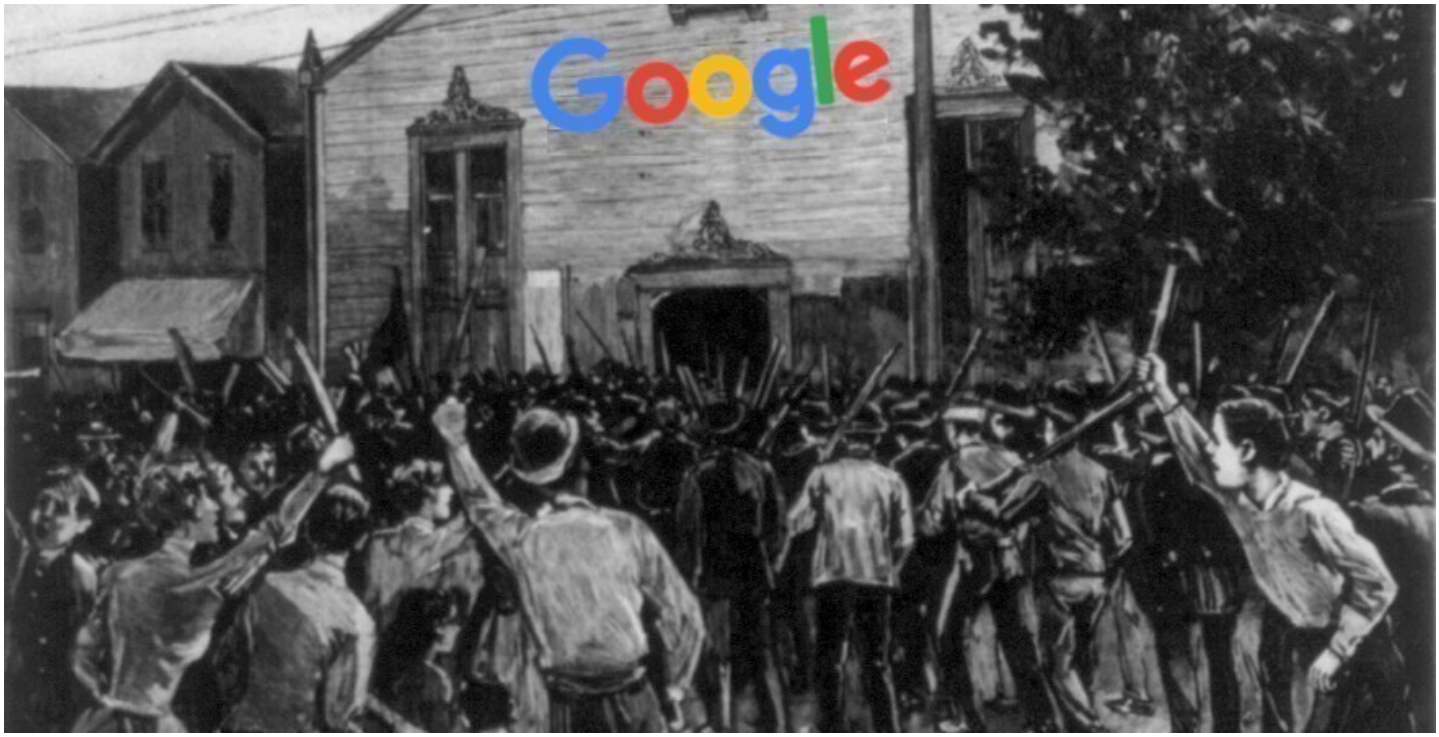
Twitter Thread by Cory Doctorow #BLM

Cory Doctorow #BLM
@doctorow

Google workers have announced their intention to form a union, under the auspices of @CWAUnion Local 1440. The union is called @AlphabetWorkers (Google maintains the legal and accounting fiction that it is a division of a holding company called "Alphabet").

1/



Speaking of legal fictions, the union is opening membership to "TVCs" - temps, vendors and contractors - employees who have deliberately misclassified so as to avoid paying them benefits or extending normal workplace protections to them.

2/

It's a bold move, a countermeasure to thwart the other commercial advantage from worker misclassification: by creating multiple categories of workers, bosses can pit employees against one another, by dangling privileges in front of one group but not the other.

3/

But it comes at a high price: to gain official legal recognition, more than 50% of eligible workers must join the union. By including more workers, the union is setting a higher bar for official status.

https://t.co/QjVkkM5hXC

4/

But the union has momentum: a series of high-profile googler uprisings - driven by official tolerance for sexual misconduct, complicity in US military drone programs, secret collaboration with Chinese surveillance and censorship, and more - show how radicalized googlers are.

5/

Google's management - who cultivated an air of participatory, cuddly collaboration - have arrived at a point where the contradictions between their "values" and the company's profits can no longer be reconciled.

6/

In Dec 2020, Google fired @timnitGebru, an eminent Black AI scientist who refused to retract a paper critical of its profitable Big Data research. Management compounded their sins by making false claims about Gebru's dismissal.

7/

The unionization drive is under the CWA's #CODE (Coalition to Organize Digital Employees) project. Though CODE is no stranger to conflict, Google represents a serious challenge, thanks to its partnership with notorious union-busters @IRIConsultants.

8/

(IWI's tactics pale in comparison to the mercenaries that @Amazon has hired to bust its unions: the @pinkerton company, who have spilled rivers of workers' blood in their murderous history):

https://t.co/XE1gb7GTbk

9/

For important context on the drive, check out @tech_actions' article on the announcement, which explains why googlers have formed a "non-contract union" that does not yet have official recognition.

https://t.co/3qrQEXeMit

10/

"Non-contract unions embody the idea that worker power does not come from legal processes, but rather through building power through solidarity."

eof/