

Goodyear Mexico fires workers for setting up their own union

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Several dozen workers have been fired because of their efforts to organise an independent union.

The corrupt ‘yellow’ Confederation of Mexican Workers (CTM) and Goodyear Mexico colluded to sign a contract before workers were even hired at the factory. The terms of this union contract were exploitative and when the workers tried to form a separate union, that would actually represent their interests, they have been assaulted on all sides - the law, CTM and their employers.

IndustriALL report that “The workers set up the Independent Union of Workers at Goodyear Mexico to ensure that the company would respect their fundamental rights and to rid themselves of the protection contract signed by the employer-backed union CTM.”

The multinational, which specializes in the manufacture of tyres, announced the mass dismissals of around 50 people on 9 July. The workers claim that the company’s action was an act of revenge to punish their decision to set up an independent trade union at the plant.

“The company’s legal counsel, José María de la Garza, came to my house and, assuming a despotic air, told me that I was going to be fired. When I asked him for the reasons, he said it was in retaliation for my actions to promote a genuine workers’ movement,” explained a Goodyear worker to the press.

The workers decided to down tools at the plant in protest against the dismissals. Goodyear, with the backing of the Confederation of Mexican Workers (CTM) – a corrupt and yellow union at the company, allowed thugs to enter the factory in order to intimidate the workers and monitor their behaviour.

Other thugs went round the factory armed with sticks and rocks, while the company management called in a large federal police force to guard the outside perimeter of the plant.

CTM, is headed by Senator Tereso Medina, a union leader known for his willingness to sign ‘protection contracts’ - sham collective agreements entered into without the knowledge or consent of workers.

In a letter to Richard Kramer, CEO of the Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company, Valter Sanches, general secretary of IndustriALL Global Union wrote:

Apart from being a shocking breach of ethics and labour legislation, this is also a breach of the written commitment signed by Goodyear on 25 April 2018, under the mediation of the Mexican labour authorities. That agreement ended the workers’ demonstration at

the plant and clearly stated that the company would take no reprisals against the strikers.

The workers set up the Independent Union of Workers at Goodyear Mexico to ensure that the company would respect their fundamental rights and to rid themselves of the protection contract signed by the employer-backed union CTM.

“We are not looking for a fight or a conflict, all we are asking is that we be granted the right to negotiate directly with the company,” said one of the representatives of the new union at a press conference which took place in the presence of the Secretary of Labour in San Luis de Potosí on 10 July.

The workers claim the management of the plant has been manipulating them since 2015 when it signed a protection contract with CTM, i.e. two years before operations actually started at the plant. At the time there was not a single worker actually employed by the US company. They also affirm that they never had an opportunity to meet the so-called leaders of the union who signed a very unfavourable collective agreement with the employers in their name.

“As far as IndustriALL is concerned, the behaviour of the local management is totally unacceptable and shatters the hopes for change that emerged during the recent presidential elections. We shall continue to support the Goodyear workers and monitor the situation very closely,” concluded Sanches.

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