

“We do outnumber them”

Students and workers support call for a general strike to oppose federal occupation of Minneapolis

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On a frigid and snowy Sunday afternoon in Minneapolis, Minnesota, hundreds of postal workers, residents and students held a rally and march opposing the ongoing federal occupation of the city and the murderous immigration Gestapo. The march and rally were warmly received by passersby and community members, many of whom honked horns and raised their fists in support.

The rally began at a local post office and ended in front of the memorial where Renée Nicole Good, a mother and wife, was murdered by Jonathan Ross, a Department of Homeland Security agent, less than two weeks ago. Signs carried by workers at the rally denounced Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) as well as Minneapolis Mayor Jacob Frey for not doing anything to stop the ongoing attacks on the community.

The protest was organized by the Build a Fighting NALC (BFN), a faction of the National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC). BFN organizers made clear to WSWS reporters that Sunday's event was not in support of the proposed January 23 general strike and boycott that several unions have endorsed.

Instead, the demands advanced at Sunday's event were narrowly focused on calls to prevent ICE agents from staging their vehicles on United States Postal Service (USPS) property before heading out on kidnapping operations. Other demands included calls for the prosecution of Ross for the murder of Good and for ICE agents to leave the Twin Cities and Minnesota.

However, in conversations with WSWS reporters, many workers and residents said they would support

postal workers, and every section of the working class, going on strike not only in Minnesota but across the country.

Hope, a freshman at the University of Minnesota, said she supported a general strike. “I think that a general strike is the most powerful and maybe most effective way to hit them where it hurts. Because no matter what we do, it just seems like they’re not listening. We can have thousands of people in the streets, and they see that, but they don’t respect it. And I think that a general strike is a way to really get to them.”

She added, “You know, we are the ones who are, you know, providing them with food to eat, providing them with transportation, providing them with mail, providing them with everything.” She concluded, “Don’t mourn. Organize.... We do outnumber them.”

A Minnesotan said she came to the rally because, “I’m so angry about what is happening to my community... and what I am seeing is people not having human decency.” On the question of a general strike, she said, “I think doing a general strike is almost imperative.”

Mike, a postal worker at the rally, explained, “We are out here, we’re demanding that ICE stop using postal property to stage their raids. We’re also demanding the arrest and prosecution of Jonathan Ross for the murder of Renée Good, a mother and community member who just had her head blown off for standing up for her neighbors.

“And we also want our neighbors and community to know that your letter carriers and postal workers are not working with ICE, and we want them out of our town

as much as you can.”

Mike explained how ICE has been operating on postal worker property: “They have been spotted in post office parking lots staging raids, and it’s really unsafe for workers. We don’t want to be around thugs, masked thugs, secret police with guns on our property while we’re trying to do our job. It’s not safe for us as letter carriers.”

On Trump’s threats to invoke the Insurrection Act and deploy active-duty soldiers to Minneapolis, Mike replied, “I think we’re already under occupation. It wouldn’t surprise me if he wants to send in more troops, but I know one thing: Minneapolis will not lay down, we will not roll over, and we will not lick the boot of the oppressor.”

Nikki, a worker and mother, told the WSWS, “We need to show our solidarity because the only people that are ‘winning’ right now are those that are profiting off of all of us.”

She added, “We are all working-class people that are being oppressed in one way or another.”

Nikki explained that she was born and raised in Gary, Indiana, and that her grandfather “worked in steel mills, so we were dyed in the wool union as long as I can remember.” She added, “This is just something that is in my blood, to organize and to have solidarity among regular people.”

She concluded, “By going on a general strike, we can really make it hurt in the only place they care, which is their pocket... So a general strike to me is the most effective thing we can do right now.”



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