



# ***Rank and File Must Decide On Any Deal***

From the start, Royal Mail have given the press and the CWU nothing but bluster. If they are prepared to talk, then good - but what have they got to offer? We want a real deal - not just paper promises. The membership should be told the full details of any possible deal. Members at branch level should be able to have their say on any deal, and we should not call off action until a deal is concluded to our satisfaction.

In order for the rank-and-file to have its say on any deal, we need to be organised. Branches and workplaces should hold regular meetings of all members to discuss what to do. Taking control of this dispute is not a job just for reps - it is a job for all posties! On a regional level, reps should get together, share information, and make decisions. The minutes of these meetings should be circulated among all members, and decisions made by reps' meetings should be binding on the leadership. National reps' meetings should also be held. If a bad deal is proposed, reps and branches who disagree with it should be prepared to call national meetings to campaign against it, and put pressure on their Regional Divisional Committees.

This is a dispute for the future of the postal service. Royal Mail bosses have made their intentions clear - they want to press on with huge job cuts, casualisation, and increasing workloads. They will not be satisfied until postal workers' job security and conditions have been demolished and the post is run as a private company.

We are not opposed to new technology, but before we talk about any job cuts, let's have the 35 hour week - and let's not pretend that Royal Mail's talk of "modernisation" of

deliveries mean anything other than making posties carry more mail and do longer walks.

Asking for Royal Mail's plans to be "negotiated" or introduced gradually is not enough. We don't want to just slow down the gutting of our industry. We don't just want to "be consulted" on the destruction of our rights at work. We need to smash Royal Mail's privatising agenda, win real, durable concessions, and show the rest of the workers' movement that cuts and privatisation can be resisted.

## **Organise the casuials!**

The use of scab mail centres is continuing. In addition to the Dartford mail centre, the old Oxford mail centre has been re-opened and is being used to sort scab mail. The union should organise the picketing of these mail centres. But also, union members should approach all casuals, wherever they work, and ask them to join the union and not to cross picket lines.

Membership should be offered free or at greatly reduced rates. It should be made clear to casuals that once they join the CWU they should join the strikes - and they have a right to do so. We should explain that postal workers have a quarrel with Royal Mail, not with the casual staff themselves, who are facing all the exploitation that management hopes to heap on permanent staff too: low wages, no job security, management bullying. Casuals are forced to work for minimum wage and will be spat back out of work after two months - they need the union too!

***What the Law Says -***  
***2003 Conduct of Employment Agencies***

**and Employment Businesses Regulations**  
**"Regulation 7: – Restriction on providing work-seekers in industrial disputes**

**Regulation 7(1) provides that an employment business may not supply a temporary worker to a hirer to replace an individual taking part in an official strike or any other official industrial dispute. In addition, an employment business must not introduce or supply a work-seeker to do the work of someone who has been transferred by the hirer to perform the duties of the person on strike or taking industrial action. An employment business will have a legal defence to having acted in breach of this regulation if it does not know, or has no reasonable grounds for knowing, that official strike action is in progress.**

**Regulation 7(2) provides that this regulation applies to official strike action only. In other words it does not apply to unofficial strike action."**

## **Strengthen branch organisation**

Spare a thought for your reps - making this strike a success is a job for every member of the CWU. Going to speak at public meetings, publicising branch meetings, ringing round the branch to get people to the picket line, and sorting out all the hundreds of little jobs that the strike throws up - everyone needs to pitch in with these tasks. An overworked rep is a rep who can't fight as hard as they need to. Get your colleagues to turn up to meetings and picket lines, find out what needs doing, and offer to do it!

## **Call for solidarity!**

As the national strike develops, wider labour movement solidarity will become essential.

Trade unionists and socialists are organising in different towns and cities to support the CWU. They are organising groups which will collect money for the strike fund, get out on the street and counter management propaganda, hold meetings and generally co-ordinate activities with their local CWU.

London CWU has produced a collections sheet; other regions should produce similar materials and contact activists in other

workplaces to ask for solidarity. Postal workers should be pro-active in calling meetings with trade unionists from other workplaces and helping bring solidarity committees into being.

## **Sack Mandelson! Sack Crozier!**

Lord Mandelson and Adam Crozier are the most capable, most aggressive hatchet-men that the capitalist class has found to throw at us. The trade unions and Labour MPs who support the CWU should campaign for Mandelson to be booted out. If Mandelson were to be forced out by a labour movement campaign, the government would find it much harder to publicly campaign against the CWU.

## **Use the political fund!**

The working class needs its own independent political voice. Disaffiliation from the Labour Party is not enough - we need to build a political alternative to New Labour. The CWU should all the leverage it can get in the Labour Party. The CWU should withdraw funding from all Labour MPs who have not signed the Early Day Motion in support of the strike. 128 have signed so far, a clear majority of back-bench MPs. And the CWU should hold back on payments to the Labour Party centrally until the Labour Party leaders deliver on the support for postal workers mandated by a unanimous decision at Labour Party Conference.

**This bulletin was produced by activists in the Alliance for Workers' Liberty. We are a socialist group fighting in the labour movement for a democratic working-class revolution against capitalism. Get in touch: [awl@workersliberty.org](mailto:awl@workersliberty.org)  
**Workers' Liberty, PO Box 823,  
London SE15 4NA / 020 7207 3997 /  
[awl@workersliberty.org](mailto:awl@workersliberty.org)****