



tubeworker

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“BREXIT” VOTE STOKES RACISM: DEFEND MIGRANTS’ RIGHTS



However you voted in the EU referendum, it's clear the atmosphere since the “Brexit” vote has been pretty toxic.

There have been several instances of racist and xenophobic attacks on migrants and black and ethnic minority people. In politics, right-wing Tories haggle over who will succeed Cameron, and Blairites in the Labour Party have launched a coup attempt against left-wing leader Jeremy Corbyn (see column, right). *Tubeworker* supporters active in the Labour Party will be working with other activists against that coup.

Tubeworker was for a “remain” vote, in part because we thought the poisonous atmosphere shaped by nationalism we now see developing would be an inevitable consequence of “Brexit”.

What now?

Defend migrants’ rights

Many migrant workers work on the Tube, many as outsourced workers such as cleaners, but also within the directly-employed workforce. Their rights are now threatened. Already, *Tubeworker* has received reports of confrontations between workers of different nationalities in the wake of the vote. Low-level unpleasantness must be nipped in the bud before it grows into something nastier.

Migrant workers are not to blame for social problems such as lack of affordable housing or squeezed wages. Those problems are caused by Tory policies. Migrants and refugees - whether they're fleeing war, or simply moving to make a better life for themselves - need our solidarity.

Many migrant workers from Africa have dual citizenship with EU countries such as Germany, France, or Italy, which allows them to live and work in Britain. Their rights are also menaced, as well as migrant workers from countries such as Bulgaria, Romania, and elsewhere.

It's not clear exactly what settlement will be reached; ISS has said, ominously, that it will “work with the authorities”.

We remember only too well ISS's collusion in workplace raids which led to cleaners being deported. It's vital that we speak up loud and clear for our colleagues' right to live and work here, and oppose any restrictions on new migrants coming to Britain.

Defend workers’ rights

The Tories are likely to use “Brexit” to launch an offensive at some workers' rights that we protected by EU law. Britain being out of the EU doesn't mean we can't defend, or re-win, those rights, but it does make the Tories' job easier.

Our unions should fight for social levelling-up across Europe, against the Tories' race to the bottom.

Fight for solidarity

In many ways the worst consequence of “Brexit” will be the ideological boost given to the idea that nationality, or immigration status, is the key axis in politics, and that we should unite with others of our own nationality against outsiders, foreigners, or immigrants. This is a poisonous idea which undermines the values of solidarity and equality that underpin the labour movement.

Unions must go on the offensive for those values, proclaiming that workers' common interests are with each other, not with bosses and the rich who happen to share our nationality.

“FIT FOR THE FUTURE”: NEW DISPUTE ON THE HORIZON?

RMT has announced it is preparing a ballot of stations and revenue members for a potential new dispute against the consequences of “Fit for the Future”. This is a very positive step after nearly a year of no industrial action. We need to work to build up to a dispute that will be capable of pushing LU back. Read our discussion article about the potential new dispute online here:
bit.ly/fftf-new

FIGHT THE COUP AGAINST CORBYN!

Right wingers in the Parliamentary Labour Party (PLP) have moved to depose left-wing leader Jeremy Corbyn.

The EU referendum outcome is merely a pretext: the PLP has never respected the huge mandate Corbyn was given when over 200,000 Labour Party members voted for him to be leader.

The press has played a vile role in the coup against Corbyn, manufacturing scandals against him and distorting comments from him and his supporters.

London Underground workers, and all working-class people, need a left-wing Labour Party. With the Tory right seeking to capitalise on “Brexit”, but in internal disarray, our class needs the party founded by our unions to be a clear, assertive voice for socialist policies: living wages, rebuilding the NHS, renationalising the railways and other services, mass building of council houses, defending migrants' rights, and more.

Corbyn, and other left-wing Labour MPs like John McDonnell, have consistently supported our struggles. We need to support them against the attempted coup. Three LU unions (TSSA, Aslef, and Unite) are affiliated to Labour, and should use their weight within the party to beat back the right. RMT voted against reaffiliation at its recent AGM, which *Tubeworker* believes is a missed opportunity, but still retains links to Labour through its Parliamentary Group, which can be used to support Corbyn.

Now is the time to get active in politics. Join the Labour Party, and join Momentum, the left-wing network within Labour. Be prepared to campaign for Corbyn in a new leadership election.

**For more, see
bit.ly/fight-the-coup**



CLEANERS' COLUMN

WOT NO PLANS?

There's an atmosphere of uncertainty for cleaners, as companies jockey for position in advance of LU awarding its "super contract", which will consolidate all cleaning services under a single provider.

