

# Workers Struggles: Europe and Africa

2 November 2000

## **Romanian workers strike over security checks**

On October 26, workers at a Romanian clothes factory began an indefinite strike in a dispute with management over their policy of allowing security guards to regularly search them.

The strike at a factory in Focsani involves some 1,200 workers, mainly woman. They have pledged not to return to work until the searches of their person are stopped. Some of the searches by the security guards even involve looking inside their underwear.

Management at the factory has refused to end the search policy, stating that it is a necessary part of the security of the factory.

## **Irish airline staff strike to demand better pay**

Clerical staff employed by the Irish airline Aer Lingus, struck for four hours on October 27 in a dispute over pay. The strike was held at Dublin Airport and led to the cancellation of 35 of Aer Lingus's 260 scheduled daily flights. About 4,000 passengers missed their flights and another 10,000 faced delays.

The 1,400 staff involved plan to continue their strike with a 24-hour stoppage on November 3 if their demands are not met. The Irish Labour Court has called both parties into talks and demanded that the planned strike be called off.

Earlier last month all flights were cancelled for 24 hours when cabin crew walked off the job. The airline has also seen strike action by baggage handlers and caterers, also over pay.

## **Italian airport workers strike**

On October 27, ground workers and flight attendants at the Italian national airline, Alitalia, took strike action in a pay dispute. The strike led to the cancellation of more than 200 flights at Milan's Malpensa and Linate airports. A further 80 national and 20 international flights were cancelled at Rome's Leonardo da Vinci airport.

## **Sympathy strike in support of bank workers**

Workers in banks, financial establishments, insurance

companies, industries and businesses of Burkina Faso began a 48-hour work stoppage last Thursday, in support of workers from the International Bank for Trade, Industry and Agriculture of Burkina Faso or BICIA-B. The strike follows a management decision to suspend the contracts of the bank's employees.

The workers are demanding the unconditional cancellation of sanctions taken against BICIA-B personnel. The strike has affected most banks and financial houses in Ouagadougou, which have closed their doors.

## **Nigerian striking civil servants set parliament ablaze**

Striking civil servants in northern Nigeria set fire to the state parliament building and chased out politicians in protest at the arrest of four union leaders. Several protesters were injured in clashes with police. Violence erupted in northeastern Borno State on October 26 after four provincial leaders of the Nigeria Labor Congress (NLC) appeared in court charged with holding an unlawful gathering.

The Nigerian *Guardian* newspaper said the leaders had been arrested on October 24 after taking the state government to court over the non-payment of salaries by the Borno State authorities, as well as the reappointment of a senior state official who had previously been investigated for corruption. In charges read out in court, police accused the union leaders of organizing an illegal march.

Many of Nigeria's 36 states, which have complained of dwindling revenues and rising expenditure, owe their workers months of salary arrears. Other professional groups, such as teachers and doctors, are also striking to demand wage payments.

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