

ORGANISE SOLIDARITY ACTION WITH VESTAS!



FOR GREEN JOBS UNDER WORKERS' CONTROL!

The Vestas wind turbine plant on the Isle of Wight has become the latest battleground in the fight for jobs. For over two weeks the plant was under occupation and now there is a 24 hour picket keeping the fight alive.

Workers in the construction industry have shown how solidarity action gets results. We need that solidarity action now. Workers are calling a national day of action on the Thursday 17th September.

What's it got to do with us?

The dispute at Vestas is not only a fight to save 600 jobs on the Isle of Wight – it also raises questions about the future of jobs in the construction industry. It has revealed the government's energy strategy to be completely inadequate and it raises massive questions about the future of the planet.

Reading the bosses' press over the last few weeks shows that there are big problems in the government's energy strategy. *The Economist*

reports that North Sea oil and gas production has been in steep decline since 1999. This pattern is being repeated all over the world. At the point at which we pass global peak oil production, prices are going to rocket, there will be energy blackouts and lots of workers in the fossil fuels industry will be out of a job. For this reason alone, we need a massive expansion of the renewable energy sector.

Added to this reality, the UK government has led the way in deregulating the energy markets – for the last 25 years they have believed that the free market would provide for all our energy needs. This process started with the defeat of the miners and the privatisation of British Gas. We have spent the last 25 years filling the pockets of energy bosses and now we are left with no long-term energy strategy.

The government is ideologically committed to free markets. Instead of deciding what is necessary and then doing it, they write a wish-list and try to create a "favourable market environment" for global corporations.

“Favourable market environment” is management-speak for a privatised education system (where workers are trained up at their own expense), a casualised, docile, non-union workforce and an array of subsidies to sweeten the deal. In recent months, the government has said it wants a nuclear power station and 7000 windmills. But private business has found it is able to make a bigger profit elsewhere. Because the falling oil production and free market chaos, the leading industry analysts expect major energy blackouts within the next 5 years.

If the bosses are right about peak oil and the government’s energy policy, then the fossil fuels industry is in terminal decline. Militancy alone will not save your jobs. It needs to be backed up with a workers’ plan for the economic and ecological crises.

So, what’s the plan?

It is clear that climate change is well underway and that it is fuelled by human activity. Already, 300,000 people have been displaced by climate change and that figure is set to rise. The bosses and their free markets have no answers. They only care about their profit-margins.

Climate change is not just about CO2 emissions. It is the result of human economic activity that is at odds with the earth’s ecology. The very language we use and metaphors we draw upon to describe the ecological crisis;

that of exhaustion, degradation and exploitation are all familiar to us as trade unionists and working class activists. The world over, workers are subject to overwork and exploitation to the point of physical and mental collapse. The planet itself faces such a collapse. The force that drives the stripping of rainforests and the poisoning of the atmosphere is the same that drives the exploitation of one human being by another; the logic that profit should be the basic imperative of human activity, the logic of capitalism. We should draw no distinctions between it’s willingness to wreck human life or that of any other living thing. Capitalism is and will always be hostile to all life.

In Workers’ Climate Action we fight for a “worker-led just transition”. For the workers at Lindsey, Stanlow and across the fossil fuel sector, the obvious transition is towards jobs in the green energy sector. Your skills should be put to use building the green energy infrastructure that we so desperately need.

This can only happen if the government is forced to give up its commitment to free market chaos. The free market has failed at Vestas and the workers are demanding “nationalisation under workers’ control”. If they lose their fight and the government is allowed to continue with its free market dogma then this will not only affect your future job prospects but also the future of the planet.

Get organised for solidarity action on the 17th September! Save jobs! Save the planet!

Workers' Climate Action is a direct action and solidarity network made up of socialists, anarchists and other class struggle activists involved in both the environmental and labour movements.

WCA stands for a *worker-led just transition to a low-carbon economy* and believes that organised labour, particularly in frontline industries such as aviation, energy and transport is a key agent which is fundamentally capable of effecting meaningful social change.

It seeks to struggle within the trade union movement to change what it sees as the conservative policies of some unions on issues like aviation, coal mining and nuclear power, as well as supporting the self-organisation of workers in the energy sector. WCA activists were first to respond to the announcement of the closure of the Vestas wind turbine blades factory on the Isle of Wight and were integral to organising the 3 July public meeting which began the organising process which culminated in a worker occupation of the factory.

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NATIONAL CONFERENCE 10th OCTOBER 2009 – Venue tbc.
www.workersclimateaction.wordpress.com for more details.