ISS has told union reps that it has made no provisions for destroying the biometric data it holds on employees if it loses the contract, and has no plans for expanding the workforce in advance of the launch of Night Tube. Effectively this means more work having to be done by the same number of cleaners.

CUTS COMING

Meanwhile existing contractors such as Interserve are making cuts. They plan to chop 2,000 hours out of the work they provide, which could amount to a 12 hour cut per cleaner per week.

ISS is also planning cuts on the TubeLines/JNP contract, with a proposal to seal train floors once every six months rather than three, potentially leading to job cuts.

INVESTIGATE NOW!

ISS has withdrawn the graffiti remover they issue to cleaners, after evidence emerged that it is harmful, including potentially to unborn children.

It's scandalous that cleaners have had to work with a dangerous chemical.

ISS should now conduct a full investigation, with full participation by union reps, into the chemical's effects on cleaners, and be prepared to pay compensation if any ailments can be linked to it.

FIGHT DRIVER DISPLACEMENTS

42 drivers across the combine face forced displacement from their depots to depots an hour or more from where they work now.

LU has decided to kick junior drivers out of depots where numbers are falling and dump them at the other end of London, starting with 15 drivers from Morden, to be followed by 24 from the Central Line east depots.

RMT's Central Line East branch has already called on the union to ballot.

Station staff, who've also faced mass displacements, will know how drivers are feeling and should back them in this fight.

COME TO IDEAS FOR FREEDOM 2016: A WEEKEND OF SOCIALIST DISCUSSION, 7-10 JULY, CENTRAL LONDON

MORE: [BIT.LY/IFFTICKETS](http://bit.ly/ifftickets)

WOT NO SIDINGS?

LU plans to close, rather than repair, Central Line sidings at Holborn.

The impact of this will be that trains needing to go into sidings will have to continue to Marble Arch or White City westbound or Liverpool Street eastbound. Congestion at those sidings/stations is a real risk.

Oh, and management didn't bother consulting our unions about this. Reps found out by reading it in the Traffic Circular!

Penny-pinching before safety and service? Surely not.

S-STOCK SEATING SLIP-UP

Whatever the S in S Stock stands for it's certainly not Simple Seats.

The driver's cab has a complex mechanism for adjusting its height, footrest and distance from the handle.

This would not be a problem if only management had bothered to provide training for drivers in how to operate it to ensure that it is ergonomically correctly positioned.

Once again, management's unwillingness to spend any money has proved to be a right pain in the backside for staff.

SOMETHING IN THE AIR TONIGHT?

A recent article in *Time Out* reminded readers of a study which concluded that air quality on the Tube is so poor that spending 20 minutes on the Northern Line has an equivalent effect on the lungs as smoking a cigarette.

If that's the case, what effect does a two hour SATS duty have? Or a night shift in the tunnel for track workers? Or the eight hours that cleaners often spend at platform level?

Union reps should keep an eye out for any workers suffering respiratory problems. These should be treated as industrial injuries!

CUSTOMER SERVICE MANAGERS: SIDE WITH US, DON'T FUCK WITH US!

CSMs are coming under pressure from Area Managers to act less like Station Supervisors, and more like managers.

Some CSMs are admirably resisting the pressure from above, others less so.

Any future strikes on stations will rely on unity between different grades of station staff, and CSMs will undoubtedly come under pressure to see themselves as part of management, with a special responsibility to keep stations open and break strikes.

Our unions must equip CSMs to resist.

WATER WAY TO RUN A RAILWAY!

Recent heavy rainfall led to serious flooding at many stations, including Balham.

Maintenance workers put bright green dye in the water supply to identify exactly where the flooding was originating, making the station look like it had been attacked by Slimer from *Ghostbusters*.

At Oxford Circus, a series of leaks has led to significant build-ups of water on platforms and in passageways.

Incidents like this show some serious deficiencies in basic infrastructural maintenance. Years of budget cuts and outsourcing of maintenance work can't have helped.

FIGHTING TO DEFEND AGREEMENTS ON FLEET

RMT members on Fleet are gearing up for a battle to defend their working agreements, which LU are trying to erode. RMT has declared an official dispute, and is preparing a ballot for industrial action.

LU's attempts to casualise, outsource, and de-skill the job on Fleet mirror similar attempts elsewhere. On stations, cleaning has long been outsourced, and ticketing work has also now been effectively de-skilled.

Tube workers in all other functions and areas should stand shoulder to shoulder with our colleagues on Fleet in their fight to defend agreements and direct employment!

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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