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EVERY JOB STILL MATTERS

RE-ENERGISE THE JOBS FIGHT! SEE IT THROUGH!

We are facing a jobs massacre on London Underground.

Nearly 1,000 frontline stations jobs are due to go, with jobs also going in the training department, with more cuts planned elsewhere. LUL has also begun commissioning designs for driverless trains.

Full-time station staff have been subjected to a farcical relocation process, with part-timers treated as a disposable resource to fill the gaps. Nightmare rosters that will wreck work-life balance are due to be imposed from February 2016.

RMT has taken no action in its fight against these cuts since October 2014, when an overtime ban was called off. It has not struck since April 2014.

This special edition of *Tubeworker* will argue that the

fight against job cuts must be reinvigorated and seen through, on its own terms - not folded into a wider or more general dispute about several different issues.

We believe RMT should immediately launch a propaganda offensive in all workplaces, particularly amongst grades whose confidence is wavering or who see the jobs fight as a "stations issue". The "Every Job Matters" campaign was launched explicitly as an all-grades battle and needs to be rebuilt as such.

We need the reinstatement of industrial action as soon as possible, with a new ballot if strictly necessary.

Some have argued that we risk losing members if we strike. But if we don't strike, we risk losing even more.

How to build all-grades unity (and how not to build it)

The RMT needs to ramp up its campaign in workplaces to highlight that this dispute is for every grade. It is about our jobs and our futures, whatever our role and wherever we work in LU.

Tubeworker knows that many drivers' and engineers' reps and activists have been working hard to win these arguments; the union needs to support them by arming them with materials, flooding depots with propaganda, and organising workplace visits and meetings.

Militant trade unionism doesn't mean recklessly advocating strikes even if members are unwilling to support them, but it does mean showing ambition and initiative, and campaigning in systematic way to persuade members who may be under-confident or cautious, not simply mirroring that caution back to them.

Some activists in RMT are advocating a new dispute that combines pay, Night Tube and job cuts. Their thinking is that, because pay and Night Tube are presumed to be of more concern to drivers and engineers than the fight against job cuts, it will be easier to mobilise all grades if the issues are bundled together.

But unions can't build disputes like a shopping list, with different demands to appeal to different groups of workers.

RMT's 2007-08 anti-casualisation dispute was built around a list of nine demands. The strikes were called off when LUL made concessions on some of the demands. But other issues, such as agency staff, were not resolved,

which returned to haunt RMT when it fought the "Justice for the 33" dispute in 2012/13.

At the time, *Tubeworker* said that the outcome demonstrated that unity is fragile when built around a "shopping list". We observed that the dispute foundered because, "each grade was brought in on its 'own' issues, rather than convinced of the common issues", which meant each grade was "prone to drop their support once 'their' issue was sorted".

So, if RMT pursues the tactic of combining pay, Night Tube and job cuts, it needs to consider what it would do if pay and Night Tube get "sorted" and a significant number of members "drop their support"?

Is RMT prepared to see the jobs fight through to the finish? If so, RMT needs to convince all grades to fight job cuts as an all-grades issue; we can't rely on pay and Night Tube as a short-cut to building all grades unity.

***Tubeworker* advocates:**

- **A workplace propaganda campaign, properly resourced by the union, to rebuild the jobs fight**
- **Begin re-balloting as soon as possible if that is necessary**
- **A political campaign, including demos as soon as possible after the election, to demand an end to cuts**
- **In the pay negotiations, keep RMT's wider claims on the table**
- **No bribes for Night Tube: we want additional time off!**
- **Move swiftly to a ballot on pay if negotiations continue to prove fruitless. Run the pay ballot and jobs re-ballot concurrently if necessary**
- **Regular reps' meetings to discuss the direction of the disputes**



How the fight began

EJM got off to an excellent start for three main reasons:

1. **RMT was proactive.** Rather than wait for cuts to be announced, RMT wrote to LUL, demanding assurances. In October 2013, when LUL did not oblige, RMT wrote to LUL to say it was in dispute and prepared to ballot its members.
2. **RMT was quick and decisive,** announcing its ballot the same day LU announced "Fit for the Future".
3. **RMT fostered a cross-union approach.** RMT's quick start spurred TSSA to ballot. RMT and TSSA then coordinated so that both unions could strike together in early February 2014.

RMT's timely, decisive, cross-union approach was effective. By February, LUL hoped to be implementing its plans. But solid strikes in February forced them back.

Just over two months of decisive campaigning derailed plans that LUL had been preparing for years.

Since then, the campaign has slowed down. Further strikes in April, and a threatened strike in October, forced further concessions, but since then, we've allowed to company to regain the upper hand.

