

More letters on the Indianapolis rank-and-file committee

25 September 2010

These letters were sent to workers in Indianapolis who have formed the Indianapolis GM Stamping Rank-and file Committee to fight against attempts by General Motors, JD Norman, and the UAW to force through a 50 percent wage cut. Previous letters were published September 23. We encourage workers to send letters of solidarity to indygmworkers@gmail.com, and to send copies to the World Socialist Web Site. (See, "Support the Indianapolis GM workers!")

Dear comrades of the Indianapolis GM Stamping Rank-and file Committee

We in South Africa have just experienced the brutal betrayal of our workers by the parasitic trade union leadership. Last month 1.3 million government workers went on strike, demanding a living wage. The government sent in the army and the police to smash the picket lines. The media vilified our teachers and nurses. After 21 days of unpaid strike action, the workers were forced by the trade union leadership to concede to the employers demands and end the strike action. The trade union leadership declared the strike a success, but the workers are poorer. The workers have been betrayed again.

I have read about your valiant struggle, and your rejection of the parasitic UAW trade union leadership. I write to you with the greatest admiration, and hope that your example is followed, not only in America, but around the world.

Your struggle is our struggle. We are all in this together.

Fraternally yours,

Iqra Q
Cape Town, South Africa
23 September 2010

To the Indianapolis GM Stamping Rank-and file Committee:

I'm writing to express my support for the historic stand taken by your Committee. At a recent Socialist Equality Party meeting in Sydney, Australia, workers and young people were told of your struggle and its significance... Namely that it is the beginning of a rebellion against the nationalist and pro-business unions, without which the working-class cannot defend its most basic social rights.

Young people are familiar with the images of Hollywood, and the American rich and famous, but your struggle is showing us that there is another America compromising the majority of working people. By exposing the reality of American society, and showing that workers can take an independent stand in opposition to the bankrupt unions, your struggle strengthens workers all over the world. In turn, I'm sure the

knowledge that the Indianapolis GM Stamping Rank-and file Committee is being followed closely, and supported by workers and young people internationally, will strengthen your fight.

We will continue to tell Australian workers and young people about your struggle, and explain why workers internationally need to support it.

OG
Australia
24 September 2010

To the workers of the Indianapolis GM Stamping Rank-and-file Committee,

I write from Britain as a worker and student. I have been following your struggle against the outrageous attacks on your wages; attacks made so that parasites can suck out even more wealth from workers and leave the mass of humanity to suffer.

I support your struggle and your courageous initiative and the example you have set for all workers.

It speaks to a whole new generation of workers and youth, which includes me, who have no future prospect under the rule of profit; a generation who must and will fight but have no living experience of struggles. I am positive that your stand will bring the new generations into living contact with their real history of all the struggles that have been waged by workers before them.

In every country we are all being told to accept poverty, or worse, so that the very same layer that tells us this can make ever higher profit by doing nothing other than stealing from workers, and trampling on all our rights as workers and humans, across the whole world.

However what makes your example very important is that it goes well beyond displaying a willingness to fight. The experiences of your struggle bring to light how management, investors and politicians—and all their cronies—have been able to impose their arrogant and hypocritical demands despite the lack of any popular support for their measures: through the union bureaucracies and the lack of any genuine workers' organisations. There are many workers who know this is the case through personal experience. So you show what workers must do against this: organise independently and unite all workers and break from these treacherous organisations that seek to divide and act against the interests of workers while falsely claiming to be for workers.

I believe you have started something extremely powerful and it will echo around the world!

Yours Fraternally,

Josh
Britain
24 September 2010

(My letter to the GM workers in Indianapolis. Thank you, WSWS for your coverage and your support of those brave workers!)

Fellow workers,

In 1861, Abraham Lincoln had this to say about the rising power of the working class: “Capital is only the fruit of labor. Labor is the superior of capital, and deserves much the higher consideration.” That remains even more true today in the age of trans-national capitalism where the working class constitute the vast majority of the world today. Despite decades of betrayal by conservative unions and the Democratic and Republican parties (both parties that are bought and paid for by capitalists and Big Business), the working class still remains the most revolutionary force in history capable of fighting for a truly just, peaceful and humane world.

Today, as the global capitalist crisis accelerates, capital seeks its pounds upon pounds of flesh from workers to squeeze them as much as possible. With 1 out of 7 Americans living in poverty, persistently high unemployment rates, income inequality between the rich and the poor at all-time highs, private sector job growth contracting to anemic levels, criminal bailouts of Wall Street—with all this making news headlines daily, it’s becoming clear that our ruling class and our bosses want to exploit the majority of people as much as possible—even to their deaths in many instances. This cannot go on! Your example shows us that!

