**Transdev Strike Rally Talking Points**

**Players**

* Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU), the largest and oldest union of transportation workers in North America. ATU represents 200,000 transit workers in the U.S. and Canada.
* ATU Local 689, a 10,000 member-strong union representing public transit workers in the DC region since prior to WMATA’s existence.
* ATU Local 1764, a 2,000 member-strong union representing transit workers in the
* Transdev, a multi-billion dollar French multinational corporation that operates transit in cities across North America, often winning contracts by bidding low and cutting corners on maintenance and labor costs.
* WMATA/Metro, the public transportation system created by Congressional compact to operate transit service in the DC, Maryland, and Virginia region.
* Paul Wiedefeld, the General Manager of Metro, who delivered the first privatized Metrobus garage in WMATA’s history.

**Cinder Bed Road Strike Background**

* Transdev employees at WMATA’s Cinder Bed Road bus garage are represented by Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) Local 689.
* We’ve been out on for over three weeks, since October 24th.
* We are out on strike because Transdev has repeatedly committed unfair labor practices, including illegal surveillance and intimidation, which has made it impossible for us to bargain for the fair contract that these workers deserve.
* Cinder Bed Road (CBR) is a WMATA bus garage with around 130 workers (bus operators, mechanics, utility workers) that was opened in late 2018.
* Instead of letting regular, public-sector WMATA workers work at the facility, WMATA chose to privatize the operations and maintenance of the facility and contract them out to Transdev, a multi-billion-dollar French multinational corporation.
* CBR is the first privatized Metrobus facility in the system’s 50-plus-year history.
* The facility operates and maintains around 5% of MetroBus service. Right after the facility opened, Cinder Bed Road workers voted to join the ATU on November 15th, 2018.
* Negotiations on a first contract between Transdev and ATU members at Cinder Bed Road started in February.
* Workers took a strike authorization vote in August.
* Bus operators at Cinder Bed Road make on average $12 per hour less than WMATA bus operators but drive the same routes, on the same roads, in the same buses that WMATA operators used to drive. They are paid $20 per hour.

**Fairfax Connector Strike Background**

* Transdev employees at the Fairfax Connector are represented by ATU Local 1764. There are approximately 600 workers in the bargaining unit, which covers drivers at all three garages (Huntington, Herndon, and West Ox) and the maintenance departments at the Herndon and West Ox garages.
* Transdev, as the lowest bidder, won the contract to perform the work at the Connector. Since then they have acted belligerently and have had fostered relationships with ATU and with the Road Supervisors’ Union, OPEIU Local 2.
* Workers at the Fairfax Connector voted by a margin of 98% in early November to authorize a strike because of Transdev’s unfair labor practices. The Fairfax Connector’s strike authorization vote was the fifth approved strike authorization in the DC region (DASH, PRTC, Challenger, & Cinder Bed) since May. The Union contract expires November 30.
* The drivers at the Connector have an unfair wage scale that keeps most of them paid substantially less than their peers at Metrobus or DASH in Alexandria. Workers with 5 years of service are at the top rate of $32.25 which approximates that in Metrobus and DASH, but many workers with 4 years of seniority or less are stuck at wage levels below $20 per hour.
* Fully two-thirds of the drivers at the Connector have no retirement savings whatsoever. There is no pension plan, and because 401(k) funds are only given on a matching basis, most workers have no retirement savings because they don’t make enough to afford to save.

**WMATA’s Behavior**

* WMATA continuously claims that they have no plans to intervene in the CBR strike and that this is a private dispute. They signed the contract to bring in Transdev. They are responsible for holding Transdev to account for failure to meet its obligations to workers and riders.
* WMATA is using Cinder Bed Road to help set up a bargaining environment in which they can in 2020 argue for lower wages, pension concessions, and more from the 8,000-strong ATU Local 689 public sector WMATA unit.
* There is no evidence that WMATA is even issuing fines to the company for its failure to provide service, as is required under most transit revenue agreements.
* The revenue agreement between WMATA and Transdev has never been shared with the union or the riding public.
* WMATA’s unwillingness to intervene risks a massive, historic, regionwide disruption in transit in the nation’s capital.

**Transdev’s Behavior**

* Transdev has walked away from the CBR negotiating table twice since the strike began. ATU has remained available to negotiate at any time.
* Since the CBR strike began, Transdev has only offered a 20 cent pay increase and resisted efforts to have a full-fledged negotiation on economic improvements for workers.
* Transdev is now attempting to train scabs and threatening to replace the striking workers.
* Management at CBR has routinely targeted union activists for retaliation and illegally took photos/videos of workers while they were on a picket line.
* Transdev said they wouldn’t offer their workers at CBR a pension. Transdev profits in part help to fund the French public pension system.
* On November 1st, workers received a letter telling them that their healthcare had been cut off. Workers at CBR have a $6,000 deductible for their healthcare. A worker delivered a baby on October 30th and was told two days later that she had no healthcare. We have workers with diabetes and a limited insulin supply. Transdev is putting people’s literal survival in danger to try to break the strike.

**Rider Impact**

* More than 9,000 riders have been left stranded since the CBR strike began.
* WMATA took more than nine hours from the time it was notified of strike to inform passengers.
* Many riders have to walk an hour to the train to get to work in the morning, extending some commutes by more than an hour.
* WMATA won’t even let passengers call into the WMATA complaint line about Transdev routes. Transdev does not operate its own customer service line.
* A strike at the Fairfax Connector would have devastating consequences for the region, and Transdev must settle its labor disputes to guarantee no further disruption to service.