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Poland - Strike

Urgent need for solidarity

- News from around the world -

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Union solidarity must be built and it is very important for the future of the more class-conscious part of the workers movement in Poland.

In the Polish coal mine "Budryk" an occupation strike started on December 17th. "Budryk" is the most recent coal mine in Poland, starting in 1994, with great productivity (1400 tons/miner/year when the average productivity in Poland is 700 tons/miner/year) and huge profitability (in 2007, during the first nine months, the profit was 45 millions zlotys, i.e. around 12,5 millions euro).

However, salaries in this mine are the lowest in the whole Polish mining industry. Almost all workers are on strike (2430 persons work in this mine) and teams of 300-400 occupied the mine on the two extraction levels: at -700 m and -1050 m. They have elected a strike committee. The strike is supported by Confederation of free trade unions "August 80" ("Sierpien 80") and two local unions, "Kadra" and "United workers of Budryk". The Polish neoliberal government aims to integrate "Budryk" mine, which is public property, into the Coal Company of Jastrzebie (also public for the moment, but with the status of a limited company, and so more easy to privatise).

This is the first step in the privatisation of the whole mining Polish industry, in order to destroy the most important organised section of the Polish workers class. If Capital can defeat the "Budryk" strike, all workers' rights surviving in Poland will be under attack. "Budryk" managers refuse to negotiate. Strikers have not received their wages this month. Managers' hope that the strike will stop when miners' families do not have bread... And the only Confederation who supports this strike, "August 80", does not have the capacity to guarantee financial resources to strikers.

We received from the strike committee [their appeal](#). It was published on the IV website. It is very important to publicise it, to distribute it in unions and, eventually, to organise material and moral solidarity with Polish miners.

The leader of the "Budryk" strike, Krzysztof ?ab?d?, is a very well-known working class activist. Two years ago, he was expelled from "Budryk" with eight other unionists, for striking. He has built at this moment a Committee for the support and defence of repressed workers (KPiORP), with other unionists expelled from others factories... This Committee organised demonstrators across the whole of Poland and was able to force managers to reintegrate expelled workers. Not only he and other Budryk unionists was reintegrated, but many others in different regions of Poland.

If you need more information about this strike and the organisation of solidarity, you can phone me on +33 1 49 28 54 88 or email inprecor@wanadoo.fr.

[Click here](#) for the appeal.