

15 November 2023

ISS strikers are an “inspiration to millions of other workers”

ISS strikers heard on today’s picket (15) that they are an “inspiration to millions of other workers” who have “been treated like dirt by their employer”.

Around 100 PCS members employed as cleaners, security guards and support staff in three major government departments for the outsourced company ISS are striking from **November 1 to 17** and from **November 27 to December 15**.

The third picket of this phase of the 36-day strike by low-paid members working in the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero, the Department for Business and Trade, and the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology was visited by Paul Nowak, the general secretary of the TUC, and PCS Parliamentary Group chair, MP Chris Stephens.

At the first picket line of the week in central London, another takes place tomorrow (16) at 3-8 Whitehall Place, dozens of members gathered to wave PCS flags, carry placards, blow horns and leaflet passers-by.

PCS President Fran Heathcote told the strikers that she and the union’s national executive committee are “proud” of the bold action they have taken so far and shared a message that “we want you to win and we stand with you”.

She introduced Paul Nowak, who noted that in the many public and private sector disputes he has seen over the past 12 months, the employer has “started off by saying we cannot afford anymore and we’re not going to negotiate”.

“But in dispute after dispute, workers have won decent pay rises,” he continued. “So I think the message to ISS today is that if you have £72 million in profits – and you can hand out £1million in bonuses to your senior staff – then you can pay your staff fairly and deliver a decent pay rise.”

He also argued that privatised contracts such as theirs need to “come back in-house” and commented on the ‘Our Work Matters’ posters that many strikers were carrying, adding: “Without you, these buildings can’t operate; without you,

these civil servants aren't supported."

An inspiration to millions

Chris Stephens expressed "full solidarity and support" from the whole PCS parliamentary group and reminded strikers that he had raised the dispute on the floor of the Commons but "had not yet received a response."

While he will "continue to fight your corner", he told strikers to "keep doing what you're doing - you're showing inspiration to millions of other workers who are in the same position as you, who have been treated like dirt by their employer."

Tom, a PCS rep on the picket line, said that it is "fantastic to see such support from MPs and the public at our picket lines this week. "

"The message was clear - not only will they will continually support us until we win what we deserve in this dispute, but they will support us, and others like us, to fight back against the outsourcing everywhere," he added.

John, a member who has worked in his role for over 19 years, said that his pay has barely risen since joining ISS.

"We will be out here until ISS sit around the table again," he said. "We're not greedy - we just want to be treated fairly. I'm not out here in the cold blowing my horn for fun - I want to go back into work. But if you're not paying me properly, I will stay out here as long as necessary."

Further picket lines will be announced unless ISS are able to end this dispute with an increased pay offer, a commitment to better terms and conditions, and recognition of PCS as our members' trade union.

Show your support

- Visit the next picket line tomorrow, **16 November at 3-8 Whitehall Place (8:00 -10:00)**.
- Donate to the ISS strike fund using account number 20331490 sort code: 60-83-01, account name PCS Fighting Fund Levy (please use ISS as the reference).
- Sign [the petition to the chief executive of the Government Property Agency](#).

- Send messages of support to editor@pcs.org.uk
- Not yet a PCS member? [Join online today](#).