

# Another letter from a German train driver

20 October 2007

*The following letter was sent to Ludwig Niethammer of the Socialist Equality Party of Germany (PSG).*

A thank-you note on behalf of all train drivers

Dear Herr Niethammer,

I am writing to you because I was very impressed with the contribution you wrote on behalf of your party, the PSG (10 October 2007), which gave us train drivers courage for the pursuit of our contract discussions, which have proven to be difficult. Please let me thank you!

I think your article continues to be relevant for the current situation facing the Deutsche Bahn [German Railways] train drivers.

All that which train drivers have sacrificed in the past as a result of the restructuring of Deutsche Bahn will not be returned to them, e.g., the reduction in holidays, increases in working and driving times—all without any corresponding increase in wages.

In addition the Railways Board has repeatedly turned to the courts to prosecute the GDL [train drivers' union] prior to the planned strikes, thereby ignoring the needs of workers. The right to strike is contained in the constitution and it is therefore a democratic right for workers to secure their aims through strikes. I regard any attempt to prohibit strikes by labor courts as unconstitutional and an attack on our democracy.

I am a long-distance driver with DB and regret that the colleagues in regional transport are taking strike action on my behalf, while I cannot make my own contribution because I am banned from doing so by the labor court.

In the name of all train drivers permit me to thank you for your contribution and I will notify many of my colleagues of your article.

I hope I can rely on the further support of yourself and your party.

With best wishes,

HS

Hannover



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