

“Vote no! We deserve a lot better!”: Dakkota auto parts workers furious after UAW announces snap vote on sellout deal to shut down the strike

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Work at Dakkota, Ford or in the auto industry? Fill out the form below to get involved with the Autoworkers Rank-and-File Committee Network at your plant.

The International Workers Alliance of Rank-and-File Committees (IWA-RFC) is holding a meeting this Sunday, August 25, at 3:00 p.m. US Eastern Time, “For global action to defend jobs at Warren Truck and around the world!” To register, [click here](#).

On Monday evening, the United Auto Workers abruptly announced a tentative agreement in a bid to shut down the strike by over 450 Dakkota Integrated Systems auto parts workers in Chicago.

UAW Local 3212 sent a message to strike captains in the evening which read, “Tentative Agreement has been reached, Q&A and vote Tuesday at 9:00 AM until 8:00 PM. Wednesday 4:00 PM until 8:00 PM.”

No contract sprung on workers in such a fashion, with workers being made to vote sight unseen on a deal announced only hours before, can be anything other than a sellout. Workers should reject it on principle.

Confirming that the UAW apparatus is trying to ram through a pro-company deal, workers who attended Local 3212’s “informational” meeting Tuesday morning told the WSWS the contract was the same as one they had previously rejected by 87 percent, with only a slightly higher sign-on bonus.

A Dakkota worker told the WSWS, “They brought us the same contract just worded and numbered differently like we’re slow but it’s our Union that has no respect for us to even do so.”

The contract proposal would impose poverty wages for new and senior workers. The current deal proposes \$16.80 for new hires on year one and \$18 at the end of the

contract. Senior workers will get \$21 and top out at \$25. The only difference is a slight increase of the bonus to \$2,500 from \$1,700, in effect a bribe and a slap in the face to the Dakkota workers who have been on strike fighting for higher wages, benefits and better working conditions.

Significantly, the announcement of a tentative agreement at Dakkota was made shortly before UAW President Shawn Fain spoke at the Democratic National Convention, where he blustered that the union was prepared to strike in defense of jobs. While the UAW has donated \$1.5 million to the Democratic Party, it has strung Dakkota workers out on the picket line without any strike pay.

The attempt to shut down the strike also serves to isolate workers at Stellantis, where the UAW has been compelled by rank-and-file anger over mass layoffs to issue a strike threat. Last week, Stellantis announced that it would lay off nearly 2,500 workers at its Warren Truck plant in Michigan, raising the possibility of its eventual closure. Since the end of the limited “stand-up strike” last year, where the majority of workers in the Big Three were kept on the job, thousands of autoworkers have lost their jobs, particularly supplemental workers.

The real reason the UAW is attempting to shut down the strike is to prevent the workers at Warren Truck and Dakkota, Ford and other sectors of the auto industry from linking up and developing a rank-and-file counteroffensive against the attack on jobs, wages and working conditions. There was also growing opposition of Ford Chicago workers to the use of scab parts from the struck plant.

But to prevent a defeat, rank-and-file Dakkota workers must take full control of the strike and expand this

struggle. Workers should join and build rank-and-file committees at Ford Chicago Assembly and Dakkota, who issued an important statement on Friday: “Support the Dakkota workers strike! Ban scab parts and launch a rank-and-file counteroffensive!”

“Our union is selling us out!”

A newer Dakkota worker told the WSWs: “Our union is selling us out. We’ve been out here the last three weeks, and we haven’t received strike pay.”

He continued:

They announced another tentative agreement. They’re trying to get us to go back to work. We’re supposed to vote on it tomorrow and Wednesday. This new agreement is basically the same as the old agreement. The only thing is a 90 cent raise we heard. They’re using a bigger bonus to entice the people who have been here less time.

They’re having us vote the same day as seeing the agreement on the same day. Our union is selling us out. You have our own union officials coercing people on the line, telling us this a good contract and that we should sign it! Our union representative, she’s telling people on the line it’s a good contract! She’s telling strike captains to tell them that. She hasn’t even held a picket sign in two weeks herself!

He added that he was going to urge other workers to reject the agreement:

I will tell everyone to “Vote No!” tomorrow when I get there. A lot of us are going to the union hall at 12 o’clock. And I will stand up there and tell them, this is not how the process is supposed to go! This paper is not the whole contract. We need to see the “low lights” of the contract. We need time to study the whole contract. This offer is nowhere near enough.

This process is not correct either. They’re forcing us to vote on the same day to vote on the

contract. That’s not right. The last contract they gave us a two-sheet paper, telling us everything that changed. But they didn’t give us the “low lights.” They just highlighted things we’d like to see.

“Vote no! We deserve a lot better!”

A veteran worker said:

The union is selling us out, man. Everybody on my line on my shift are mostly senior people. They’re not going to accept it. They can’t sign something without our vote. They can’t make us sign—basically force us—into a contract we’re not okay with. I’m telling everyone, vote no! We deserve a lot better!

The majority of the people I talked to, they’re not going to accept it. 90 cents? That is garbage. They’re still spitting in our face after the last agreement. We’re not voting “Yes.” We’re voting “No.” This was too quick.

Some union negotiating guy came here to tell us it’s a “fair contract.” How do you know it’s fair for us? They tried to silence me from speaking out.

We’re nowhere near where we need to be. We need to make a lot more, \$28-\$30 an hour. It’s a whole bunch of BS.

We’re autoworkers. We make this world move around. We make super money and profits for them. We deserve a lot better!

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