



LIBERTY

tubeworker

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FIT FOR THE FIGHTBACK

On 21st November, London Underground launched its job cuts plan, 'Fit for the Future'. LU wants to close all ticket offices, cut 950 staff and slash our terms and conditions. Here, *Tubeworker* offers some suggestions for how to build the effective political and industrial fightback we need.

Act immediately

It's excellent that RMT immediately announced a ballot for industrial action. We lost the OSP and many past fights because unions were slow off the starting blocks and management raced ahead.

Tubeworker supporters have argued for the last year that RMT should proactively fight cuts, rather than wait for LU's announcement. This meant that RMT was already in dispute with LU over mobile station supervision, ticket office closures and de-staffing of stations; when the cuts were announced, RMT was ready to ballot.

RMT's ballot will run until early January, which will allow TSSA and ASLEF to join in.

LU is using shock and awe tactics to demoralise us and setting false deadlines to pressure us. A swift response from unions will send this message to us: 'Don't panic! These plans can be defeated!'

Legally, 90 days' consultation on redundancies has to discuss whether redundancies are needed at all. If we can convince and pressure LU into an alternative plan, then we do not need to start planning for pay cuts or redundancy.

All unions together

A united response from all Tube unions could defeat these plans. It's great that ASLEF members in depots have said they're prepared to strike. ASLEF head office has said it will 'oppose vigorously' changes that compromise its members' safety, recognising that '950 less staff' will be available to deal with incidents and emergencies.

TSSA is entering into immediate dispute with LU; a reps' meeting voted to 'stand shoulder to shoulder' with the RMT.



RMT's early January ballot deadline gives you a chance to convince your TSSA and ASLEF leaders that you want to fight and to ballot in time to take all-union, effective industrial action in January.

All grades together

Our fight must defend jobs in all grades. LU is preparing for driverless trains; service control job cuts; train maintainers' and engineers' cuts under the guise of 'auto-preparation' and other automated processes.

LU wants to pick us off one function at a time. We must not fall for this; we must act together.

Winning the propaganda war

LU has put a glossy 'Fit for the Future' booklet into our hands. Our unions must debunk the company's spin; update us on its discussions with management; explain how the unions can win and what role we can play. We need publicity for all workers, but also addressing each grade's concerns.

Seeking support

Londoners outraged that Boris has betrayed his promise to keep ticket offices open should be our allies. We need to head off LU and the Mayor's Evening Standard propaganda by leafleting outside stations and doing headline-grabbing protests, involving community and anti-cuts campaigns. Disabled peoples' campaign, Transport for All, showed the way with a demonstration of 40 disabled activists outside Westminster station on the day of the announcement.

TSSA announced it will run a campaign through the Labour Party, which *Tubeworker* hopes will not be used as TSSA's alternative to industrial action. All unions need to run an effective public and political campaign, with rank and file input.



A FIGHT FOR US ALL!

Drivers must join the fight. LU wants almost 1000 jobs to go, leaving dangerous staff shortage and poor incident response. Drivers need station staff to assist sick passengers on trains in platforms; to help detain in tunnels in emergencies; to help us after an assault, near miss or one under; to be the eyes and ears that stop a small incident from escalating.

The more of us that stand together, the stronger we will be.

The Tory Mayor and the Government's political agenda is driving the vast cuts and 100% ticket office closures.

The Tories have another politically-inspired dream: driverless trains. Recently, LU all-but declared its plans for driverless trains when it refused to give RMT assurances on the subject. The Government's funding to TfL stipulates that new 'deep Tube rolling stock' must be commissioned in 2015 and the Conservatives are pushing for the new stock to be driverless.

All grades must unite to defeat this politically-motivated attack and prevent the next one. We can save jobs now and for the future.

Effective, creative, sustained industrial action

Learn the lessons from past defeats: with 24-hour strikes, management staff the service with scabs. We will need sustained strikes. United action from all grades and unions will win sooner. By being creative about when and how we go out, we can maximise disruption for a week or more. Unions need to show that strikes will not be a one-off event, but part of a program of strikes calculated to win. Only this can force a rethink from LU and the politicians.

Rank and file in the driving seat

We must set the agenda and decide the strategy, based on discussions in our workplaces about the most effective forms of industrial action. We need to form a strike committee to pressure our union leaders to adopt our strategy and to organise visits to depots, stations, etc. The committee may be open to all, but must make its decisions on the basis of balanced representation of all grades and areas.

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STATION STAFF: LET'S FIGHT FOR OUR FUTURES

LU proposes to abolish all our current grades, creating new job titles instead. According to RMT figures, over 3000 ticket sellers, supervisors and control room assistants will have to apply for around 900 customer service manager posts or equivalent. Any unsuccessful person will become an equivalent of today's CSA.

Most station staff will be downgraded with only three years' protected earnings.

Will we be able to pay our bills, mortgages or rent? LU is trying to wreck the lives we have built around anti-social, health-wrecking shifts, which we do because we thought we could rely on financial and job security.

Promotion will become impossible for current CSAs with no ticket office and far fewer supervisor jobs. The gateline will be the only future in LU.

The framework agreement, built around job roles which LU is trying to abolish, will be ripped up if LU goes ahead with this. Will station staff follow rosters? Will we know our duties in advance? We don't know, but it's for sure that we're going to have to fight LU for conditions that give us stability and quality of life. And LU hasn't even mentioned pay rates for the new jobs. Will LU try to have a pop at the wages of every LU stations worker?

