

## About Us

*The Worker* is an organ of revolutionary working-class expression, with the aim of uniting revolutionaries under Maoism, serving the effort to reconstitute the Communist Party.

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# Starbucks Workers Speak from the Picket Lines



*Volunteers with The Worker spoke with Starbucks workers on the picket line in NYC and LA on Monday (12/23). The interviews have been shortened and formatted for publication.*

### **Why are you on strike?**

NYC: We're on strike as part of an unfair labor practice strike. The company is withholding back pay and is not bargaining with us in good faith. The company last week came to us with an offer that just was unacceptable and so we're showing them that we have the power and we're gonna make them come to the table with a real offer. We're asking for a living wage, we're asking for them to honor commitments that they've already made and are no longer enforcing.

LA: Our goal is to have them meet us with an adequate proposal that is not insulting and that will provide our partners with the ability to live by working instead of having to overwork themselves or have second or third jobs even.

had over 300 of those stores pledged to go on strike. We have over 500 shops [unionized]. We've had 150, just this year, unionize, and we're prepared to keep growing every year.

### **How to support**

LA: We're constantly having our social media updated and letting people know how they can support us, even if it's just signing a pledge or stopping by in a store and saying, "oh, hey, I support you guys, keep up the good work." It does mean a lot when we hear that from our regular people.



Starbucks workers picket in Los Angeles, California.

Just stick to it and really believe in it. If you are willing to put in the work to be out and active, do it. Do it because you have people backing you up. You know, you have a whole community backing you up in what you're doing. And as scary as it may be, like the support you get, 100% always. There's so much power in the numbers.

### **Trajectory of the strike**

NYC: We're showing the company that we're coordinated, we can do a choreographed strike, we are escalating and giving the company time to say, let's negotiate. As they continue to avoid addressing these issues with us, we're gonna continue to escalate the pressure on the company while also showing the coordination of our strike. We're doing a ULP strike escalating every day up through Christmas Eve, and then we have other tactics that we're prepared to use if that isn't enough to move the company back to the table. The goal is definitely to have as many stores as possible go on strike by the 24th. I know at the last count, a few days ago, we

### **Getting unionized**

LA: We began two years ago. It was at the time where Buffalo, about three years ago, had just filed and more and more stores were popping up. And we just started having conversations amongst ourselves and it seems like everyone was pretty much on board because our working conditions at the time were not great and we were constantly being overworked and we were being paid less even then. And we got in contact with Workers United and they helped us out with the entire process. And here we are now, two years later.

### **Solidarity with Palestine**

NYC: There's a lot of solidarity between the Starbucks union members and the Palestinian liberation movement. It's something a lot of members hold very near and dear to their heart. We've put out statements in support of Palestine and are happy to do so again.



## **Coordinating between labor struggles**

NYC: We've already had members from Starbucks go to the Amazon picket lines. We've had the Amazon teamsters show up to support us. We have Starbucks workers going to speak at the rallies at Amazon tomorrow. We've linked up with REI as well. There's plenty of union support in New York. New York is a union town.



Starbucks workers picket in Brooklyn, NY.

## **Dealing with repression and scabs**

NYC: We've had the NYPD show up here today and tell us that we can't use our bullhorns and are just kind of pestering us.

We definitely haven't seen arrests the way that Amazon workers here in New York have, but we stand in solidarity with the Amazon workers and we are prepared to stand strong in our own fight and to join up with theirs as well.

They've not dared to bring any scabs here. We're prepared to be out here talking to anyone, customer or worker who would dare to cross our picket line. I think [Starbucks] knows that workers are really the ones with the power in this situation and they know that we will be able to shut down any store that they try to open, that we will go in. We will talk to workers and we will go to other non-union stores and talk to those workers too. We will get our demands met.

LA: Stick to it. It will be a fight. But you're not alone in it. There are so many hundreds of stores out here and thousands of partners who are on the same boat as you, who have been struggling and have unionized successfully. And it will continue to grow.