

WORKERS'



LIBERTY

cwu conference

PO Box 823, London SE15 4NA. May 2006

HOW TO FIGHT PRIVATISATION

Allan Leighton sees Royal Mail as a commercial company operating in a liberalised market. For him the fact of public ownership is a barrier to making profits for him and his business friends. Two things stand in his way. Firstly a Union prepared to fight the effects of liberalisation, against job cuts and for improvements in pay and terms and conditions. Secondly the political pressure on the Government to keep Royal Mail in public ownership. His long term plan is to sideline the CWU and to persuade the Government that part privatisation is necessary. The idea of an employee share offer ticks both boxes. It is an ideological weapon he can use against the CWU, and can be the thin end of the wedge for privatisation.

The postal industry is not the only part of the public sector under attack from privatisation and marketisation. We have seen Gordon Brown announce swingeing cuts in the Civil service and we are witnessing the chaos that the reintroduction of the Tory policy of an internal market for the NHS means for health services. The Government is also breeding rebellion in its ranks on its plans to create more 'independence' in the education system which means more

space for the marketisation of education. There are cuts proposed in the fire service, privatisation of the probation service, the list goes on. The CWU need to link up with campaigns such as "Public Services not Private Profit". We do not have to fight alone. We should support other Unions fighting similar battles and ask for their support for ours. Unity is strength.

Having fought off the threat of privatisation this year it is necessary for us to renew our campaigning for the coming year. At Postal conference a strategy for dealing pay and consultation with the Union will be debated. Leighton needs to hear a clear message that the CWU means business. But more than this we need to keep political pressure up by using our link with the Labour Party to advance our union policy. We have been successful this year, with the issue becoming one Blair dare not take on in the Labour Party, with over 200 of his own MPs agreeing with us. But the threat remains, and will remain under a Brown leadership.

In order to fight this threat we need to be more political not less. It is a flawed tactic to propose a "suspension of funds" to the Labour Party when we should be building up the pressure on Labour MPs. We should not take our ball home when the match is at half time. We should be demanding the NEC and our sponsored MPs should be seeking a commitment from Brown that there will be no part privatisation or employee share issue. If he is not willing to give this commitment, we should remind him that as a union affiliated to the Labour Party we have a say in who the future leader will be. We will not support anyone who does not support 100% public

ownership of the Post Office and trade union rights.

- OPPOSE Emergency Motion 2
- SUPPORT Motion 114 and 118

PUBLIC SERVICES NOT PRIVATE PROFIT

Fringe Meeting
Sunday 5.45 pm
Cork Ballroom, Tralee
Hotel, West Hill Road, West
Cliff

Speakers include John McDonnell MP, Chair of LRC and of Public Services Campaign, Matt Wrack, GS FBU, Billy Hayes, GS CWU, Norman Candy NEC. Chair Peter Donaghy NEC

WHO WE ARE

THIS bulletin is written by CWU members who are members of the Alliance for Workers' Liberty, an organisation fighting in the unions and the workplaces for a socialist alternative to both capitalism and Stalinism, based on common ownership and democracy.

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FOR TRADE UNION FREEDOM

The CWU is already committed to support a Trade Union Freedom Bill through its affiliation to the United Campaign for the Repeal of the Anti Union Laws. The case for repealing the anti union laws is overwhelming. We need the right to strike, take solidarity action, take political action and the right to reinstatement. We need to play our part in the campaign for the Bill. It is a priority for all trade unionists.

For more details of the campaign see www.unitedcampaign.org.uk.

- SUPPORT Motions 19 and 22

PENSIONS: WHO PAYS?

There are many motions on the agenda for Conference the issue of pensions. We have to defend our occupational pensions, no increase in age or contributions - the employers must pay. We must also support an increased state pension. As Motion 1 says we must reject the defeatist Turner proposals than limit state spending on pensions and call for an increase in retirement age.. We should be welcoming the fact that people live longer and instead ensure that we all have a decent standard of living. Collectively we as a country can afford it. We should be challenging the vested interests in the City that play with our money, have very nice lives from the profits and then tell us to work longer!

FOR AGENCY WORKERS' RIGHTS

As the Communication Workers Union we need to increase our efforts to organise the whole of the postal and telecom industries. It is only by organising sector wide that we

can challenge the casualisation,, agency working and downward pressure on terms and conditions that results from a 'flexible workforce' . The Government has refused to impliment a European Directive that would improve agency workers rights. All working people need fair employment rights as a matter of justice and dignity. But this also means that the employer cannot set us against each other.

- SUPPORT Motion 16

Public Services Not Private Profit lobby of Parliament
Thursday 27 June
Rally from 12 noon at Westminster Central Hall, chaired by John McDonnell MP and Janine Godrich (PCS).
Sponsored by 14 trade unions including CWU.

Iraq Union Solidarity fringe meeting

SOLIDARITY WITH IRAQI TRADE UNIONS, SUPPORT WOMEN'S RIGHTS IN IRAQ

Tuesday 23rd May, 12.45pm, Trouville Hotel, Priory Road

Speakers include Houzan Mahmoud, Organisation for Women's Freedom in Iraq; Pete Keenlyside, Greater Manchester Amal Branch; Ian Cuthbert, CWU officer. Chair: Maria Exall, CWU Executive.

IDEAS FOR FREEDOM

Workers' Liberty summer school 2006
Saturday/Sunday 1/2 July at the Resource Centre, 356 Holloway Road, London N7.

- Greg Palast on his new book on big business and the Iraq war ●
 - Kim Moody on the US labour movement ● Looking back on 40 years of our political tendency ● Debates: how to fight Islamism; the Euston manifesto; left-wing anti-semitism ● and much more.
- Buy tickets online at www.workersliberty.org/ideas.