RMT has done very little in the first four months of 2015. There has been no industrial action, nor a decision on when we might strike in future.

RMT has missed a series of opportunities where timely, decisive action could have had positive impact. The spirit of urgency that began the campaign must be rediscovered.



No to mañana militancy

RMT geared up to the Every Job Matters campaign for years. RMT resolved to put all its effort into this battle, even accepting a four-year pay offer on the basis that the impending jobs fight was more important than pay.

This gives us all the more reason to see our current jobs battle through to its conclusion!

If RMT starts to focus on pay but goes silent on jobs, then members will rightly see this as a betrayal and a dodge out of a tricky fight.

There is a long and ignoble history in the trade union movement of not seeing fights through to their conclusion. Instead, union leaderships move on to new battles and quietly drop the old ones, without ever actually declaring that they have lost or given up. This style of trade unionism promotes a kind of "mañana [Spanish for "tomorrow"] militancy": full of fight about the next battle, but with little to offer in terms of strategy for fighting today's fight.

We must make sure that Every Job Matters is fought vigorously through to its conclusion; that its demands don't get sidelined by a new dispute; that it does not become an example of mañana militancy.

PAY CAMPAIGN: FIGHT FOR BETTER TERMS AND CONDITIONS!

RMT's pay claim does not just demand a substantial pay award, but makes a number of wider demands about terms and conditions.

These include the demand for a four-day week for all grades, and staff travel passes for contractors and outsourced workers. The union must make sure that these vital demands do not fall off the agenda.

The company wants to give us a one-off (and not very substantial) bribe for implementing Night Tube; we should demand proper compensation, in the form of more time off work, for the huge changes that 24-hour running will make to our working lives.

The company has already tried to buy off ASLEF by offering an additional Night Tube bonus for drivers. RMT, as the only all-grades union at the table, must stand firm for a decent deal for all grades.

We must also make sure negotiations don't drag on forever. Unless the company makes serious responses to our wider claims, instead of just messing around with derisory offers of less than 1%, we should move to a ballot for industrial action.

A serious political campaign could help save jobs

Many union branches and activists have done excellent work to keep the fight against ticket office closures alive. But it looked to some as if the union only started campaigning once ticket offices were about to close.

The union should also have made, and could still make, greater use of the Labour group on the Greater London Assembly, which opposed the job cuts and ticket office closures, and whose transport spokesperson Val Shawcross was an outspoken critic of them from day one. The hostility felt by many within RMT towards the Labour Party shouldn't be allowed to restrict the union's political influence.

The Hands Off London Transport campaign has done as much as it could with the number of allies and volunteers it could mobilise, but RMT - a national union with a Parliamentary Group, links to GLA members, a press and political department, and substantial resources - could have given the political campaign a much higher profile.

We should pile pressure on the new government that forms after 7 May. RMT needs to call action immediately, and demand that any Labour government declares a moratorium on cuts and closures and reverses the cuts in central government funding to Transport for London.

Our industrial campaigns will be stronger if they are backed up by political campaigns that involve labour-movement allies, and the users of the public transport we provide.

WE CAN STILL SAVE JOBS

In October 2013, RMT launched an all-grades fight against job cuts, "Every Job Matters", after London Underground announced long-prepared plans to make huge cuts.

RMT said at the time: "Together with attacks on maintenance frequencies and fleet jobs, planned job cuts in service control and refusal to rule out driverless trains, this constitutes a wholesale attack on London Underground jobs and services. It is no coincidence that it is being accompanied by an attendance and discipline clampdown, attacks on our pensions, and the widespread use of agencies instead of directly-employed staff. RMT will resist these attacks with all means at our disposal, up to and including industrial action."

This was always a fight for all of us. The all-grades basis on which the fight was launched needs to be re-established, and the fight re-energised.

LUL's cuts are not due to come into effect until February 2016. A strong fight could push them back. We can still save jobs.

Mood music?

Much of the debate in RMT about whether strikes are feasible has focused on whether there is a "mood" for them.

But our "mood" isn't a fixed quantity; they can change depending on conditions around us. A strong union campaign to give members confidence, show a winnable strategy, etc., could greatly improve members' "moods".

Waiting for an issue like pay or Night Tube to create a "mood for action" for us is a recipe for passivity. Those of us who want to fight have a responsibility to persuade our colleagues to join us.

Many union activists say *they're up for a fight*, but *"the members" won't back them*. Well - maybe the union changes the music, we might change the mood.

What is Tubeworker?

Tubeworker is a rank-and-file socialist bulletin, published at least monthly, written by

Tube workers, for Tube workers. It is published by the socialist group Workers' Liberty, but is produced in editorial meetings open to all workers. Supporters from outside London Underground can help with public distribution.

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