



Industrial Workers of the World International Solidarity Commission

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Solidarity with the Workers' Occupation of the Greif-Sanjut factory in Istanbul!

The International Solidarity Commission (ISC) of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) sends our solidarity to all workers occupying the Greif-Sanjut factory, a division of the US enterprise, Greif, since February 10. We condemn the police and gendarmerie raid in the early daylight hours of April 10. Due to this attack many workers have been taken into custody and abused, including, Mehmet Ali Karabulut, who was reporting for the left publication Kizil Bayrak.

The Greif factory, a manufacturer of packaging products, has been occupied by 500 workers who are members of the Confederation of Revolutionary Trade Unions in Turkey (DİSK). Workers at the Greif factory are struggling for several issues. The most urgent problems are: low wages, which are currently below the poverty line; 44 subcontractor companies working for the Greif bosses, and excessive workplace accidents. Workers, including the core workforce and subcontracted workers, decided to occupy the factory after the managers refused to negotiate concerning their problems.

The occupation process has worked through direct democracy with 14 workers' committees inside the factory. Every decision has been discussed and made by the workers and committee decisions are discussed at the general assembly. Female and male workers alike have expressed in videos and interviews that they have gained confidence through the occupation and by taking matters into their own hands.

Shamefully, however, occupying workers at Greif, who are members of DİSK, have not been receiving solid support from the bureaucracy of the confederation. The confederation is dependent on the legal framework and negotiations with the bosses and thus the union bureaucracy turned its backs on the workers' militant direct action. The union bureaucracy, including the so-called professionals, is aware of the fact that workers' control and self-management are a real threat to their interests.

Since the IWW's founding in 1905, we have striven to build unions based on the direct strength of workers on the job, through strikes and occupations such as the brave workers at Greif have done. We salute the resisting workers at Greif and encourage them in their struggle.

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F. Hanschmann (chair) • J. Pierce • W. Bliss

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