You, the workers of the Indianapolis GM Stamping Rank-and-File Committee, are courageously resisting the attacks by GM, the corrupt UAW bureaucracy, JD Norman, and the political and economic elite that tells you to accept wage cuts that condemns—yes, condemns!—you to poverty-level income brackets—after decades of fighting for decent standards of living. Do not accept such unjust demands. These are the same politicians and businesspeople that are pilfering your resources, your wealth, your labor, your environment, and telling you that you deserve a 50 percent wage cut—while corporate profits soar, CEOs take million dollar bonuses, and Wall Street gets backed by both parties to the tune of trillions of dollars. The gall they have! This is obscene, grossly hypocritical and completely unjust. They are vampires living on the fruit and flesh of your living labor.

Working people of the world are looking at your example to inspire and show leadership in the struggle against the attacks by the capitalist class. Your example will blaze trails as workers all over the world start fighting back in the masses—we are already seeing Asian, European, African and South American workers fighting back in greater numbers. Our common power remains in shared struggles and in greater numbers. You give us all hope and show us that we don’t have to accept the brutal attacks on our living standards. Continue to fight back with your demands. It will give us all a spring in our step knowing that we, too, can fight back and learn from your courageous efforts! The American working class will play a pivotal role in fighting for a better, more just world with your example in mind.

I wish you all the best and hope to share your struggles with my friends and workers to ensure that your fight reaches a greater audience. American workers, Asian workers, European workers, African workers, Latin American workers, and all the poor and oppressed of this world—

all look to you to strengthen our common struggles against the ruthless parasites of a decaying capitalism in every nation—whether it be President Obama and the corrupt American political and economic establishment or their counterparts in other countries. Working people have no country—we are bound together by our vast and powerful counterparts of every country. The only thing that stands in the way of this revolutionary international class is capitalism itself; the rational path forwards can only be a world socialist movement.

Every sector of the working class—blue collar, white collar, service industry, health care, etc.—will be inspired by you. We are all in this together. This is what real hope looks like. This is what real, democratic, rank-and-file change looks like. Keep up the good fight, brothers and sisters!

With solidarity and great admiration,

George
Illinois, USA
24 September 2010

To the Indianapolis GM Stamping Rank-and-file Committee:

I am an SEP member in Los Angeles and I learned about the formation of your committee from the WSWS. I am writing to congratulate you and to say, “I support you.”

The formation of your committee is an important event not just for Indianapolis or Indiana, but for the entire world.

You have set an inspiring example.

Fraternally,
Tom
Los Angeles, California, USA
23 September 2010

I wish to deliver my wholehearted support to your efforts in fighting the appalling strategies being used against you. This is a very important stand that you are taking, inspirational, in many ways, and I wish you every success.

Tony W
Carbondale, Illinois, USA
23 September 2010

Dear Local 23 Chairman Gregory Clark, Rondo Jabbar Turner, and the Indianapolis GM Stamping Rank-and-File Committee:

As you workers today cast your votes, I wanted to write to support you. I live in a small, no-stoplight town outside of Terre Haute. Unfortunately, the TV stations in Terre Haute have not even mentioned your struggle, which is important for all workers in America. These are difficult and anxious times, and I respect you for standing up and doing what is right. You set a good example for your children and their children.

With nearly 50 million living in poverty and snakes like J.D. Norman, Mitch Daniels, Pacers-bailouting Ballard, Wellpointer Evan Bayh, and president Obama pulling the trigger on the middle-class daily, it is time to unite the workers, take to the streets, and elect supporters of those who

make the country hum.

We can no longer function in a sick society which forces even more ill on its workers and then cuts off their life lines and their health insurance, all the while spoon-feeding the rich who haven't worked a day in their lives. We can no longer live in a society where psychopaths in suits who should be in jail are rewarded bonuses for stealing the food off of our children's plates, or poisoning them with contaminated eggs that are never inspected. It is totally wrong.

In Indianapolis, you are doing the right thing. Eugene V. Debs, that great socialist Hoosier, would be very proud of you today, as we all should be. Proud that true Americans are in our backyards. As Debs said a hundred years ago, "It is better to vote for what you want and not get it, than to vote for what you don't want and get it!"

The work you do moves like poetry. Let your struggle blast through the gigantic bullhorn across the world, so that the world can have compassion for all human beings, so that the sick world can hear and feel again.

