



tubeworker

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CLEANERS TO STRIKE?

RMT's strike ballot for the London Living Wage for cleaners is finally set to go ahead this month. With the T&G not joining in, strong RMT organisation is vital. Cleaning companies are already checking national insurance numbers to weed out 'illegal working'. Employers may now step this up and the union needs to be ready to challenge them head-on. We also need to involve agency staff, who have replaced permanent staff, which could undermine the strength of the union's action.

RMT should give strike pay to the cleaners. Better-paid grades should donate to a strike fund, and the union should call on other trade unions and general public to give too. There is a lot of sympathy for the cleaners; let's turn it into hard cash.

www.workersliberty.org/tubecleaners

Tubeworker's weblog - daily updates! -

www.workersliberty.org/twblog

METRONET STRIKE OFF

RMT won its dispute with Metronet, but not without naffing off a fair few of its own reps and activists. The Strike Committee should have been at the centre of the decision-making about management's offer, since rank-and-file members have to live with the deal and any shortfalls in it. But instead, the Department of We Know Best swung into action.

Do our union leaders appreciate a Strike Committee when it is doing all the leg-work building a dispute, only to brush it aside when important decisions have to be made?!

www.workersliberty.org/metronet

Tubeworker is produced by tubeworkers in the Alliance for 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. Only our bosses benefit from a divided workforce.

PAY: THE FIGHT STARTS NOW

Our current pay deal on LUL runs out next April, but the fight for a decent new deal must start now. We can be sure that our employers and their political puppet-masters are determined to make workers bear the brunt of the looming economic crisis. They will demand that we tighten our belts, while theirs will remain as loose and well-filled as ever.

Gordon Brown has demanded pay cuts across the public sector but not acted against obscene City bonuses, surely one of the reasons voters are deserting Labour. And with Boris Johnson now Mayor, the Tories staging a comeback, and LUL desperate for industrial peace for the Olympics, our pay fight is more important than ever.

We should not be apologetic about demanding better pay and conditions. We do a tough job, with anti-social hours, facing a high and rising cost of living.



Rank-and-file members must have a say in what pay claim the unions put forward. Usually, we wait for head offices to tell us, or worse, the unions wait for management to make a crap offer before saying anything. Instead, we should debate the claim in the branches over the next few months, then prepare to fight for it.

The unions must demand a one-year deal only. We can not sign up to a 'pay rise' that might turn into a pay cut. Even an 'inflation-plus' deal can lead to real-terms pay cuts if inflation rises and the pay rise was based on an earlier, lower inflation figure. We can not put our weapons away for years, letting management come after our conditions knowing we are disarmed. We have to fight for better pay and conditions year on year.

Boris reckons we should give up our right to strike and hand over our livelihoods to an 'independent' pay arbiter. No way. Ask workers in other public services about

'independent' pay reviews. It's funny how these bodies consistently award rubbish rises to workers but fat-cat salaries to Mayors!

We should demand:

- a flat-rate rise rather than a percentage;
- an additional £250 to 'consolidate' the CSS bonus, which should be scrapped;
- a 4-day, 32-hour week;
- improvements in working conditions, such as paid leave for domestic emergencies;
- other improvements that a democratic debate will generate.



The strategy to win a decent deal? First off, the unions need to have one! It must include starting the process now, and submitting the claim by October so there is a clear six months of talks and campaigning before the rise is due. If there is not an acceptable result by April 1st, we go into action. *Tube workers are no longer prepared to tolerate seeing pay claims drag on for months and months beyond the due date.*

The unions should submit a joint claim and act in unity. They should co-ordinate with similar fights in the Infracos and other TfL companies. We must not allow one grade to be bought off at the price of a poor deal for everyone else.

The unions must keep members informed and involved. There should be a rank-and-file strike committee that does not just do the legwork but has a real input into decisions.

www.workersliberty.org/pay



BOJO BANS BOOZE

New Mayor Boris Johnson is to ban drinking alcohol on London's public transport. BoJo says this will be enforced by staff as well as BTP. Us then, as we rarely see the BTP. How do you fancy telling the person with the open bottle or can that they are not allowed to drink it? We should refuse to enforce Johnson's rule on safety grounds.

Under the plan, someone who is drunk and abusive, but not actually drinking on the Tube, would be fine by Boris. But someone who is well-behaved, bothering no-one but sipping from a can will be booted out.

www.workersliberty.org/LTsafety

In a great display of working-class solidarity, dockers in Durban, South Africa, refused to unload 77 tonnes of Chinese weapons bound for Zimbabwe. When the dockers — members of the Transport and Allied Workers Union — learned of the shipment, they knew exactly what the weapons would be used for: “our members will not handle containers which are full of weapons that will be used against the Zimbabwean people, to put down the democratic opposition.” The dockers’ action forced the ship to leave South African waters. More on the situation in Zimbabwe: www.workersliberty.org/zimbabwe



SUNNY STONEBRIDGE

Management want to transfer Willesden Junction staff to Stonebridge Park. But the staff have not been asked nor their rep consulted!

