

Support the struggle of WISAG workers at Frankfurt Airport to defend their jobs!

The Network of Action Committees for Safe Workplaces
15 March 2021

With this appeal, the Network of Action Committees for Safe Workplaces calls for support for the rally of WISAG workers on Tuesday and to extend their fight against layoffs.

The rally will take place on Tuesday, March 16, from noon on the Dernschen grounds, Schlossplatz Wiesbaden, near the Hesse state assembly, where, at the same time, a major debate on the coronavirus policy of the state government is to take place.

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Support the struggle of the WISAG workers to defend their jobs! These workers continue the fight for their rights with great determination. Their hunger strike at Frankfurt Airport was just the beginning. They are determined not to be intimidated by the WISAG Group and the Wisser family who own it, nor by the establishment political parties and the trade unions—such as Verdi.

The WISAG Group is enforcing the same measures that workers everywhere are currently experiencing.

The WISAG Group, the Wisser family and their shareholders are taking advantage of the murderous coronavirus pandemic to enrich themselves immeasurably at the expense of the workers. At the same time, they have made a mint through exploiting short-time working and overtime.

Now, some 250 workers are to be laid off so that wage costs are pushed down and profits rise. Many of them have worked at the airport for decades. They will be replaced by cheaper temporary staff. The airport bus drivers will be forced to sign on with a new WISAG low-wage subsidiary and give up all their acquired social rights and wages.

WISAG and the Wisser family claim it is their right to do what they want with the jobs. The workers no longer accept this. Work is their only source of income.

The lives and needs of the workers and their families stand higher than the profit interests of the corporations and shareholders.

The demonstration in front of the Hesse state assembly should open the eyes of all workers about what is going on. Politicians from all parties are working together and making laws, which are then used by the corporations and the rich like the Wissers to fire a section of workers and to massively worsen working conditions for those remaining in the company.

This situation is the result of the worldwide deregulation and privatization of formerly state-owned enterprises and public services. In recent years, more and more new laws have been made to deregulate air travel and trim the airline corporations for profit. **The rights of workers in the formerly state-owned airlines and airport operators have been sacrificed to the international financial markets.**

Claus Wisser is a Social Democrat and has maintained close contacts with all parties for many years. In 2018, the Hesse State Minister of Economics and Transport, Tarek Al-Wazir (Green Party), explicitly supported the WISAG Group being awarded the contract for ground services at Frankfurt Airport.

The “red oligarch” Wisser is just one of numerous capitalists who are using the pandemic to massively increase profits. This is now the normal business model. At Lufthansa, Fraport, Airbus and many other companies, too, mass layoffs are taking place and wages are being squeezed.

In the automotive industry and supplier factories alone, hundreds of thousands of jobs are on the line. Hardly a day goes by without new bad news about mass layoffs, wage cuts and social welfare cuts.

The unions are playing a key role in this. They collaborate closely with corporations and the

government. Their functionaries sit on the supervisory boards, are involved in all the layoff plans, and the works council representatives often compile the layoff lists themselves. There is no rationalization programme without the signature of the works council. In return, they reap the rewards.

Twenty years ago, when the Social Democratic Party-Green Party coalition government drew up the Hartz laws, creating the low-wage sector that is being used against us today, Verdi was at the negotiating table. Its board member Isolde Kunkel-Weber later became president of the European Federation of Public Service Unions (EPSU) in Brussels. And it was precisely the EPSU that was instrumental in the liberalization of the European internal market.

It is time to oppose this cronyism of the employers, political parties and trade unions. We must all take the fight for our rights into our own hands. We therefore call for support for the WISAG workers' industrial action and for a joint struggle against layoffs and wage theft.



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