

Strike

When the union first complained
About the members working plight
Their claims were lightly entertained
By those with power to put things right

While management was slow to grasp
The language of the new complaints
The members wanted action fast
Though leaders urged for some restraint

Small remedies were introduced
But problems were no longer few
Inaction had by then produced
A list which simply grew and grew

As negotiations reached their limits
Management remained complacent
And was as yet quite unconvinced
That what the workers said, they meant

For these workers were but civil servants
Who surely would not break the norm
But with dedication and with tolerance
Their official duties would perform

The staff would surely wish to please
Despite the heat and lack of air
To work upon their hands and knees
And share with others a desk and chair

And answer too upon the phone
The public anger that occurred
No, for now they knew that they alone
Could change what had become absurd

The workers, let it well be noted,
Demanded action from their leaders
And in secret ballot strongly voted
To write a page for history readers

The word was, "Strike", it must be done
For normal means had failed to waken
Those whose hands held the solution
The system needed to be shaken

Rights which were for one and all
The lowest paid had to demand
And so for what was theirs by law
Were humbly forced to make a stand

For some it was no easy thing
To take the action now proposed
But worse would be continuing
To accept what they so much opposed

And so it was that day in May
The picket line was firmly drawn
As civil servants stayed away
No more to be the silent pawn

The media created headlines
The inside story it did get
The leadership set new deadlines
Escalation if demands not met

And so it was the strike was settled
Solutions found and agreed upon
The system had been barely rattled
The battle of years in five hours won.

Phil Lynch