If jobs go, staff should be displaced as per agreements, not told ‘that’s where you’re going’. OK, offer displaced staff the option to go, but don’t force them. Advertise any shortfall in the Traffic Circular. Maybe management could get some rosters out at the same time!

www.workersliberty.org/bakerloo

YOU ARE DRIVING TOO SLOWLY!

Bakerloo drivers have been told off and given an item on their Holistic Record for entering Willesden Junction too slowly on the northbound causing the wrong road trainstop to rear trip the train.

Er, aren’t you meant to slow down if stopping at a station?! Aren’t you meant to drive taking conditions into account? The Bakerloo line does not have a minimum speed on entering Willesden or any other platform. Management should sort out the timing on the section and let us drive.

www.workersliberty.org/bakerloo

FINDING OUT FACTS

Green Park managers have added a stage to the attendance procedure: a ‘fact-finding interview’ before the LDI. What facts do they need to find out that they couldn’t unearth at the Return To Work interview? Or is the ‘fact-finding’ really the disciplinary hearing in disguise, and the LDI just a rubber stamp?

Could this be something to do with the fact that LUL denies you the right to a union rep at the fact-finding, but has to allow you one at the LDI?!

www.workersliberty.org/sickssystem

WOT NO STATION SUPERVISOR?

One April Sunday, there was no SS2 at Harrow & Wealdstone from 0700-1900. There were just two platform staff for six platforms, and the barrier staff were all agency. A DSM said that as there were no Bakerloo trains due to engineering work that was OK, but it’s not. LUL is responsible for all traffic through the station, LUL and TOC trains. Note: there have been three one-unders in as many months.

This is not a quiet station in the sticks. Management seem to still think the rest of the station is someone else’s responsibility and the transfer never happened.

www.workersliberty.org/silverlink

WE HAVE LIFT OFF

Management want to keep Holloway Road open if the lifts go out.

How they plan to get people out in an emergency is anyone’s guess. It will be us and the passengers who are on site and at risk, while the managers who dream this stuff up are safe in their offices.

www.workersliberty.org/piccadilly

UNCOVERED DUTIES

Duty sheets at Oxford Circus and Piccadilly Circus are showing loads of duties unfilled. At OXO, 6 full-time and 6 part-time positions are vacant. Platforms which should have SATS are left unstaffed (impacting on Customer Satisfaction Surveys and our bonus?).

It seems management are doing their usual trick of cutting costs by making already-overworked staff work even harder. But why leave posts vacant? Maybe they’re paving the way for redeploying staff from outer London stations when jobs are cut, especially in the ticket office.

www.workersliberty.org/staffinglevels

FRIES WITH THAT?

Management tell ticket sellers that if someone asks for a quid’s credit on their Oyster and tenders a £20 note, ask them ‘Wouldn’t you like more credit than that?’ Arnos Grove staff dutifully did so. The first person they asked replied that if he’d wanted more credit, he’d have bloody asked for it. So now they just take the note and add the quid credit.

Managers who come up with such ideas should have to test them out themselves before inflicting them on the rest of us.

www.workersliberty.org/fares

ALONE ON THE GATELINE

Embankment was getting by with its skeleton staffing levels: in the peak, two CSAs on the gateline, one on each of two platforms. But now a big cheese District line manager has decreed that another platform needed SATs too.

But there will no extra staff! Instead, one of the gateline CSAs has to move to the platform, leaving one dealing with the

stream of passengers on his/her own, and all the CSAs spending an uncomfortably long time on platforms.

Embankment staff may have to refuse to do this on safety grounds.

www.workersliberty.org/district

WHY ARE WE (STILL) WAITING?

Management promised to create the grade of SA(CR) coach, so that all those Stations Assistants (Control Room) who have been coaching other staff in the role could actually get some reward. A year on, they still haven’t delivered.

Anyone would think that LUL doesn’t appreciate us! They should say sorry for the delay, by giving some money to all the people who have been coaching for free.

www.workersliberty.org/promotion

ACTION TOWN BALLOT

Bollo House drivers have had enough of their depot’s regime and have asked RMT to ballot for strikes. Management have clamped down on sickness and SPADs, and dish out disciplinaries like confetti. They routinely send drivers on trips they know will take them over 4hr15mins driving time.

It is open season on Picc drivers - and will remain so unless we fight back. It would be good to see Arnos drivers join in. They are not short of issues to be naffed off about!

www.workersliberty.org/disputes

HOW VISIBLE?

Kings Cross staff are wearing HiVis all day, management ignoring staff concerns that this is uncomfortable, gets you mistaken for contractors, that HiVis rapidly deteriorate in quality - nor that wearing them all day detracts from their impact during an emergency.

CSAs also wear a blue tabard, with ‘happy to help’ on the back. We can not confirm rumours that the next version will say ‘Would you like fries with that?’

www.workersliberty.org/uniformPPE

WOT NO STATION CHECKS?

Managers seem to think it’s OK for a Supervisor to book on at Canons Park at 06:45 but not check the station until after 10:30. The Rule Book says that you only need to check the station once per shift, and doesn’t say when. So if, say, the night-turn SS did his/her check at the start of the duty and the early turn at the end, then the station could go overnight and over 15 hours without being checked!

Tube workers live with the consequences of LUL imposing a dangerous Rule Book and our unions failing to fight it.

www.workersliberty.org/jubilee

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