

# Fujitsu staff kick off two-day strike action

WORKERS at IT services company Fujitsu in Manchester kicked off a two-day strike yesterday, after bosses "walked away" from talks aimed at ending an ongoing bitter dispute over pay and conditions.

Amicus union members picketed the company and leafleted the public to gather support for their campaign before heading off to a general meeting.

The union's regional official Terry Thompson said that the "extremely well-

attended event" had shocked bosses.

"Our members are angry that the company has done nothing to help resolve the situation and have no choice but to return to strike action to defend their redundancy rights, union recognition and fight for better pay," he said.

Amicus suspended strikes in December to allow talks with Fujitsu management and the arbitration service ACAS in an attempt to settle the dispute.

But, while the union was willing to ac-

cept binding ACAS arbitration, Fujitsu chose to walk away from the talks.

In addition to the two-day strike, action short of a strike, involving withdrawal of goodwill, commenced in late November and is still ongoing.

Mr Thompson insisted: "The door is always open from the union's side. We want to reach an applicable settlement to end the dispute."

Amicus said that the company had attacked workers' union rights and was

seeking to worsen pay and conditions, including the imposition of two different pay deals on its workforce in Manchester, delaying pay rises and offering no increase in pay rates for many low-paid jobs.

Workers have also seen their right to a 90-day consultation before redundancy and their redundancy payment terms cut.

All of this is despite Fujitsu's reported profits increasing by 46 per cent to £150 million in 2005-6.

# Unmasking Fujitsu's shame

THANKS for your report on our strike at Fujitsu in Manchester (M Star January 12).

Fujitsu doesn't yet recognise unions across most of the UK and we believe that the company is attacking us in Manchester partly in response to growing union membership and organisation across the company.

Strikers recently leafleted Fujitsu sites in Bristol, London, Stevenage, Solihull and Crewe, having covered Wakefield, Warrington, Liverpool and Salford before Christmas.

We distributed a joint leaflet with the PCS at Civil Service workplaces in Manchester and Blackburn.

We picketed our own workplace in Manchester and sent groups touring round other workplaces building support.

The commitment and determination of members is an inspiration — many of those involved had no pre-

vious involvement beyond being a union member.

Thankfully, this is also being matched by support from across the labour movement, which clearly recognises the importance of unionising new industries such as IT.

Leafleting other sites has got the company rattled. It sent a notice to all 14,000 UK staff on Friday, the first time that the company has ever been forced to respond to union activity at national level.

Its response can only help us to build the union.

On Wednesday, members will be discussing further industrial action.

More information on the strike, including where to send messages of support and donations, can be found on [www.ourunion.org.uk](http://www.ourunion.org.uk)

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Amicus senior rep, Fujitsu Manchester

...the lessons of Chile