’s tariffs. The tariffs are a weapon in the US ruling class’s drive toward world war aimed, above all, at China and other adversaries of American capitalism. But by far the greatest concern of the ruling class is the growth of opposition in the working class, in the US and throughout the world.

The jobs bloodbath at UPS is the next stage of this global class war. Mass layoffs begun in the federal government are now extending to broader sections of the private sector. Logistics workers are the canary in the coal mine because they are the key transmission lever for the whole economy. The Port of Los Angeles is expecting a 35 percent drop-off in volume *next week*, and domestic freight trucking is expected to plummet by late May. Within weeks and even days, layoffs will quickly spread to other industries.

Every worker in America is looking at the UPS layoffs and asking: “Am I next?”

A line in the sand must be drawn! The layoffs must be met with mass resistance—through unified action by workers at UPS, across the logistics industry and in every sector in the US and internationally.

This requires a rebellion against the pro-corporate union bureaucracy and the building of the UPS Workers Rank-and-File Committee, as part of the International Workers Alliance of Rank-and-File Committees (IWA-RFC).

The trade union apparatus is doing nothing to oppose the escalating assault on the working class. The AFGE federal workers union has fired half its staff instead of mounting any effort to oppose the cuts. The Teamsters, the port unions on both coasts and the United Auto Workers are openly backing Trump’s “America First” policies.

The Teamsters’ empty posturing—claiming it will “fight” layoffs only “if” the company violates a vague

pledge to create 30,000 jobs—is beneath contempt. In reality, tens of thousands of jobs have already been eliminated since the Teamsters blocked a national strike and pushed through the sellout 2023 contract based on lies.

Only through a rebellion to tear themselves out of the straitjacket of the sellout bureaucrats and transfer power to the shop floor can workers prepare a coordinated counteroffensive and develop an independent strategy.

Rank-and-file committees should be formed in every factory and industry to begin discussing coordinated action, up to and including a general strike. The working class cannot simply allow one section after another to be broken off and crushed. It requires the unified resistance by the whole working class.

The experience with Sean O'Brien, whose 2021 election was hailed by the pseudo-left as a break with the union's corrupt past, exposes once again the lie that the bureaucracy can be reformed. Every "reformer," including Shawn Fain in the United Auto Workers, has only spearheaded even deeper betrayals.

In contrast, the UPS Workers Rank-and-File Committee consistently warned workers about O'Brien and the union bureaucracy. It opposed the sellout 2023 contract, warning it would pave the way for mass layoffs. Throughout 2024, it sounded the alarm over the "Network of the Future" job-cutting plan, holding public meetings to inform workers and organize resistance.

UPS workers must mobilize against the oligarchic principle, endorsed by the bureaucrats, which subordinates all decisions to the bottom line of Wall Street.

The resistance of workers to mass layoffs must be combined with a broader fight against Trump and dictatorship. Key to both is the fight to overthrow the union bureaucracy. Its inability and refusal to defend jobs and its open hostility to workers expressed in its support for Trump show that it serves no useful purpose and should be abolished.

We propose that workers concentrate around the following demands:

- **The right to a job and livable income!** All layoffs since the ratification of the contract must be revoked with full back pay.
- **End part-time slavery!** Full-time jobs must be

available for all who want it, with fully funded pensions and healthcare for all.

- **Massive wage increases to make up for decades of decline!** Adjusted for inflation, a UPS warehouse worker in 1978 made the equivalent of \$40 per hour. Pay must be brought up to this level and indexed to real inflation.

The developing movement at UPS is the opening stage of a broader struggle by the working class against capitalist exploitation. This must become a fight for the expropriation of UPS and other major corporations—Amazon, the auto giants and beyond—to be transformed into public utilities under the democratic control of the working class.

There is growing social opposition in the United States, fueled by hatred of staggering inequality enforced by both the Democrats and Republicans and the escalating campaign of social reaction spearheaded by Trump and his government of oligarchs.

It is critical for the working class to intervene as an independent force, through an industrial counteroffensive and a political struggle for workers' power and socialism, in the US and around the world.

This is the subject of the online May Day rally this Saturday at 3:00 p.m. Eastern, sponsored by the International Committee of the Fourth International. We call on all workers to register and attend at wsws.org/mayday.



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