WORKERS VANGUARD

Supplement 28 October 2023

25% Won't Turn the Tide!

A 25 percent raise, promises of COLA and other items on offer from the Big 3 aren't nothing. But they won't turn the tide for the working class and oppressed in this country or even in Detroit. On October 20, Fain said: "If we stand together, if we have faith, we will win. Not just a good contract. Not just a record contract. But a contract that turns the tide." We all know this is a fight for the whole working class, but what's on offer is just a drop in the bucket compared to what's needed. The deal also leaves tiers in place and temp workers out in the cold. In the beginning, Fain was clear that 40 percent wasn't just a bargaining tactic. It reflected the raises the bosses got and, more importantly, what workers need to be able to survive.

We are being ruined by deindustrialization and inflation. Attacks by the bosses during the COVID-19 pandemic destroyed workers' lives and livelihoods worldwide. Sellout contracts and givebacks in auto have devastated the whole metro Detroit area. The UAW strike has the potential to turn things around, but to do that requires a fundamentally different perspective and strategy from Fain's.

The situation in Detroit is potentially explosive, despite Fain sending workers back without even having seen the contract. BCBS is still out. The casino workers are still out. Detroit is still the most segregated city in America, and black people are

still fed up with the racist abuse they get from the bosses and their cops. Auto workers must *resume* and *escalate* the strike to get what they need—end tiers, rebuild Detroit and fight for black liberation. If auto workers keep up the fight and unite all these struggles against the common enemy, it would rapidly change things.

The bosses and their government are weakened and overextended. They're funding the war in Ukraine and genocide in Gaza to try and maintain their international standing. A hard fight in auto right now would not only throw a wrench in their destructive plans but could also *quickly win* far more than what's on offer in the current tentative agreement with Ford.

It's possible to turn the tide. The problem is Fain's strategy. Fain has dragged this on, refused to mobilize the masses in Detroit and demoralized workers who have been out since the beginning. Six weeks of reporting to picket duty and being told by the leadership that they can't stop scabs has made some folks question why they have been out there. Now many just want to get back to work. It's not time to settle just because the Ford TA is all Fain's strategy can get. Now is the time for the strategy required to get what we need and advance the cause of the working class and oppressed worldwide! *Don't abandon the picket lines! Vote down this contract! Spread the strike! Stop the scabs!*

