

# tubeworker

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## SUPPORT 30 NOVEMBER STRIKES!

**30 November will be the next day of strike action against the Government's attacks on public sector pensions and jobs.**

We look set to see a mass working-class show-down to stop the 'work longer, pay more and get less' reforms: an attack on the hard-fought right to a life after work for all working class people. This will be many people's first experience of a mass strike.

The biggest public sector union, Unison, the Fire Brigades Union, the teaching union NASUWT and the general union, the GMB, are throwing their weight behind teaching unions NUT, ATL, UCU and civil servants in PCS who struck on 30 June.

The government's mania for deficit-reduction has begun to unravel as another recession looms.

The government's wholesale attack to our jobs and services looks ever more ludicrous: it always was a pure class attack, devoid of even capitalist economic sense.

There are divisions within the government; some LibDems want £5 billion investment in infrastructure; even the ultra-capitalist IMF, their natural ally, has warned against excessive austerity measures.

If the striking unions fight seriously on 30 November and follow it up soon with strategic, sustained, hard-hitting action, then the trade union movement could start to make a dent in the government's plans.

This will give Tube workers a shot in the arm. The press and politicians will find it much harder to portray us a workforce alone and isolated in our willingness to strike. Millions of working people, their families and

friends will take part in and support the 30 November strike, and will become less hostile to others, like us, who have to strike.

London Underground is already preparing for post-Olympics job cuts, trying to impose lower stations minimum numbers for the event. Further ticket office and supervisor job cuts lie beyond the Olympics. There are even

rumours that multinational privateer Serco is looking at running all stations outside zone two.

We need to support public sector strikes in the run-up to 30 November to defend working-class pension

rights in general - and because a victory on pensions will set back the government's cuts, putting an obstacle in the way of their plans for LU. Get involved in any local strike committees or local anti-cuts committees to help make the day as vibrant as possible.

We also need to think about how our ongoing pay and Olympics dispute can be used to benefit our fight and theirs. If it is appropriate to coincide action with this date, then we should - but only if it is the right thing to do for our disputes, and without doing so artificially. If not, we should bear in mind that it is not safe to work if the fire brigade is on strike, and may not be possible for many of us to attend work if schools are closed.



## REJECT THIS OLYMPICS 'DEAL'

So, ASLEF has agreed to put train drivers' frameworks to one side for a month during the Olympics. This for £500 plus overtime. It may sound good, but £500 to lose our hard-won conditions, for the next 40 years the younger of us could be train ops, doesn't seem worth the risk.

We can look forward to 9-hour running turns and other delights. All for just £500 (minus tax), when we deserve more than that anyway, for the extra workload, grief and working while others are enjoying the world's biggest sporting fiesta.

The big problem is not the exact number of hundreds of quid: that will come and go before we know it. It is the weakening of our agreements, rights and conditions. If 9-hour turns go off without any disasters over the Olympics, LU will conclude that we should have them the rest of the time, and 'temporary' framework changes will become permanent.

What message is being sent out here? That we'll strike and lose pay to win these terms, but give us a few bob and we'll put them on hold? It sets a dangerous precedent for the future - don't be surprised when the money has been spent but longer shifts become the norm.

How should LU cover the extra driving duties required during the Games? How about giving drivers' jobs to those on the waiting list?!

To its credit, RMT has not signed up to this nonsense. ASLEF members should be banging down the Society's door demanding to know why on earth they did.

And staff in other grades should be getting reports from the unions about what management plan for them.

*Tubeworker* is produced by Tube workers and published by Workers' Liberty, an organisation fighting as part of the labour movement for a socialist alternative to both capitalism and Stalinism, based on common ownership and democracy.

We want one democratic, fighting union for all railworkers. We reject artificial divisions between workers of different grades. We oppose racism, sexism, homophobia and all prejudice that divides us. Only our bosses benefit from a divided workforce.

## OPPOSING THE RACIST EDL

**T**ube workers played our part in opposing the English Defence League's provocative visit to East London on 3 September.

The EDL's claim to oppose 'Islamic extremism' is a thin cover for hatred of anyone who does not conform to its own, narrow, far-right conception of 'Englishness'. Wherever it has demonstrated in significant numbers, racist attacks have increased.

It seems that originally, LU and the police had a plan to put on special train(s) from Hainault to Liverpool Street to bring EDL members to their demonstration on 3 September. RMT reps objected, and told LU that it expected that members would refuse to work on safety grounds if hundreds of racist thugs came through their stations and onto their trains. LU management swiftly knocked the idea on the head, and the EDL itself admitted that the police told them that the initial plan had not taken account of the likelihood of RMT scuppering it. (Shortage of drivers on the Central Line may also have been a factor!) The union also got texts around advising members of their right to refuse to work on safety grounds.

However, although King's Cross was closed for a short while for a 'fire alert' (that's what management called it, anyway), the EDL did eventually travel from Kings Cross to Moorgate with a police escort, through open gatelines, some drinking and smoking unchallenged by police, while ordinary passengers were kept out of the station and prevented from travelling. What a disgrace.

While anti-racists protested in Whitechapel, the EDL managed to hold a rally of several hundreds (estimates range from 600 to 1,000) in Aldgate, and a much smaller one (less than 100 of them) at Liverpool Street.

We need to keep on opposing the EDL, by winning people away from their ideas as well as confronting them when they mobilise.



Join us in celebrating *Tubeworker's* 20th birthday, with an event featuring an exhibition of issues down the years, a slideshow & talk from founding editor and former Tube driver Martin Donohue, and time to socialise.

**Thursday 13 October, from 7pm, 12 Pins pub, next to Finsbury Park station**  
Hosted by Finsbury Park branch RMT

Make sure you get *Tubeworker* every month, and help us keep going into the next two decades. Under our special birthday subscription offer, a tennor will get every issue sent to you until the end of 2012.

Send the money (cheques payable to *WL Bulletins*) to 20E Tower Workshops, Riley Road, London SE1 3DG, with your name and address.

## JUSTICE FOR JAMES!

**D**espite an an Employment Tribunal ruling that LU sacked James Masango unfairly, the company has still not seen fit to reinstate him. While James remains on the dole, without the income from the job he should never have been sacked from, Mike Brown has apparently been 'too busy' to meet Bob Crow about the case until the last day of September, more than six weeks after the Tribunal decision.

Are LU management dragging this out because they want to find a way of not reinstating James, or is it just that they don't give a toss?! We need to make sure that when Brown finally sits down with Crow, he is in no doubt that anything other than a full reinstatement will have James' workmates out on strike, and LU management's disgraceful actions plastered all over the press.

[www.workersliberty.org/victoria](http://www.workersliberty.org/victoria)

## ROOM 101

**O**SN 101 Should be left in room 101. The new procedures involve departing a platform with no CCTV or assistance, reversing the train after a SPAD or reversing after a platform overrun.

LU spends millions on CCTV equipment - on newer stock the driver can see the platform until the entire train has left the platform. LU don't do this because they enjoy spending money (unless its the 'top bods' pay), but because it is the safest way to run the service.

Back in 2007 Tubeworker warned "The withdrawal of the second right endangers passengers - the PTI is LUL's biggest risk. It has also become a very convenient excuse to further cut stations jobs." It seems now that the jobs went first, and as a service running on time is more important than safety, the important role CSAs play in assisting a train to depart will be scrapped.

It's also worth noting that subjects that a new driver would have been taught over several days will now be taught by signing for a piece of paper.

Here are the next few OSNs rumoured to be coming out of Faulty Towers:

- **OSN 102:** Driving with doors open to improve the service
- **OSN 103:** Bullying drivers who have been signed off by LUOH back to work and then sacking them
- **OSN 104:** Service before safety

[www.workersliberty.org/LTsafety](http://www.workersliberty.org/LTsafety)

## TAKE A BREAK

**L**U management's latest idea to keep the service running while employing as few people as possible is to squeeze your time in the khazi. Yes, we hear that managers are to create an EIRF every time you take a PNR and are even threatening staff with disciplinary action for taking 'too many'.

We would be very interested to know whether this new drive to minimise toilet time applies to employees at every level of the company - do Directors have to ask permission to go to the loo and have a record kept of how long they spend in there?!

As well as the obvious issues of discomfort and dignity, restricting our access to physical needs reliefs has implications for health, and for women at certain times of the month.

Don't let managers push you around. If you need a PNR, take one.

[www.workersliberty.org/sickssystem](http://www.workersliberty.org/sickssystem)

## A RICH MAN'S TOY

**T**he railway has been described by Phillip Hammond, Transport Secretary, as 'a rich man's toy'.

Hammond, a rich man himself, worth around £8 million, says this has been the case for some time - though he doesn't seem to want to change the situation. In fact the opposite is true, as the Tories are keen to allow rail companies to increase fares beyond the RPI+1% formula currently in use.

It may be expensive in the short run to subsidise fares, but enabling more people to travel further from home gives people access to many more jobs so other costs such as unemployment benefit would decrease. Car congestion costs billions too - and the pollution is killing people; more train journeys would go towards resolving this.

We wonder if Hammond would agree that an increase of RPI+1% would be good for railworkers' pay too?

If the railway were renationalised, then the profit could be put back into the system making it cheaper for people who use it. It seems simple maths and from what we can make out, maths is one of Hammond's strong points - he managed to get a second home on expenses to within £8 of the limit.

**Tubeworker's weblog**

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