

Lionbridge sack worker for joining a union



LIONBRIDGE UNION BUSTERS

Lionbridge, is a USA based multinational company that provides translation, and software development services. They have operations in over 26 countries, including Ireland, and everywhere they are hostile to decent pay and trade union rights. Today there are protests outside their offices all over the world.

On February 12th, a workplace representative of the 'Workers Federation' trade union in Lionbridge Poland was summarily dismissed. This came shortly after staff told management that a union had been formed in the Warsaw office.

We are proud to stand by our Polish fellow workers in their struggle against union busting. Whether we live in Walkinstown or Warsaw, we are all workers and should stick up for each other when employers put the boot in.

To get around the Polish law which prohibits the sacking of union representatives without good cause, the bosses said that Jakob B had "damaged the company's image" and leaked confidential company information to an internet website.

This 'confidential' information was

(a) that a condition imposed on Indian firm Mentorix when they were taken over by Lionbridge was that the firm "is not and has never been a party to or bound by any union contract, collective bargaining agreement or similar contract".

(b) that Lionbridge drives down wages.

As Mary Phelan of the Irish Translators' & Interpreters' Association explained, "The Courts Service pays Lionbridge €46 per hour. In turn, Lionbridge pays either €25 or €20 or €17.50 to the interpreters. We have even heard reports of €15 per hour. The rates vary depending on when the interpreters were recruited – those recruited more recently are paid less.

"The reduction in pay is an alarming development. Interpreters used to complain that the hourly rate never increased despite inflation. But they never expected reductions like these. The ITIA believes that Lionbridge favours the more recently recruited interpreters for interpreting assignments because they cost less."

This information is certainly not confidential, even the Irish Independent has written about it. All sources for the information were provided in the original article and all are publicly available.

Management's allegations are nothing but a smokescreen to hide their old fashioned union busting. They know that none of us has much influence on our pay or working conditions unless we stand together. That's why workers join unions and why bosses don't like them.

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If you are in a job where there is no union, talk to your workmates about joining one. If there is interest, contact a few unions (e.g. SIPTU, UNITE, MANDATE, etc.) and see how they can help you. Talk to the Independent Workers Union, who are currently taking up the case of a Lionbridge worker. Their office is at 61 North Strand Road Dublin 3. 087-9356945

Today's solidarity protest is organised by the
**Workers Solidarity
Movement**

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