

## A Toyota worker in Australia

**"There should be equal opportunity around the world"**

21 July 1998

*The World Socialist Web Site is discussing the implications of the GM dispute with car workers in Australia.*

Daniel Campbell has worked for Toyota in two countries, first New Zealand and now Australia.

Since he left New Zealand, the Coromandel assembly car plant where he worked in Thames, employing about 500 workers, has closed down.

He works up to seven days a week, and on the day he spoke to WSWS he had just worked 13 hours.

Discussing GM's job destruction in the US, Daniel said, 'It is almost hard to believe--this is a massive number out of work. In my workplace, the robotics are becoming more complicated, performing more complex jobs. They are not doing our jobs yet--they haven't got finger sensitive touch. But the company is working on it, and they're going to get it.

'Toyota shut down Coromandel recently because they did not see it as viable. The closure will turn Thames into a half-dead ghost town. Other factories there were dependent on the Toyota plant, for example an exhaust company.

'I learnt recently that Toyota is the tenth richest company in the world. They are squeezing us; there is a lot of pressure on us to perform. Slowly and surely they're taking our rights as free agents away.

'In the foreseeable future, with such competition between themselves, there are only going to be three main car companies in the world.

'I've already experienced what globalised competition means. These companies can pick up a whole factory down to the nuts and bolts and ship it anywhere in the world. If Australia is not producing enough, the same thing will happen. It is scary.

'I'd like to say something about the way some places

have slave labour and the companies move there to get cheap workers. There should be equal opportunity for everybody around the world. Whether the workers are Mexicans or South Koreans they are just as intelligent as we are. If they're building cars, they are just as skilled as we are. They should be getting the same wages. We should all be equal.

'There should be a law against people having as much money as Bill Gates--it is not justice. We all know where the pressure on us is coming from. Who gives governments the right to privatise hospitals and everything else, and make us pay for them? It will be a good start to put these hierarchies off their courses.'

See Also:

*Letter to GM strikers from an Australian car worker*

'The unions use nationalism to divide the workers'

[22 July 1998]

*Overwhelming vote for strike at Saturn*

Auto workers turn away from GM-UAW collaboration

[21 July 1998]



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