

China Labor: “Are we going to follow in the footsteps of our parents?”

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A post 80's generation China Honda worker speaks out

Honda is a Fortune 500 company! It earned more than 4 billion yuan last year! It earned more than a billion the year before that! Let's compare Honda with other businesses. But none can really compare with it! This is a Fortune 500 company which earned more than 4 billion in 2009 but only pays minimum wages to workers. It gives you a thousand yuan a month, which is only enough for food, and holidays are not included! Would you dare to work for this company? You may say Honda has contributed to our pensions and other companies have not. Mind you, it is illegal for employers to fail to contribute to a pension fund. You must file complaints to the labor bureau. A Fortune 500 company simply cannot do such openly illegal things! This time it increased our wages. 355 yuan! The increase is made up of a basic wage raise of 200 yuan, a living allowance raise of 35 yuan and a meal allowance raise of 120 yuan. You may say that after this pay raise our wage level reached 1500 yuan. All surrounding businesses also offer wages at this level. But how can one compare Honda with other businesses when Honda earns more than 4 billion yuan in annual profit? And this profit may even increase in the future. We all know that the automotive industry is a highly profitable industry. This is created by us frontline workers! But what do those of us who create the profits get? If we are not satisfied we can of course resign, but Honda will continue to recruit people, and our brothers and sisters would continue to suffer here! Even if we quit we have to fight for our brothers' and sisters' benefit! This is another reason for us to continue to strike!

Some people even say that because we are just secondary technical school students and vocational school students, we do not deserve higher wages. First of all I would like to ask: are you looking down on us as technical secondary school students? I strongly despise you! Although we are technical secondary school students, we have created a profit of 4 billion yuan a year! Can you do that? No, you can't!

On May 17 when the strike began, the high-level Japanese management ordered us to resume production. We responded that we would do so and gave them a week to reply to our demands or else we would quit. Then they secretly fired our leaders! The general manager, in his office, mocked us as fools. Where was their good will? So we went on strike again on the 21st. The Japanese managers have resorted to taking pictures of us, to threaten us to resume production! At this critical moment our great trade union did nothing for us! Instead they just wanted us to go back to the production line! Is this what a union should be doing? You take from our monthly wages 5 yuan for union dues but look what you had done for us! On May 22 the Japanese manager sacked two of our leaders to threaten us to resume production. So is this your good will? On the 24th you announced that you would increase our allowances from 65 yuan to 120, an increase of just 55 yuan! So this is your good will? And you continue to make video recordings to threaten us. This is another reason why we continue to strike.

China! It has been promoting low-cost competition and cheap labor. Our GDP keeps growing!

However, this growth relies on exploiting our cheap labor. We have created all this wealth but only get very low wages in return. Our wages are still at the level of the minimum wage. We are still struggling to get by with this. We created this wealth. Don't we deserve to get better pay? With such deplorable wages, just how are we going to raise the overall level of our national economy? This (kind of injustice) is just too common! Our parents have suffered from this cheap labor market and now they are getting old. And now, do we, the post 80 and 90 generation, want to follow in the footsteps of our parents? I believe no parent wants this. It is because they all once walked down this road and know how hard it is. We do not want to go this way either. Times have changed! So this kind of cheap labor regime must end!

Honda is a Japanese company and Japan is a capitalist country. But China is supposed to be a socialist country! The Japanese companies investing in China must follow the rules of China. Implement socialism! Do not give us capitalism!