Best and Bless You,

Doug M
Indiana, USA
23 September 2010

I am so proud of you guys! I am a public school teacher and we are constantly under attack for trying to stand up for ourselves in any way. Our union has sold us out. Please do not give up. We are watching you and you have our support.

Your sister in SOLIDARITY,
HF
23 September 2010

To the Indianapolis GM Stamping Rank-and-File Committee,

My experience with the unions (Teamsters, SEIU) is that they act as the third partner in alliance with the corporations and the capitalist government to police and suppress any independent economic or political movement of the working class. Their representatives (business agents) are trained to use lies and deception to steal concessions, prevent strikes and smother wildcat independent actions and should never be trusted. They will often hand-pick a few of the more popular workers, offer them a union position, and thereby enlist their help to convince others to go along with their back-stabbing union policy.

Your new rank and file organization is the opposite of Labor-Management committees with their corporate and American nationalist outlook. These anti-working class committees assume that there is an identity of interests between workers and capital. But nationalism and race-based politics only chain workers to the profit system and its two parties, and serve to divide them from the international working class. Every social crisis exposes the reality of the class struggle for a larger part of the national income, and reveals the treachery of those organizations that collaborate with management to maintain exploitation, poverty and political dependence.

However, a determined, democratic and centralized organization guided by socialist internationalism will gain the growing support of workers around the world and eventually shatter the old bureaucratic apparatus.

You are not alone!

Your initiative for an independent workers organization is one of the most significant developments since the mass strikes of the 1930s and the mass socialist movement led by Eugene Debs 100 years ago. Along with the example of the Balmoral plantation workers' independent action committee in Sri Lanka and the support of the SEP and its *World Socialist Web Site*, your committee can provide the experience and lessons to help other workers multiply such independent organizations throughout the US and internationally.

The main reason for the spread of imperialist war and the defeats of the workers movement since the 1970s has been the lack of any mass, democratic and politically independent organization with a common socialist program based on the needs and interests of the working class. These social needs are incompatible with the capitalist profit-market system that is rooted in private monopoly ownership of the productive forces of society.

Therefore, your rank and file committee is a crucial and necessary step to help the working class break free of the stranglehold of the union bureaucracy and the corporate-dominated Democratic Party, the other party of war, austerity and inequality.

Robert L
California, USA
24 September 2010

To the ladies and gentlemen of the GM stamping rank-and-file committee,

I just wanted to send a brief message of support to you, to let you know that there are many of us out there who believe in what you are doing. In tough times, workers have to be organized. When your union doesn't work for you any longer, it presents you with a difficult choice. But the answer is never "every man for himself." Working people need to stand together. We have to organize. I hear a lot of slander about economic problems being caused by "greedy" workers who make too much money and spend too much time not working, but I know this is not true. In this country and around the world most of us work hard, or desperately want a job, so I wonder where such notions originate. Anyway, I just wanted to say that I think you have taken a brave step and that I hope it does serve as an example to others.

Sincerely,
Loren P
Wilmington, North Carolina, USA
23 September 2010

To the workers of the Indianapolis GM plant and their Rank-and-file Committee,

I am so glad that you're taking real action against the profit system, and that you have decisively broken with the union—which has degenerated to be nothing but the labor enforcement branch of General Motors. Your history and your struggle demonstrate how unviable any "workers" organization really is which isn't based on the objective necessities of the working class itself.

American workers are finally starting to regain a consciousness which has been so long suppressed—an awareness that the will of the ruling class

is fundamentally contradictory to the most basic aspirations—and rights—of working people.

You are at the vanguard of ushering in a whole new historical period for the working class and its struggles, and many great people will surely follow in your footsteps.

You have already faced very difficult challenges, and more will become, but know that some of the most dedicated and advanced workers in the world are already strongly behind you, and that many more will enter the struggle.

In solidarity,
Julian Q
23 September 2010

I am a retired former professional, also currently unemployed and living on a limited income. I am personally and politically aware of the hardships facing workers and the attempts of the bosses— such as those at GM— and the government to return the working class to sweatshop labor conditions, or worse. I am also aware of the role of the decayed unions—above all the UAW— as junior partners of GM and the corporate elite. The UAW has renounced its glorious history of struggle for the interests of the working class, the high-point of which were the sit-down strikes of the 1930s in Flint and similar struggles elsewhere in the ‘industrial heartland’. I support and encourage your struggle to bring back that fighting spirit of the great sit-downs and with the support of workers from all corners of the globe, want you to know that your struggle is of paramount importance for all workers.

Daniel F
23 September 2010



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Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact