

UBS CLEANERS DEFENCE COMMITTEE
C/O Latin American Workers Association
NUJ
Headland House
308-312 Gray's Inn Road
London
WC1X 8DP



URGENT APPEAL FOR SOLIDARITY
HANDS OFF OUR UNION – REINSTATE ALBERTO DURANGO

Dear Brother/Sister,

We are appealing to all sections of the labour movement, to assist in an important struggle of workers with the Union Bank of Switzerland underway in London.

For many years' cleaners, mostly migrant workers have been amongst the most exploited section of the working class. In an effort to improve their rights and conditions many have organised into trade unions, in response there has been a concerted effort by employers to break the union organisation and reverse any gains made by cleaners. Unionised workers have been dismissed and the immigration laws used to victimise and intimidate them.

The Union Bank of Switzerland is the latest to attack these workers, despite making a profit of \$1.1 billion in the last quarter; it has hired the notorious anti-union contractor Lancaster Ltd to drive down costs. Ignoring the legal protections afforded by TUPE, they have set out to cut the jobs and wages of workers already on poverty pay. Simultaneously they have attacked the cleaners union.

A mere three days after taking over the contract, the elected union representative and leader of the Latin American Workers Association Alberto Durango, was sacked on 4 February. Alberto has been a leading activist amongst cleaners in London and has helped organise cleaners into both UNITE and RMT. Alberto previously worked for the contractor Lancaster for over a decade, on becoming a union activist at Shroders Bank they victimised him. The company orchestrated his arrest based on false claims. He was released without charge. They sacked Alberto regardless claiming he never worked under his true identity. **After** his dismissal the Lancaster admitted he had in fact worked in his true identity after all!

The Banks and contractors are partners in crime and are blacklisting trade unionists.

The treatment of these workers **is a disgrace** which can and must be stopped. Already many sections of our movement have supported the campaign in defence of the UBS cleaners. We need further help to win! We are appealing for financial assistance to mount an effective defence both legally and as a campaign.

Make *cheques payable to Latin American Workers Association* to the above address or direct to:

Latin American Workers Association
Lloyds TSB
Account: 058 19 53 02 – Sort code 30 98 14.

The banks have billions – the cleaners have nothing but your solidarity. All donations – no matter how small can help.

Jake Lagnado
Secretary
Latin American Workers Association

Chris Ford
Organiser UNITE
Clerkenwell & St Pancras,p.c

Supporters include:

'UBS cleaners' and 'Schroders cleaners', **Jeremy Corbyn** Member of Parliament, **John McDonnell** Member of Parliament, **Jeremy Dear**, National Union of Journalists, General Secretary, Suresh Grover, **The Monitoring Group**, **Steve Hedley**, Rail and Maritime Trade Union (LUL) London Regional Organiser; **Labour Representation Committee**, **Scottish Socialist Party** (International Committee), **RMT's Black and Ethnic Members**, **The Prisma**, newspaper; **Rifondazione Comunista** (London), **Socialist Party of the USA**, **Latin American Workers Association**; **Colombia Solidarity Campaign**; **National Shop Stewards' Network**; Campaign Against Immigration Controls, **Jerry Hicks**, UNITE General Secretary Candidate, **Unite London Construction Branch**, **Chilean Community Association** (S Yorks), **South Yorks Migration and Asylum Action Group**, **London Coalition Against Poverty**, **Derek Wall** (Green party candidate), **Green Left**, **Ecuadorian Movement in the UK** (MERU), **Polo Democratico UK**, **Latin American Womens Rights Service**, **Paul Haste**, Morning Star industrial reporter; **Leslie Sklair**, Emeritus Professor of Sociology, LSE; Professor **Gregor Gall**, Research Professor of Industrial Relations, University of Hertfordshire, **RMT Finsbury Park Branch**, **Black Workers for Justice – Europe**, John Peers Branch Chair **East London Mental Health UNISON Branch**, Susan McDowell Branch Secretary **Lambeth College UCU**.

For further information please contact: latin_americanworkers@hotmail.com