

DHL worker wins unfair dismissal case after anti-war speech at Palestine protest in Leipzig

Martin Nowak
15 July 2026

The DHL employee and Verdi union representative Christopher Tersch won his case against DHL at the Leipzig Employment Tribunal on July 8, successfully overturning his dismissal. Christopher had been suspended after giving a speech at a demonstration against arms deliveries and was later dismissed without notice.

The starting point was a speech Christopher gave on August 23, 2025 at a “March to Airport” organised by the Palestine Action Committee Leipzig. At the time, between 600 and 700 people took part in a protest march to Leipzig/Halle Airport, where the DHL logistics hub is based. The protest demanded an end to all transport of military goods, particularly to the state of Israel, which is waging a genocidal war in Gaza.

Christopher, who works in the offload department (unloading), spoke out against arms transports and the militarisation of the site. He described how the military nature of the goods was usually kept secret and that such information was only uncovered by chance. He cited a case in which freight was explicitly to be prioritised for processing precisely because it consisted of military goods. He said he found it repugnant to handle arms manufacturer Rheinmetall deliveries.

He referred to strikes and blockades by dockworkers in Greece and Italy that prevented arms deliveries to the state of Israel and expressed the hope “that we will get there too.” He advocated further protest actions and concluded with the slogans: “Workers don’t shoot workers” and “No transport for genocide.” His entire speech can be viewed [here](#).

After this, he was summoned to a personnel meeting. Christopher was suspended, and just under two weeks later dismissed without notice. The dismissal was justified on the grounds of a breach of confidentiality and violations of the terms of his employment contract.

The company justified this, among other things, by claiming he had disclosed trade secrets, specifically the naming of Rheinmetall as a DHL customer.

In court, however, DHL’s claim was shown to be baseless. Evidence established that both DHL and Rheinmetall had publicly disclosed their cooperation. The fact that the DHL hub in Leipzig is an “important hub for the transport of military goods around the world” had already become public knowledge a year earlier through a court case in Dresden. That case concerned espionage allegations against the far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD) politician Maximilian Krah.

A further scandal in court arose from the fact that DHL attempted to use statements made by Christopher at a works meeting against him. This raised the question of whether management had made illegal recordings of it.

Although Christopher’s politically motivated dismissal has now been declared invalid, it is not an isolated case. Later this year, appeal proceedings against Adrian Manuel Mauson are due to take place; he was dismissed in July 2025 and had stood as a candidate on the Maoist MLPD’s electoral slate for the federal election. There could also be an appeal proceeding in Christopher’s case.

Meanwhile, DHL has cut around 1,000 jobs at the hub within two years. While just over 7,000 employees were still working there at the beginning of 2024, there are now barely over 6,000. The works council and union representatives told broadcaster MDR that this was happening mainly through the back door, by putting workers under pressure to sign termination agreements. Countless workers are venting their frustration under the MDR article on Facebook—and also voicing their opinion about the works council

there.

Regarding the role of Verdi, of which he is a representative, Christopher told *Neues Deutschland* that he had a “nuanced” view. No one from the Verdi administration had “approached him proactively,” he said.



To contact the WSWWS and the
Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact