

# “Now is the time to stand up and fight back”: Striking Dakkota parts workers speak from the picket line

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*Work at Dakkota? Fill out the form at the end to tell us what you are striking for and to discuss forming a rank-and-file committee. We also encourage Ford Chicago and other area workers to send in statements of support. Your identity will be kept confidential.*

**Ford workers: “Why are we building with scab parts?”**

Over 360 autoworkers at the Dakkota Integrated Systems parts plant on Chicago’s Far South Side entered their fourth day on strike Saturday against poverty wages and poor working conditions.

Anger has continued to grow at Ford Chicago against the handling of scab parts.

The Dakkota workers, members of UAW Local 3212, voted down One outraged worker said on social media, “So, every part we use is assembled UAW-endorsed tentative agreement by 83 percent last Saturday, after by a scab.” Another asked, “Why are we building with scab parts?” Yet another earlier overwhelming strike authorization vote. On Wednesday, they said, “Where is the solidarity in this? This is embarrassing.”

on strike at noon. But the company had been training temps to work as Another asked, “Why don’t we just go back on strike on behalf of Dakkota?” scab labor in the event of a strike, which the UAW did nothing to stop. Workers at Ford Chicago should take the initiative and organize rank-and-file

At the same time, workers at the nearby Ford Chicago Assembly Plant mass meetings to vote on and enforce a ban on scab-made parts, to enact genuine (CAP), which Dakkota supplies, are growing outraged that they are made solidarity with their brothers and sisters at Dakkota.

to handle scab parts and continue working under orders from the United At the same time, striking Dakkota workers must be on alert against the Auto Workers (UAW) leadership. inevitable next attempt at a sellout by the UAW bureaucracy, which has

In 2023, Dakkota made an estimated \$1.1 billion in revenue, according repeatedly betrayed struggles at the Big Three and in parts plants like Lear and to job placement firm Zippia. The company is privately held and does not publicly release earnings. anywhere.

Dakkota workers at a Louisville, Kentucky, plant also rejected a “last information and mobilize to expand their fight to meet their demands, including a best and final” offer by the company in June. In March, the company 50 percent wage increase, an eight-hour work day, better working conditions and announced its Canadian plant in Windsor, Ontario would be subject to closure, affecting 138 workers.

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WSWS *Autoworker Newsletter* reporters visited the picket lines Friday, speaking with workers about the issues motivating their strike.

**“This strike really opened my eyes”**

“When I started the conditions and the benefits and everything was alright,” said a worker. “I started off at \$15 an hour with 12 hour shifts. Then we worked Other striking Dakkota workers spoke on the abysmal pay and working through the pandemic and there were some promises made that were never kept conditions they faced.

feel like we were already in a bad contract. We still persevered and everybody “I’ve worked here for three years,” one worker said. “I’m fighting for better still came to work and worked hard, but the majority of the people here were rights, better pay and for our wages to go up with the cost of living. Workers at the seniority stage so we were capped at about \$20 an hour. McDonalds in Chicago make more than us. I’m a factory worker, a fork-lift

“We want a fair contract. Who wants to come to work miserable because you driver. It’s supposed to be a skilled position, but they don’t label us that so they know that what you’re making isn’t going to take care of what you need to take don’t have to pay us. Your job is not fighting for you, it’s fighting you. care of? I feel like we are two levels behind the cost of living. It hasn’t changed This strike really opened my eyes. They brought temps in day by day just to since the pandemic for us. In no way. replace our jobs. That was mind blowing.

“In the most recent contract, they were offering some things like more vacation The offer we rejected was pennies. It was basically pitiful. When you add up days and time off, stuff like that. But the pay just wasn’t right. It was crumbs. The retro pay, it’s 50 cents for three to four months.”

new people they offered \$17 an hour. And for those of us that have been here they I work about 42 hours a week, 6 p.m. to 6 a.m. And then on the side when I’m only offered us a \$2 increase. That’s nothing.” off, I do Grubhub, Uber Eats and Amazon Delivery. I do that on the weekends.

Speaking on the exploitation of the workers by the company, he added, “Between all the jobs I work, I do 60 hours a week. I’m away from my family and companies are making billions easy. They’re not building the cars, we are. We’re working more than I’m home. I’m a husband and a father. I would get a are the ones putting out 700-800 new cars daily. They’re not doing that. And that better job, but I put so much time here. I was holding out for the next contract to see what we can get. We deserve more. Dakkota is a billion-dollar company. And

