

Students and youth must join the fight to oppose GM job cuts!

International Youth and Students for Social Equality US
31 January 2019

The IYSSE is organizing delegations of students and youth from throughout the Midwest to attend a demonstration on February 9 at the GM headquarters in Detroit to unite workers across the US, Canada and Mexico to fight job cuts and wage and benefit concessions. Write us to learn more about the demonstration and to become involved in the IYSSE in your area.

The International Youth and Students for Social Equality (IYSSE) calls on young people throughout the country and internationally to support autoworkers in their fight against General Motors' plan to close five plants in the US and Canada by joining the February 9 demonstration in Detroit.

The closure of these plants will have devastating consequences for tens of thousands of autoworkers, their families, and the communities in which these plants are located. The workers and young people of Detroit, Lordstown, Oshawa and others targeted by GM must unite their struggles into a common fight to oppose the closures!

The actions of GM are driven by the demands of Wall Street for ever greater profits that will worsen record levels of social inequality that dominate every aspect of life for workers and youth. Decent-paying jobs that allowed workers to start a family and buy a home are largely a thing of the past. They have been replaced by low-paid temporary positions, with few or no benefits.

When young people leave school, we face the choice of low-wage jobs, unemployment or military service.

The destruction of jobs for young people is exemplified in the auto industry. In the aftermath of the 2008 crash, the Obama administration oversaw the bailout of the banks and the restructuring of the auto industry, including the elimination of hundreds of thousands of jobs and the halving of wages for new

hires. Throughout the country, workers' wages were slashed, pensions eliminated and funding for social services and education drained. We watched as our parents' jobs and savings were destroyed and our communities devastated.

Many young autoworkers now make no more than they would working at McDonald's. They essentially have no job security and can be fired at will. The destruction of jobs and the cuts to social services have bred an immense social crisis throughout the US. Out of these conditions, all of the ills of capitalist society find stark expression: the rise of a deadly drug epidemic, skyrocketing suicide rate, increasing "deaths of despair," and rampant mental health issues, among others. In Detroit, the situation has become so dire that the entire public school system was operating for months at the beginning of the year without access to clean water.

GM made billions in profit for decades by exploiting workers at low wages, working long hours with limited benefits. It leveled a community to build the Poletown plant in Hamtramck, on the promise of bringing good jobs to the region. As soon as it no longer served its interests, GM plans to close up shop, lay off thousands of workers and leave behind a trail of social, economic and environmental catastrophe.

The fight against the plant closures is part of a much larger fight taking place on an international scale: that between the working class of all countries and the capitalist ruling elite. The past year has been dominated by a reemergence of the class struggle internationally.

The mobilization of the working class requires the building of independent organizations of working class struggle. The trade unions do not represent workers. They have colluded in the destruction of jobs and the attack on wages and benefits. In exchange for forcing

through concessions, the executives that run these organizations “earn” hundreds of thousands of dollars a year.

The February 9 demonstration has been called by the Steering Committee of the Coalition of Rank-and-File Committees, which was formed by workers in auto and other industries to organize a fight independently of the trade unions. Such committees must be formed in every workplace and neighborhood, including in the schools, to organize teachers and students in defense of public education.

A fight against the attack on jobs also requires a break with the Democrats and Republicans, the two parties of the ruling class which defend the profit system. The Trump administration is a government of the corporate and financial oligarchy that represents an extreme danger to the working class and youth. However, the Democrats are no less committed to the attack on workers.

It was the Obama administration that oversaw the largest transfer of wealth from the poor to the rich in history, deported more immigrants than any other administration, bailed out the banks and funneled trillions to war and militarism.

The IYSSE is the student and youth organization of the Socialist Equality Party (SEP), which is leading the fight to organize the working class in a political struggle against the Democratic and Republican parties and the entire capitalist system. We insist that a good-paying job, free high-quality health care, public education, and access to art and culture are basic social rights.

These rights cannot be secured without a frontal attack on the capitalist system. The IYSSE fights for internationalism, for the unification of workers of all countries, to abolish borders and bring the world’s political map into harmony with the international character of the process of production. We fight for workers’ control of the means of production. The major banks and corporations must be placed under social control, run democratically by the workers themselves, and the vast wealth of the financial oligarchy must be expropriated to meet pressing social needs.

The IYSSE calls on youth and students to join us on February 9 at the demonstration at GM headquarters to support autoworkers in their struggle against the

destruction of their jobs, which will one day be our jobs; against the destruction of their communities, which are also our communities; against the giant corporations and unions that collude in the attack on wages, benefits and working conditions; and against all those who seek to tie workers and youth to the Democratic and Republican parties.

Students and youth looking for an alternative to capitalism and a way to fight should join the IYSSE today and take up the fight for socialism!



To contact the WSWs and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact