Girls of Dublin City

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(Ewan MacColl)

Pause a while my friends and listen to what I'm going to tell to you
About the events in Dublin City and the girls of the IDATU
Dunne's stores branch in Henry street was where the trouble first began
That led to the strike, the famous strike,
of ten young women and one young man

At the union conference that year they said "We will not compromise
With Apartheid", and they voted to boycott all South African merchandise
Karen Guerin, Dunne's shop steward, told her mates about the ban
They said "We'll stick by the resolution",
ten young women and one young man

Mary Manning, from Kilmainham, a twenty one year old cashier
Was put to the test the very next morning and she spoke up loud and clear
"No, I'm afraid, I cannot serve you, them grapefruit's South African
And some of us here are opposed to apartheid,"
- ten young women and one young man

There was a hell of a hullaballoo, with moans and shouts and angry cries
The bosses foaming at the mouth and the suits running round
like blue-arsed flies
"You'll sell that fruit or be suspended, we'll tolerate no union ban"
Little did they understand the will of ten young women and one young man

Mary Manning got the push, that girl of independent mind
And ten of her workmates went with her and joined her on the picket line
For days and weeks and months they stood there,
held their nerve and kept the ban
Showing the will and determination of ten young women and one young man

So here's to the girls of Dublin City who stretched their hands across the sea
And gave the world a perfect lesson in worker solidarity
Here's to the folk that heed the boycott, won't buy Cape and spurn Outspan
And to the fellow that made their number
- ten young women and one young man!

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