



tubeworker

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KEEP UP THE FIGHT TO SAVE JOBS!

Our last strike, due for 11-13 February, was suspended after management retreated slightly from their original plans.

There's now a two-month negotiation period. The dispute is far from over: it remains ON, and *Tubeworker* believes unions must take concrete steps now to ensure the momentum isn't lost and more concessions are forced from the bosses.

Set more action soon!

We will need to take more action. If the unions set a timescale now, it allows us to plan and save up.

It keeps momentum and pressure on management.

Plan ahead

We should use the "truce" to get ready. If management don't budge on the core demands, then sustained action — more than 48 hours, over a few consecutive weeks — could become necessary.

Unions could agree to pay strike pay. Locally, we should be raising a strike fund to help people take action when facing hardship.

It's all about putting the measures in place to help us take the action we know can win.

Unions: involve us in the talks!

It is good to hear union reps promise to report regularly on the talks.

It is important that they tell us what's going on, what is being discussed?

Workers affected might have new ideas, so listen to us.

What are our demands?

Our demand is "No job cuts!" — and also others, such as "Keep a Supervisor on every station".

We suspended our action from a position of strength. Plans don't come in until next year; we have time to beat them.

Our negotiators need to know it's not time for a compromise. Instead, they should hold out for what we want.

Extend the strike committee

The current strike committee needs to make sure it has representatives from all areas involved in the dispute, and from both unions.

After honest discussion and democratic decisions, we can guide our leaders on the best course of action.

Public and political support

The Hands Off London Transport campaign (handofflondontransport.wordpress.com) needs to be supported by both unions.

The level of public support for the strike panicked management. Boris is on the ropes too. His dopey image ceases to be lovable or amusing while he revels in privilege while squeezing workers.

Local Labour Parties have been out leafleting against the plans, although national Labour leaders couldn't quite bring themselves to support our strikes.

Labour AMs passed a motion through the London Assembly to review LU's cuts. Unions need to use these political opportunities, without relying on them as an alternative to industrial action.

WHAT THE FLOODS TELL US ABOUT THE TORIES

The recent flooding has opened up a public debate on what we expect a national government to actually do.

Those who own a large proportion of the nation's wealth would like to see the government doing less and less (and taking less tax from them to do it). But even advocates of "small government" would concede that when it comes to defence against floods, extreme weather, military invasion, or financial meltdown, then it is down to the good old British taxpayer to bail us out. The cuts to the Environment Agency have been severely criticised, not least by traditionally-Tory rural constituents!

Democratic accountability is being lost as more and more areas of government responsibility are devolved to private businesses run for profit. Healthcare, education, transport, and even prisons are all now subject to the market forces.

We need to get the market out of public services, and we need government policies that put social need first instead of the needs of profit.

The floods and extreme weather are also further proof that climate change is real. It too can only be stopped by taking on capitalism: a system that will always put profit first.

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. Email us at tubeworker@workersliberty.org

***Tubeworker's* blog — daily updates — workersliberty.org/twblog**

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Got a story for *Tubeworker*? We welcome reports and comments from all Tube workers.

Contact us: Workers' Liberty, 20E Tower Work-shops,

Riley Road, London SE1 3DG, tubeworker@workersliberty.org

DEFEAT DRIVERLESS TRAINS!

A 19 February "Employee Communications" bulletin says LU is "procuring the next generation of deep-level trains".

"These trains", it tells us, "will have the capability to be operated with, or without, a train operator at the front of the train." Mike Brown promises that drivers can continue their careers as drivers, but they must be "prepared to be flexible."

The new fleet of trains will cost £3 billion. The government is letting LU spend £3 billion in the midst of austerity because bosses anticipate long-term savings from the erosion of drivers' pay and conditions.

It could not be clearer: all grades face the same fate unless we fight together to defeat LU's stations cuts.

If LU is about to begin the tendering process for the new trains, maybe the time for our fightback is approaching.

@BOJO, #CLUELESS

Within 48 hours of unions and management signing the agreement which saw strikes suspended, Boris tweeted: "We will close all old-style ticket offices but keep a few as visitor information centres at biggest stations."

But the agreement explicitly says the review of closures "could result in some ticket offices remaining open."

Boris knows that he won't be scrutinised by the mainstream press for what he says. Just read through the articles and comment pieces that give apparently in-depth reports into the tube "modernisation" but don't mention the main issue — nearly 1,000 jobs going, let alone long term workers facing massive pay cuts. It's easy to see why Boris believes he can say anything on Twitter and not be called out on it.

