MOBILIZE THE RANK AND FILE AGAINST WARREN TRUCK JOB CUTS!



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

As candidate for UAW president, I am outraged by Stellantis' decision to eliminate the third shift at the Warren Truck Assembly Plant. This is an act of corporate terrorism which every worker must oppose.

I campaigned at Warren Truck in August, and spoke to midnight shift workers whose jobs are under threat. Many are single mothers who are now losing their incomes as the winter approaches and as the cost of heat, electricity and other expenses continues to surge. Others quit full-time jobs with vacation time and other benefits because company, city, and UAW officials claimed their jobs were secure.

Lehman speaking to Warren Truck workers in August 2022

In response to the job cuts, UAW Local 140 President Eric Graham declared, "No one is being laid off." This is a lie, and he knows it. In a letter to the state of Michigan, copied to Graham, the plant manager says, the move "may result in a job loss" which "are considered to be permanent." It continues, "Affected employees who are represented by UAW Local 140 will not have bumping rights…"

Hundreds of supplemental and temporary workers may lose their jobs on the third shift or be bumped off from other shifts. The UAW bureaucrats may consider SEs as "nobodies" who can be tossed out like garbage, but these are our brothers and sisters, and we must defend them.

Last week, the company sent its top manufacturing executive from Europe, Arnaud Deboeuf, to threaten workers at the factory. If they did not bow to management's demands for higher productivity, he said, the entire factory could be shut down. Far from opposing this blackmail, the UAW officials functioned as the message boys for the auto bosses. Now the company has carried out the first phase of its attack.

My campaign for UAW president is aimed at building a mass movement of the rank and file to stop this type of corporate terrorism. I am the only candidate for UAW president who is advancing a workers' agenda and a socialist agenda. I am not concerned with the privatized profits of the corporations and the payouts to the corporate executives, shareholders and UAW bureaucrats. My only concern is with the welfare of workers—SEs, second-tier, legacy and retirees.

This is not only an attack on Warren Truck workers. It is a message to workers at JNAP, SHAP, Mack, Toledo, Belvidere, and all the other plants, including at GM and Ford. With the contract coming up next year, the companies are going to use the threat of mass unemployment, and the collusion of the UAW apparatus, to demand new concessions from workers.

There is a basic principle for the workers' movement, which the UAW bureaucrats have long defiled: "An injury to one, is an injury to all!" It is the responsibility for all workers to come to the defense of the Warren Truck workers and to prepare collective action to defend every single job.

If the companies say they need fewer workers to build cars, trucks and electric vehicles, what they really mean is they require fewer hours of labor. If

that's the case, then the rational solution is to reduce the number of hours we work, from 40 to 30 hours, with no loss of pay, rather than cutting jobs. The company has pocketed more than enough from our labor to secure the jobs and living standards of the workers who build these vehicles.

Stellantis made a net profit of $7.98 billion in the first half of 2022, up 34 percent compared to the first half of 2021. It paid its CEO, Carlos Tavares, $20.5 million, more than 300 times the average worker, plus a stock and long-term compensation package of nearly $60 million. It was the workers, including the workers at Warren Truck, who produced the wealth, not Tavares, Deboeuf and the other corporate executives.

To stop the competition between workers to see who is going to work for the worst pay and conditions, and to protect all jobs, we must build rank-and-file committees to transfer power from the corrupt UAW apparatus to workers on the shop floor. It is time the autoworkers in Detroit and other cities to draw a hard line: No to corporate terrorism. Yes, to the right of every worker to a secure and good paying job! To help carry forward this fight, support my campaign for UAW president.

JOIN THE FIGHT FOR WORKERS' POWER!

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

willforuawpresident.org/get-involved