We can change LU's plans during consultation if we can put management under pressure. We need to show them that if they press ahead with destroying our futures, we will repay them with strikes at strategic times to disrupt LU continuously for a month. If we struck for a week or showed LU that we will not go back to work until they leave our lives alone, then we could reverse these plans. It will be hard financially for many of us. But faced with losing £10 or £20k a year for the rest of our lives, with consequences for pensions too, it will make financial sense to strike and lose a few hundred quid now.

Let's make LU see it's made a mistake by hitting us so comprehensively and so hard. Let's give them the fight of our lives, because our lives and futures and worth fighting for!

NOT YOUR JOB TO SELL!

LU is dangling voluntary severance in front of us. Its 21st January deadline to declare interest pressures us to go before we know whether our jobs can be saved. But before you start seeing pound signs, remember: it is not your job to sell! If you take VS, the position will be deleted. No future worker or

unemployed person can take your place. If pensions were attacked, we would expect young workers to show solidarity with those nearing retirement by fighting for pensions. Now older workers must show solidarity with the young by protecting jobs!

WHO'S INCOMPETENT?

To justify cuts, LU has said 'only 12% of SSMFs, 24% of SS2s and 34% of SS1s are Competence Management System qualified'.

The Competence Management System is LU's assessment of competence on the job, which management have never successfully implemented because duty managers did not leave their offices to come out and assess us. Management are always behind on CMS targets; supervisors have been pressured to help out to catch up.

If small numbers are assessed as 'competent', it's because of management's incompetence, not ours!

What an insult to imply we're not good enough at the jobs we're fighting to save!

WELL-PAID JOBS FOR ALL!

The Government and bosses have used the recession to create a working class that is desperate, without rights, living in poverty.

Four in five jobs created since 2010 have been in industries where the average wage is less than £8 an hour; casual work has increased by 62,000 in two years; a million workers are on zero hours contracts. Bosses are exploiting fear of unemployment to make workers work harder, less securely and for less money. The bosses are waging class war.

We want a race to the top, not a race to the bottom. We want our unions to fight for well-paid jobs for all. We must fight to hold onto our 950 decently-paid, unionised jobs, because it not only benefits us but the whole working class if these jobs exist. The fact that workers in other industries are paid and treated worse than we are on LU is all the more reason to fight for the conditions we have won over generations.

NOT YOUR GUINEA PIGS!

LU ran a poster campaign for LU staff to volunteer for the pilot of contactless bankcards, due to launch on LU in January.

It wanted some of us to use our own personal bank cards! It must think we're stupid if it thinks we would volunteer to test a technology that will assist in closing ticket offices.

LU shouldn't get too carried away. Only 16,000 people used contactless payment during its first six months on London Buses. 20% of the population do not have bank cards. And who will use them once realising that no station staff, only the bank, can refund excess charges for incomplete journeys? Unions and passengers must work together to demand better service than this.

LU IS NOT A BUSINESS!

LU managers keep trying to justify cuts by saying things like, 'You've to understand, LU is a business. Does it make business sense to pay someone to work in a ticket office when LU is guaranteed the revenue anyway?'

Let's say it once and for all: LONDON UNDERGROUND IS NOT A BUSINESS! It is a public service.

What other business has a guaranteed revenue and customer base, however much customers are ripped off and mistreated?

You can tell it's a public service because the same managers also try to defend cuts by saying, 'London Underground has no choice about making cuts because its funding has been cut by the Government'.

Would the Government be funding the Underground if it really was a business? No! It attracts public funding because it is a public service.

LU makes an operating surplus, which greatly diminishes the argument for job cuts. But in any case, the Government should not be making these cuts because it should provide jobs and customer service as part of its obligation to deliver a transport system that meets the needs of the public. That's why fighting our political bosses is so important.

DEFEND SERVICE CONTROL JOBS!

Along with fighting management's imposition of Corrective Action Plans and fighting for re-grading due to increased workload, service control workers are gearing up for a fight to save around 150 jobs when the new service control centre opens at Hammersmith.

Most people have accepted that cabins will close. But we do not accept that jobs should go. Unions should put forward proposals to management that prove that existing job levels can be maintained - even increased.

RMT lost members over the 2005 Service Control Agreement and needs to re-build. All unions in service control must take a stand against job cuts now, which will help prevent job cuts in service control in the future.

BRING CLEANERS IN HOUSE!

ISS is in the process of slashing staff and services to save £1.2 million by April. It has replaced its contract with the ATOM agency for a contract with what must be an even more unscrupulous agency employer. Meanwhile, some accommodation cleaning has been taken back in house by Tube Lines, kicking ISS out. Cleaning should be taken in house everywhere!

**VOTE BRIAN MUNRO FOR RMT
LONDON TRANSPORT REGION
COUNCIL OF EXECUTIVES
REPRESENTATIVE.**

RETURN BALLOTS BY 2ND DECEMBER

Tube worker is produced by Tube workers and published by Workers' Liberty, an organisation fighting as part of the labour movement for a socialist alternative to both capitalism and Stalinism, based on common ownership and democracy.

We want one democratic, fighting union for all railworkers. We reject artificial divisions between workers of different grades. We oppose racism, sexism, homophobia and all prejudice that divides us.