

TWU Local 100 Members

Let's Get Real: How Do We Get a Fighting Union?



We transit workers show up to work every day facing horrible work conditions. There are two Houses of Pain: The MAC and 2 Broadway. The threat of write-ups and management harassment make every day miserable. It's impossible to pay the bills unless you work massive amounts of overtime. It's always service over safety. You work until you drop and then run the gauntlet by trying to get workmen's comp. The list goes on. The problem is not just that we work for transit's brutal bosses, but also that the union leadership lets them get away with it.

The TWU tops do this because they work hand-in-hand with the MTA and the politicians, both Democrats and Republicans, to maintain business as usual and to ensure their own power and privileges. That is their only strategy and why working conditions are so bad, the union is so weak, and transit workers are so demoralized. Clearly we need a new leadership, but not just any new leadership, we need one committed to building a strong union that fights against the MTA to improve our jobs and our lives.

We can't let TWU International president John Samuelson get away with handpicking another one of his cronies to run Local 100. As soon as possible, there should be a real mass meeting of the entire membership to organize new elections for all top posts. Real union democracy is vital for our 44,000-strong union to debate the way forward and engage in real struggle. Transit Workers for a Fighting Union advocates this, not because we want democracy in the abstract, but because we want a union that defends our livelihoods. To free our union from the bureaucrats' stranglehold, we must challenge their losing strategy. As our flier stated during the recent election, we want TWU Local 100 to fight for:

- We Move New York! We should be able to afford to live here!
- Abolish Tier 6! Everyone to top tier now!
- We shouldn't have to kill ourselves to do our jobs!
- For black liberation! Down with witch hunts against migrants and refugees!
- Oppose the Democrats and Republicans! Workers should run the country!

The purpose of new elections has to be to get the union off of its knees. Beware Local 100 oppositionists who call for the Department of Labor to oversee new elections. This would only leave our union under the thumb of an agency of the bosses' government and stifle our collective struggle. We must run our own affairs and oppose government intervention. Local 100 members need a different path from that offered by Samuelson and his gang, not more cause for demoralization.

Let's get real, tougher times are ahead. The pro-business methods of the existing union leadership are a dead end. If you want to fight to rebuild our union and prepare for the struggles ahead, join us!

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