At least *Tubeworker* is here to give you a true insight.

But the danger is that what Boris wants, Boris gets — so if he keeps on like this, we need to be ready to resume strike action.

Preparing to strike now after the ACAS talks finish may send the message to him that we won't stand by and let him win.

BTP'S "ARMCHAIR EXPERTS"

A BTP Chief Superintendent recently tweeted that, whilst "armchair experts limber up", frontline cops just "get on with the job."

"Getting on with the job" is fine when your job doesn't affect anybody else, but this is a police force with the power to take away your liberty on a whim (as RMT rep Mark Harding recently found out to his cost — see

facebook.com/defendmarkharding for more).

What "job" were they "getting on with" when they were buzzing around our picket lines, *Tubeworker* wonders?.

DON'T TAKE VS! NO JOB CUTS!

LU says 450 people have applied for voluntary severance (a small minority of the 3,400 eligible applicants).

But if 450 go, and you end up working alone on the gateline, you won't be comforted by the fact that your ex-colleagues went "voluntarily".

Taking VS when management are reducing staffing levels is like burning down your house when you want to move out. Stand firm against job cuts!



FIGHT BIOMETRIC BOOKING ON

ISS has asked cleaners to sign a letter to say they accept biometric

booking on (fingerprint) machines, now due to go live on 2 March.

RMT has already put industrial action in place: cleaners should use the established method to book on for duty and NOT use any biometric machines. RMT has also indicated it will ballot cleaners for strikes over this issue.

Reps in all workplaces should be supporting this action by talking to cleaners, giving confidence, helping to build for a great action against biometric machines.

As one Facebook commenter put it, biometric booking on means one less responsibility for Station Supervisors, and one more pretext for getting rid of them. It means cleaners will be allowed to work on unsupervised stations.

Biometric booking on for cleaners today means biometric booking on for everyone else tomorrow.

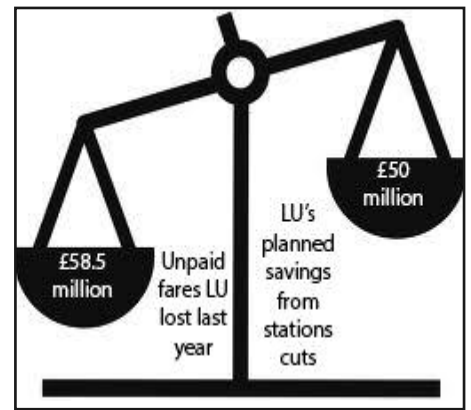
DLR INCIDENT SHOWS DANGERS OF DESTAFFING

At Cutty Sark DLR last week, an up escalator threw itself into downwards running, and the alarm didn't work. Reports of the incident show passengers were distressed by the lack of staff at the station.

DLR needs more station staff; and London Underground needs to learn from this episode how perilous it would be to cut station staffing.

TAKING CHANCES ON PRIVATE CONTRACTORS

Station refurbishments are taking more time than they should due to outsourcing, as



Chancery Lane staff and passengers are finding out.

Chancery Lane has been like a building site for ages, and it's recently emerged that the refurb was put on hold when the private contractor went bankrupt and the job had to be retendered!

LU should do its own work, rather than contracting it out to unreliable profiteers.

ECONOMICS 101

Little-known "business leader" Simon Thomas made a show of himself recently by delivering a "bill" for the "cost" of the strike to RMT HQ.

Perhaps he should have delivered it to City Hall or 55 Broadway instead. After all, if the Mayor and LUL/TfL management had not announced massive job cuts, then there would not have been a strike!

In reality, the money on Thomas's "bill" is money we generate for business every day when we are not striking (i.e. 99% of the time). We didn't "cost" business this money on the strike days — we just didn't make it for them like we usually do.

Thomas has inadvertently drawn attention to how much profit, and how much wealth, Tube workers deliver to London's capitalists.

So how about the government take some of that profit back from them through taxing the rich and business, and invest it in London Underground, so it can abandon cuts and closures, reduce fares, and improve services.

LU MAKES LIFE HARDER FOR CUSTOMERS

From March, LU's new "Service Delay Refund Scheme" makes things even harder for our disgruntled passengers. Refund-seekers will need a TfL online account. LU won't issue vouchers (which require a ticket office to process) but will add the refund to Oyster or customers' bank account. What about the 20% of the population without bank accounts? Or without internet?

Replacing front line staff with technology excludes poor and vulnerable customers from LU services.