FOR AN INSURGENT SLATE OF RANK-AND-FILE WORKER DELEGATES TO THE UAW CONVENTION!



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

UAW Sisters and Brothers,

Many members may not yet be aware that a new election is taking place this year for UAW president and other national offices. But it begins now—through delegate nominations and elections in every local. If the rank and file doesn't organize to win those delegate elections, the bureaucracy will control the Constitutional Convention in June and make sure only those loyal to the apparatus can run for top officer positions.

That's why I'm urging workers to form an **insurgent slate of rank-and-file delegates** and to demand a real, democratic delegate process in every local. The only way "one member, one vote," will have any meaning is if workers—not the corrupt bureaucracy—can democratically choose who to vote for.

I am a Mack Trucks worker in Macungie, Pennsylvania, and I ran for UAW president in the last election. I am running again because the rank and file must take power out of the hands of the entrenched apparatus and put it where it belongs: in the hands of workers on the shop floor.

This campaign is not about getting me into some cushy office at Solidarity House — I'm not going to be moving there. I will stay on the shop floor. The aim of this campaign is not to replace one official with another, but to abolish a pro-corporate bureaucracy that has enforced concessions, isolated workers, and protected its own privileges while conditions in the plants and workplaces get worse.

WE CAN'T ALLOW VOTER SUPPRESSION AGAIN

In the last UAW election, there was systematic voter suppression. Many members never received ballots, information was withheld, and the process was dominated by an apparatus that does not represent us. Only 9 percent of the membership voted in the first round, and a substantial section of this vote was from the apparatus itself.

Shawn Fain—a long-time functionary in the UAW International—came to power promising "change" and the "democratization" of the UAW. Instead, he presided over backroom deals with employers, phony "stand-up" strikes that kept workers on the job, continued corruption and ongoing betrayals. In other words, he is just the figurehead leading the same old bureaucracy.

That cannot be allowed to happen again.

This election must become a means for rank-and-file workers to assert our own interests—independently of the officials, their corporate "partners," and the politicians who speak for the companies. If we leave this election in the hands of the bureaucracy, they will use the same methods as before to block genuine opposition and keep control.

THE DELEGATE ELECTIONS ARE A CRITICAL BATTLEFIELD

In the coming days and weeks, every local will hold nominations and elections for delegates to the Constitutional Convention June 15-18 in Detroit, where candidates for national office will be nominated.

Indeed, some locals have already held barely publicized nominating meetings and closed the door on further nominations. This includes UAW L. 2209 at the GM Ft. Wayne, Indiana plant whose 4,000 workers make up nearly 10 percent of the active UAW membership at GM. Our campaign has also received word that UAW Local 1097 in Rochester, New York and Local 2300 at Cornell University have already carried out delegate elections.

That is why I am calling on workers who support this campaign to intervene directly in the delegate nominations and elections to ensure that there are delegates at the convention who will represent the rank and file, not the apparatus—and who will fight to nominate and advance this campaign.

I urge workers to demand that your local hold a well-publicized meeting where delegate nominations are taken and that delegates are selected democratically, with full notice to the membership, clear rules, and an end to backroom maneuvers.

This is a practical and urgent task. If we elect rank-and-file delegates, we can begin transforming the election into a movement of workers ourselves.

WHAT THIS CAMPAIGN IS FIGHTING FOR

This campaign is about fighting to:

- **Abolish the bureaucracy and build rank-and-file power.** The UAW apparatus functions as an arm of management—enforcing concessions, isolating struggles, and policing workers. We fight to replace it with rank-and-file committees in every plant and local, with full democratic control.
- **End corporate collaboration—fight for what workers need.** This campaign is for a real reversal of decades of concessions: major wage increases to make up for lost ground and inflation; the abolition of tiers and all forms of temporary labor; an end to layoffs, plant closures, and “restructuring”; and workers’ control over safety, staffing, and line speed. We fight for secure, affordable healthcare for active workers and guaranteed, fully funded retiree benefits, including protection of pensions and cost-of-living increases for retirees.
- **International unity of the working class.** The corporations operate globally and coordinate attacks across borders. The bureaucracy’s nationalism divides us by company, plant, and country and is increasingly used to scapegoat immigrants. We fight for unity with workers in Canada, Mexico, and beyond, support cross-border actions, and insist: an injury to one is an injury to all—no worker is “illegal.”
- **Defend democratic rights and oppose war.** The same corporate-state forces attacking living standards are escalating repression at home and war abroad. This campaign fights to mobilize the social power of workers—through independent organization and united action—to defend democratic rights, oppose militarism, and put human needs ahead of profit.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

If you want to help, I’m asking you to take the next steps: Read my campaign program and sign up to get involved in this campaign.

In solidarity,

Will Lehman Candidate 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