

Solidarity from London bus drivers to WISAG airport workers in Germany

London Bus Rank-and-File Committee
1 March 2021

The London Bus Rank-and-File Committee extends solidarity to the courageous stand taken by WISAG ground personnel at Frankfurt airport in Germany.

We fully identify with your fight against sackings, wage theft and the neglect of workers' safety during the pandemic by the owners of WISAG who are among the richest 300 families in Germany. We have read on the *World Socialist Web Site* that you have not been paid for four months simply for refusing to be transferred to another private operator on inferior terms at 15 minutes' notice! This is a brutal expression of an experience we are all too familiar with.

That you have resorted to a hunger strike as a means of protest is an indictment of the trade unions which claim to speak in the name of workers but only serve to throttle our collective voice. You rightly left the Verdi union which sits on the company and supervisory boards of WISAG in which these attacks have been prepared behind your backs. The fact that the union you have joined, IGL, appeals to the same WISAG owners and political establishment that have supported the attacks against you demonstrates they are equally opposed to mobilising your only true ally in this fight—the working class.

We urge you to establish a rank-and-file committee to reach out to workers across Germany, Europe and internationally and mobilise solidarity action. We offer you our full cooperation in this struggle.

Our rank-and-file committee has provided the only principled focal point for bus drivers' opposition to the Unite union in Britain. Unite has sided with the bus companies, the Labour Party's Mayor of London and the Johnson government to deny our demands for a safe workplace. It colludes with the companies to cover-up COVID-19 infections and deaths. In the past year, an average of one London bus driver has died from

COVID-19 each week. Our lives count for nothing in the eyes of the company shareholders.

Throughout the pandemic, the union has vetoed one strike vote after another. It has helped victimise workers who speak out. This week, bus drivers in the UK have taken strike action at RATP in London and Go North West in Manchester against the imposition of inferior terms and conditions and "fire and rehire" contracts. The Unite union is keeping these struggles segregated and offers pay restraint and millions of pounds in cuts. The conditions exist for a unified fight, but this means organising workers independently of these pro-company organisations.

In opposition to the trade unions, we recognise no national borders in our fight. Whether in Brexit Britain or the European Union, workers face the same bonfire of our terms and conditions to further enrich a criminal financial oligarchy which tramples our basic rights.

The pandemic has demonstrated a fundamental truth: without the working class, society does not function, and its labour is the source of all wealth. It is from that standpoint we must carry forward the fight for what is rightfully ours.

"Workers of the world unite—you have nothing to lose but your chains!" has never been truer than in the unprecedented times we confront today.



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