



Speak Out Now

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The UPS Contract – Now It's Up to the Workers

On July 25, the bargaining team of the Teamsters union and United Parcel Service (UPS) reached a tentative agreement on a five-year contract for more than 340,000 workers. Teamster members will vote on the contract, from August 3 to August 22.

UPS management and the union's top officials, along with the U.S. Department of Labor are all claiming that it is a good contract and seem confident that the workers will vote to ratify it. There are some positive changes, that could cost UPS some money. But we have to be a little suspicious when UPS CEO, Carol Tomé, says that the contract is a "win-win-win agreement" for all involved. Teamster president Sean O'Brien said, "We demanded the best contract in the history of UPS, and we got it... We've changed the game... This contract sets a new standard in the labor movement and raises the bar for all workers."

There are real gains, compared to the past 20+ years of takeaways. But UPS hasn't changed its goal of maximizing its profits. Last year it reported profits of more than \$11 billion. And it has to guarantee a similar level of profits to the banks and other stockholders. So, anything given with one hand they will try to take with the other. Many of the gains in the contract are restoring what workers gave up in previous contracts.

The elaborate two-tier system imposed on full-time workers has been eliminated. But the inequalities between full-time and part-time workers has not been changed. Part-time workers will get a wage increase, but they won't be paid the same wage as full-time workers for doing the same work. This is a five-year contract and a lot can happen over five years. Wages and benefits that seem like a gain today can disappear with runaway inflation.

The contract covers installation of air-conditioning in new trucks beginning in 2024. Fans will be put in most trucks the month after the signing of the contract. Many parts of the country are facing dangerous heat waves and people working under those conditions are endangering their lives. Without immediate installation of air-

conditioning units in trucks and sorting centers many workers will continue to work in dangerous situations.

A lot of people were watching this contract, both workers and bosses and not just at UPS. Many workers were hoping that a successful strike could open new possibilities. And corporate heads were concerned about a strike that could disrupt the economy and motivate workers in their companies. They were concerned about the impact of a strike on auto workers, whose contract expires September 14; and on the 165,000 actors, the 11,500 writers, and LA hotel workers who have been on strike. Reinforcing those strikes could help other workers make the decision to join what could be a real strikewave of workers across the country.

If the UPS workers vote to accept this contract, it's not game over. There is a growing discontent of millions of workers who are tired of watching their paychecks eaten up by inflation and having to work overtime or pick up another job to try to earn enough money. When that discontent is organized, we can bring about the changes we need. We are often divided workplace by workplace. But when a company like UPS or the railroads face a possible strike, the bosses stand together, and bring their politicians along to back them up. We need to look at our class interests in the same way. We have no one to rely on but ourselves, as workers.

Our future is up to us and won't be solved at the bargaining table but only when we organize and mobilize our power together to create the future we need and deserve.



What kind of fans will be in the UPS trucks?

The War Over Ukraine Starves People Around the World

In early July, Russia pulled out of the Black Sea grain deal. This agreement was negotiated between Turkey, Russia, and Ukraine in 2022 to ensure that Ukraine, one of the world's largest suppliers of grain, would still be able to export this essential food source to the rest of the world even after Russia's invasion.

Ending this agreement means that Ukrainian grain shipments will no longer have guaranteed safe passage through the Black Sea. Russia said it will treat any ship leaving a Ukrainian port as a legitimate military target. This could have a horrible impact on global food supplies.

Under the grain deal, Ukraine was able to export 57% of its food products to developing countries and 43% to developed countries. Countries in the European Union received 80% of their grain from Ukraine in the last year. Ukraine was also able to supply 725,000 tons of grain to the World Food Program, which helps to supply food to Somalia, South Sudan, Ethiopia, Kenya, and other areas of the world that have many people suffering from hunger due to heat, drought, or other environmental impacts that were caused by global climate change.

Without the ability to safely transport grain out of the Black Sea, people in many areas of the world will be even worse off than they already are in terms of access to reliable food sources.

Wars among the big capitalist powers don't only kill soldiers and civilians in combat zones. They also kill people all around the world who have nothing to do with, and nothing to gain, from these rivalries among the wealthy and powerful.

The State of Our World!

According to the United Nations, more than 3.1 billion people (42 percent of the world population) were unable to afford a healthy diet in 2021, and 2.4 billion people were moderately or severely food insecure in 2022 (29.6 percent of global population)

According to Forbes magazine, the magazine that calls itself "The Capitalist Tool," the planet's **2,640 billionaires** have \$12.2 trillion in personal wealth; 735 of them with a collective wealth of \$4.5 trillion live in the U.S.

Women Fight Back Against Texas Abortion Ban

Last week, court hearings were held on a case known as *Zurawski v. Texas* – the first time patients who were denied abortions sued a state since the overturn of *Roe v. Wade*. Fifteen women, along with the Center for Reproductive Rights, filed a lawsuit against Texas after being forced to endure tragic and high-risk pregnancies to term. Their case states that the language of Texan anti-abortion laws prevents doctors from providing abortions to even the most vulnerable people.

The Texas state government refuses to assume responsibility and instead points fingers at individual medical providers. The state government is trying to keep abortion bans vague to take away the reproductive rights of as many people as possible.

The women filing the lawsuit told of their horrific personal experiences. They are not alone, they represent millions who are being denied their right to a necessary medical procedure.

These women are using the lawsuit to demand change. Regardless of how the court rules, we must not forget that this same court system allowed the right to abortion to be taken away in the first place. We cannot rely on the courts. We have to defend our rights and not place our hopes in the courts.

REPORT FROM FRANCE:

Police Murder in France A Nationwide Uprising

On June 27, French police murdered Nahel Merzouk, a 17-year-old of North African descent, in a suburb of Paris. The video of his murder triggered a massive response across France for days. More than 45,000 police were mobilized across the country, more than 4000 people were arrested and many more brutalized

Giles, an activist in France, will give a report from Paris about the response to Nahel's murder.

Saturday, August 5

12 pm PST/ 3pm EST

Online: [TINYURL.com/AUGUST-TH-23](https://tinyurl.com/AUGUST-TH-23)

Information at speakoutsocialists.org

Ask about a watch party in your area.

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