

Mack Truck workers issue statement: Support the strike at John Deere!

Mack Truck Workers Rank-and-File Committee
17 November 2021

To join the Mack Truck Workers Rank-and-File Committee, contact us via text at (484) 466-8841.

The Mack Trucks Workers Rank-and-File Committee expresses its strong solidarity with striking workers at John Deere and calls on them to vote down the sellout contract put forward by the United Auto Workers by the widest possible margin.

You are not alone. Right now, across many industries and across the globe many workers are striking or pushing for strike action to fight for their own rights and material gains.

Globally, more than 170,000 metal workers recently went on strike in South Africa, oil and health care workers have taken strike action in Sri Lanka and many parents in Britain have participated in weekly #ParentStrike protests against unsafe school reopenings.

In America too, workers are beginning to fight back against years of corporate exploitation and union-backed sellouts. This includes, just this year, Frito Lay and Kellogg's in the food industry, workers at auto parts maker Dana, Volvo Trucks workers at the New River Valley plant in Virginia, as well as thousands of teachers, nurses and others.

Workers are realizing their value, rising inflation pushes more and more of us into battle against the corporations' attempts to push us further into poverty. At the Mack Trucks plant in Macungie, Pennsylvania, Vice President and general manager of Lehigh Valley Operations, Gunnar Brunius, has sent out letters complaining about backlog and strain. Mack has been posting hiring ads for months and months, and management has been unable to fill vacancies.

But far from carrying out a fight to maintain our living standards, the UAW is shielding the companies, setting up a series of hurdles in a bid to force workers

to accept concessions.

The tactics the UAW is employing at John Deere, forcing you to re-vote on a contract you already rejected, are the same sellout tactics that it pioneered against our Volvo Trucks coworkers at New River Valley Volvo earlier this year to shut down their five-week strike (Mack Trucks is owned by Volvo Trucks, and we share the same supply chains). During that strike, the UAW made us handle scab parts, while they starved workers out at NRV on \$275 a week out of our 800 million dollar strike fund. Meanwhile the UAW reserves far larger sums of money for itself, showering hundreds of top officials with six figure salaries while workers walking the picket line struggle to make ends meet.

Meanwhile, the massive UAW corruption scandal continues after the self-proclaimed "reforms" under former president Rory Gamble. The financial secretary of UAW Local 412 in Detroit, Timothy Edmunds, has been charged with embezzling over \$2 MILLION in union funds, our money. The union's federal monitor Neil Barofsky said last week that he had 15 open investigations into union officials, not including a case against President Ray Curry for accepting thousands of dollars worth of football tickets from a union vendor. There is no reason to trust any UAW rep who says, "we don't have the money to pay workers on strike!"

To our Mack brothers and sisters, is there any doubt that the UAW will betray us in the same manner at contract time if we trust the same losing system we have been operating under for decades? We need to be there to support the workers at John Deere. We need to build ties across our industry so we can carry out the fights necessary to keep us all from sliding into poverty.

The purpose of our committee is not to reform the

UAW. It is for us workers to organize and lead ourselves, throughout the auto industry and in the working class as a whole. To fight these massive multinational corporations, we need to unify the working class across national and sectional boundaries, take the initiative out of the hands of organizations that keep betraying our fights and “leading” us down blind alleys. The watchword for our committee, which the UAW long ago abandoned, is, “an injury to one is an injury to all!” This is why our members are also participating in the Deere Strike Rank-and-File Solidarity Committee .

Moreover, this means a fight against the entire corporate political establishment. The Democrats and Republicans are parties of the rich. The primary difference between them, as far as the struggles of the working class are concerned, is that the Democrats rely more heavily upon the services of the unions to isolate and betray us.

Just after the UAW shut down the Volvo Trucks strike, and after we formed our own committee at Mack Trucks, Biden visited the Mack plant in Macungie, Pennsylvania to promote trade war in collaboration with the unions. Today, while you are voting, Biden will be in Detroit at a GM plant for the same reason, embracing and posing for photos with the same crooks who are selling out our struggle.

The companies must be made to pay what they owe. We are the only ones who can make that happen. Our rank-and-file committee has met with John Deere’s rank-and-file committee, and we will continue to meet in the future. We hope the workers can hold out despite the UAW’s attempts to curb their fight and we are working to expand our rank-and-file committee to empower the fights of our brothers and sisters to new heights.

For anyone that thinks we have to wait for contract time to fight, Mack doesn’t wait until contract time to make changes for their benefit. They implemented the points system to penalize us for attendance without waiting for contract time. Mack lays off workers as they see fit without waiting for contract time.

Mack has been allowed to do what they want whenever they feel like it and that needs to stop, we need to be the ones to stop it. We must forge the path ahead for ourselves and for our brothers and sisters in our class, the working class.



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