Strike victory at Dublin store

Gregor Kerr

1995

At a time of increasing attacks on workers' rights and conditions throughout both the public and private sectors, it is refreshing to report a victory for a group of workers who had the guts to stand up to their boss's intimidatory tactics. On Friday February 17th, following a 3-week strike in defence of a colleague who had been unfairly dismissed, eight MANDATE members at Knightingales store in Dublin's ILAC Centre returned to work victorious.

With management refusing to even talk to the union at the outset of the strike, the workers faced an uphill battle. However their determination and the tremendous solidarity shown by other shopworkers in the city centre and by the general public forced the re-instatement of the sacked worker. In addition management was forced to concede union recognition and to recognise that issues such as working hours, conditions and low pay need to be addressed.

These workers have shown the way in which unscrupulous bosses must be tackled. In the coming weeks and months as they follow up this victory with negotiations to improve their working conditions, they will need the full backing of their union and of fellow trade unionists.

The strike at Knightingales has served yet again to highlight the deplorable wages and conditions endured by thousands of workers employed in the services sector. Trade union leaders would be better employed backing their members in a vigorous fight against such exploitation instead of stitching up workers through "rationalisation" plans, redundancy deals, national programmes and the like — all of which are designed to break union organisation and increase exploitation.

The Workers Solidarity Movement wish to extend hearty congratulations to the Knightingales strikers.

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