FULL SUPPORT TO THE BRADFORD WHITE STRIKE IN MIDDLEVILLE, MICHIGAN!

BY WILL LEHMAN
Mack Trucks worker and rank-and-file candidate for UAW president

I extend my solidarity to the 1,200 workers at Bradford White in Middleville, Michigan who struck on September 16 against low wages being eaten up by inflation, grueling 50-60-hour workweek schedules and health care concessions. This fight must have the support of every autoworker and be broadened to every Bradford White plant.

Workers have already voted down two rotten agreements by 96 percent margins while UAW officials extended the contract for two weeks to carry on further fruitless negotiations. Now workers have decided to take a decisive stand stating they are no longer going to tolerate declining real wages and abusive conditions.

This fight deserves the full support of every worker. But Bradford White workers should be warned: the UAW apparatus will seek to end this strike with a repackaged version of the same rejected contract, exactly as it did at Nexteer, Dana, Bridgewater, Eaton, GE Aerospace, University of California and other locations. Fain's statement of support is aimed at covering up this fact.

Draw the lessons of the sellouts engineered by Fain at the Big Three plants in 2023, after the bogus "Stand Up" strike that kept the majority of the workers on the job. The "victory" Fain claims the bureaucracy won was followed by mass layoffs, forced overtime, and the deaths of four workers at Stellantis and Ford. Look at what really happened at Nexteer, Dana and other auto parts plants. The UAW bureaucracy uses its control over strike authorization, strike pay, and the ratification process to sabotage militancy. The UAW will seek to withhold or delay strike pay and schedule a ratification vote on a repackaged deal on short notice without releasing the full details of its deal.

To prevent the UAW apparatus from repeating this scenario at Bradford White strikers should immediately establish a rank-and-file committee of their own, elected by and accountable to the workers, to publish their demands, supervise any ratification vote, and demand full strike pay. The $857 million in the strike fund is paid for by the members and it must be used to sustain those in battle not pad the salaries of corrupt UAW officials.

A rank-and-file committee must reach out to workers at Bradford White's other plants and to parts workers and workers at the Big Three to transform an isolated strike into a unified offensive. I am running for UAW president not to gain a position in the apparatus but to build a powerful movement from below so rank-and-file workers can take the conduct of our struggles into our own hands.

JOIN THE FIGHT FOR WORKERS' POWER!

Get involved with the rank-and-file campaign in the UAW elections.

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