

Vestas occupation supporter: “Those people in there definitely want to be heard”

Our reporter
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The *World Socialist Web Site* spoke to John, who has worked for five years at the Vestas plant on the Isle of Wight, about the occupation that has been mounted to oppose the closure of the factory.

John said, “Where we are at the moment is that Andrew Turner, the Isle of Wight MP, is now in the building. He’s in talks with the CEO—I suppose to see how he can resolve this. One of the big men from Unite has just turned up.

“The police and security have just erected a fence all the way around the front to stop us getting food to our fellow workers. So they are basically being starved because we can’t get to them.

“I’ve worked here five years. There are people that have been here nine years that stand to get quite a bit of redundancy money. And there are people that have been here only a few years and below that stand to get only a few hundred pounds.

“We were told a few months ago that this job was going to give us a future. What industry could give us that at the moment? Now it’s come to this.

“It’s between five and six hundred jobs that are affected. The unemployment situation on the Isle of Wight is terrible. This is going to cause big problems—not only the people who work here but also in the support companies. There’s going to be a lot of people affected.

“I live on the island. There are a few office staff that come in on the boat in the morning, but predominantly the production staff is Isle of Wight based.

“As you might have seen the news earlier, a few people did get in and some food was got into the occupation. There was another attempt about half an hour ago, but now the police are all around the front of the building.

“At the plant we build onshore wind turbines, which the pot is not very big for in the UK at the moment. There are a lot of people contesting sites that have been put forward for where they are going to go. It is just not being embraced.

“A lot of the British market is going to be offshore turbines, which we don’t make. We haven’t got the moulds for them. That’s not to say things couldn’t be changed to do that.

“The Chinese and American markets are booming. They’re the ones that are taking off at the moment and the money’s there now. And production will obviously be cheaper in China as well. It seems the company are just moving from place to place. If they can make £100 million here and £100 million there and use cheaper workers they just do that.

“The firm seems to just come in, get the technology or whatever and then they are out. It’s just a hire and fire company.

“Those people in there definitely want to be heard. We have support from other workers.”



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