



NEW DAY AT UPS

NEWS FOR UPS WORKERS, BY UPS WORKERS!

THEIR PLANS AND OURS PART I: NETWORK OF THE FUTURE

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UPS Goes on the Offensive

UPS recently announced its plan to increase profits and cut labor costs in the near future through automation, consolidation, and layoffs. UPS corporate representatives call this plan “Network of the Future”. (It strongly resembles the government restructuring of USPS called “Delivering for America”, and in fact it seems like USPS is being converted into a dump for low-profit volume to the mutual loss of both USPS and UPS employees. UPS recently agreed to be USPS’ primary air cargo provider.) “Network of the Future” aims to close 200 UPS facilities, with the volume being shifted towards automated and semi-automated operations. UPS is closing 40 sorts this year, as opposed to 30 sorts last year, according to SupplyChainDive. UPS US President Nando Cesarone said, “Network of the Future is targeting all activities [!] for automation within our four walls... These building consolidations and automations yield real savings. For example, we’ll have fewer feeder runs. We’ll be able to eliminate both a.m. and p.m. ground and air feeds in many, many locations.” UPS’ main objective is increasing profit by improving the ratio of volume processed to employees. The ratio was 51 packages-per-employee in 2023, and they want to increase it to 59 by 2026.

That is UPS long-term plan. In the short-term, what this actually looks like is liquidating bids (well underway in WORMA, where a car-wash bid was declared nonexistent midway through the sort, cover responding bids were reduced, and staffing is so far below minimum that some belts can’t run unless all loaders are above 400 pph), consolidating driver routes (such as in the Rutland, VT building), equipment is pushed way past its limits, management harassing workers to speed-up, sorts and even entire buildings are closed (as in PRORI and WCHNC)—the usual cost-cutting routine from UPS. WORMA is now hiring part timers at a lower pay than they were a year ago, thanks to the contract, which sets part time pay at \$21/hour, below last year’s market rate. This is how UPS is perpetually able to get away with it: even though collectively the UPSers are getting screwed over across the board, individually everyone is affected in a different way and to a different degree. The IBT keeps everyone divided through the grievance system, which never resolves any of these problems, and then people either give up

and accept UPS’ crap or quit UPS altogether. Then a new batch of people are hired (who have no idea what UPS does or how the IBT helps UPS get away with it) and the cycle continues.

IBT Plans to Collaborate

“Fight layoffs with contract enforcement” is the slogan of the IBT and their activist front organizations, including Teamsters for a Democratic Union, right now. The contract is what allows UPS to conduct layoffs in the first place, specifically Article 6 Sections 3 and 4, which says all that is required is for UPS to convene a committee of half UPS corporate representatives and half IBT representatives to sign off on technology implementation. In fact, not even the IBT believes this slogan, as local 25 representative Greg Kerwood publicly admitted, “Our contract has nothing to do with these layoffs, this plan was in place four years ago, five years ago...” [approx. 4:40, “What Chaos Has the Layoffs Created?” by Roswell Hub via YouTube] So even according to the IBT, the layoffs exist independently from the contract, and therefore the contract cannot be considered an adequate tool for fighting them.

That is what the Teamsters publicly claim to be their plan. In reality, the IBT is already actively assisting UPS’ offensive simply by withholding information from the UPSers and allowing UPS management to do whatever it wants on a day-to-day basis. Actually, yet another UPSer died on the job recently, this time a feeder driver in Indiana who was involved in a three-vehicle crash that caused their truck to catch fire. Anyone who has ever contributed to UPS’ CHSP (aka “safety committee”) knows that UPS accepts these accidents so long as they are within the targets set by corporate and the insurance companies. The IBT has allowed UPS to create an extremely unsafe, hostile working environment in exchange for dues money.

Just two days after Teamsters President Sean O’Brien posed for a photo op with West Charlotte UPSers, reports began to spread on the shop floor that both the West Charlotte and Cottonwood UPS hubs would be shutting down at the end of the year. This came just a month after management announced that the night sort would be closing in May. As a result of this, over six

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hundred UPSers will potentially be laid off within the year. Management has refused to disclose information about the hubs being shut down, not giving a firm date and leaving UPSers in the dark about when they will be losing their jobs. The silence of management is only outdone by Teamsters bureaucrats, whose only advice to Charlotte UPSers is how to avoid being laid off sooner.

