



POST WORKER



United we can stop Royal Mail...

Take action to support Belfast

BELFAST POSTAL workers are in the middle of a crucial battle, and they desperately need your full support and solidarity.

Two weeks ago they were forced to strike by the bullying and harassment of Royal Mail managers. This came to a head when a worker who had kept a diary of harassment had the diary seized by management. He was then found guilty of harassment himself for daring to document the abusive actions of managers.

Management bullying & lies

His mates walked out when he was found guilty, management refused to talk and so other workers joined the action.

Around 800 Belfast postal workers are out now, demanding an independent employee relations and industrial relations review. Management won't grant that because, as one Belfast CWU member puts it, "The place is a cesspit and when you shine a light into a cesspit you see the rats running."

At one point management said the worker had noted down car registration numbers, implying he was some sort of paramilitary gangster. It was a lie, as they've been forced to admit.

Management then said the union was trying to cover up for worker versus worker bullying based on hatred of Protestants by Catholics or vice versa. In fact the dispute has brought Protestant and Catholic together in a way that hasn't been seen for over 70 years.

The first office out was BT13 in Shankill (mainly Protestant). The next was West Belfast (mainly Catholic) because they weren't prepared to see their colleagues

treated with arrogance and contempt.

A great march of postal workers and their supporters, uniting everyone from both communities, swept up the Shankill and down the Falls Road last week. That hasn't happened since 1932.

Royal Mail are throwing everything at Belfast postal workers. Late in the evening they visited four CWU officials to hand them letters threatening to drag them through the courts and hold them personally responsible for damages arising from the strike. That means they would lose their homes.

The CWU is held back by the anti-union laws from directly calling for support for the strikers. But the union has supported the call for an independent review and encouraged everyone to send money to the hardship fund set up by Belfast and District Trades Council. A national CWU meeting last week discussed Belfast, Ask your area rep about what was said.

National attack

Belfast workers, ordinary men and women just like you, will be starved back to work if they don't get support. They will be forced back with all the conditions they have won in the past taken away, new contracts imposed, the union smashed and facing a regime of relentless harassment.

That would be disastrous with Royal Mail managers already attacking the union across Britain and with bullying commonplace.

Everywhere branches are calling for strike ballots over managers tearing up agreements, imposing new contracts, turning full-time jobs into part-time, slash-

ing earnings, changing overtime deals and much more.

We could all soon be part of national ballot. If we are forced into that then it's crucial to kick off with a victory in Belfast.

Take solidarity action on Tuesday

On Tuesday this week the Belfast postal workers have called a rally, and postal workers from across Britain will be travelling over to give support. Most of us can't do that, but it's vital that something happens to support Belfast IN EVERY OFFICE. Hold a collection, hold a meeting to discuss the issues, raise the strike in work time learning.

They're all important, but the Belfast strikers really need more than that. Offices in Glasgow, Edinburgh and Liverpool have refused to handle their mail. Every branch needs to follow that lead.

But the quickest way to win, the way to guarantee they won't be starved back in Belfast is for other offices to give real solidarity in the way that has won strikes before. Royal Mail wants to isolate Belfast, they need more forces in the frontline alongside them. On Tuesday, take action to support Belfast.

Send messages of support to:

- Tel: 02890 330378
- Fax: 02890 330379
- Email: branch@cwuni.org

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