When the rail companies and the government demanded the imposition of a concessionary contract in 2022, the IBT agreed. The IBT publicly admitted to handing over \$5 billion in wage and benefit concessions to Yellow before the company folded, and now Yellow terminals are being reopened by non-union employers such as Estes. In this way, they are blatantly an anti-union organization. So long as they get their dues money, they do not care what happens to the logistics workers. This is a fact. It is also a fact that the Teamsters recently donated to Senator Josh Hawley's campaign (who is publicly and avowedly anti-trade union) and are currently carrying out a campaign of threatening logistics workers as they suffer decertification after decertification. The IBT was decertified recently by drivers at Dependable Highway Express and Keurig Dr Pepper. They were also decertified at XPO only a couple years after negotiating their first contract. Local 848 apparently "threatened unit employees with physical violence for not supporting the Union" according to the National Labor Relations Board and Local 63 illegally threatened an employee's job at Dependable Highway Express after they distributed a leaflet containing union officers' salary information. This is completely in line with our experience with the IBT, which threatened a New Dayer for promoting their strike program among Local 25 UPSers. In short, the IBT cannot be counted on to put up any level of resistance to UPS' plans, but almost certainly will put up militant resistance to any organizing work done by UPSers.

The Charlotte Plan

In the view of New Day, the correct response of the UPS workers is to develop the shop committee system in order to carry out a slowdown. Depending on the level of development of the UPS workers' organization, the objectives of a slowdown could be as minor as regaining lost hours and as major as forcing UPS to adjust their "Network of the Future" initiative to suit the demands of the UPSers. The plan for a slowdown is called the Charlotte Plan after the city where UPSers are currently working at obscene rates for extremely limited hours. Its objectives are the following:

1. Increase the total hours available to work by reducing the average work rate.
2. Improve safety and diminish management harassment, work-related and otherwise.
3. Expropriate, in part or in whole, management's productivity bonus system.
4. Adjust the "Network of the Future" initiative so as to ensure automation and consolidation is carried out in a way that overall benefits the UPS employees.

To accomplish this, the UPSers must develop ironclad organization and exercise discipline on a level not seen in decades. For the slowdown to begin, at the bare minimum the shop committee system must cover all the loading and unloading work areas, with at least one representative from each loading and unloading work area on each shift in the hub and a majority within these work areas agreeing to carry out the slowdown. The primary and secondary sorters must also have representatives capable of explaining the situation to the sorters, who will almost certainly be moved into the load/unload to replace slowdown participants, and they have to be prepared to join in if this happens. As the sorters are technically in-between the load and unload, and they are not technologically monitored by UPS like the loaders and unloaders are, there does not have to be a fixed work rate set for them. All they have to do is follow the pace of the work, and follow the slowdown if they are moved into the load or unload. **THE SLOWDOWN MUST NOT BEGIN UNTIL THE MAJORITY OF UPSERS REPRESENTED IN THE SHOP COMMITTEES AGREE TO CARRY IT OUT.**

The main enemies are going to be full time managers and up (meaning the entirety of UPS corporate) and the International Brotherhood of Teamsters officials from the business agent level up. These are the parties responsible for the problems and naturally, they are going to resist our solution by every means available to them. This means that they are going to try to frustrate organizing by lying, deal-cutting, ratting, and threatening employees. Both parties are going to hide behind the contract, even though the contract does not specify any work rate and therefore we cannot be said to be breaking it. They will also hide behind the law, which bans "insubordination", but as a speedup is not a lawful order in the first place, we cannot be said to be breaking the law either.

That is our long-term objective for the life of this contract--organizing an economic action against UPS to stop the losses currently being imposed on us. What this looks like in the short-term is building up the shop committee system as the scientific organization of the trade union struggle, continuing to educate the vast majority of the UPSers on the need to contribute to the trade union struggle, and struggling against every anti-union idea including those spread by the Teamsters. Our slogan for the preparatory work should be, "build our solidarity, build the shop committee system." The shop committee system means that the labor organization actually reflects the operation. UPS is divided into belts and work areas, then sort, then hub. New Day wants to build a trade union that accurately reflects this, with workers in each work area responsible for choosing a representative who can convey the demands and capabilities of the people in that work area.

In part two, we will examine the political plans of UPS and the IBT for this election year, how this relates to the economic program of the "Network of the Future", and explain our plan to boycott the general election.



New Day is a newsletter produced by UPS workers to rally our coworkers against UPS corporate and their agents in the Teamsters. New Day Committees are for gathering information and disseminating the basic outlook of the revolutionary UPS workers to the rank and file in the operation, as well as a base that our coworkers can use as a launchpad for campaigns around more immediate issues. Our long-term goal is the creation of a revolutionary industrial logistics union.