

tubeworker

www.workersliberty.org/tubeworker <> tubeworker@btopenworld.com

RICKY: VOTE YES

RMT is balloting station staff on Rickmansworth group for strike action after management with issued displacement notices to five CSAs.

LUL created the problem by sending a dozen staff 'above numbers' to Ricky group by mistake, and is now forcing staff to move to another station, miles away, even though they had been told that their Ricky post was permanent, and some of them have shelled out money to move house.

It is vital that the maximum number of staff vote Yes. Everyone on the group objects to management's shabby treatment of their workmates: now we have to put that support into action.

The union should then call strikes, if possible timed to coincide with action in other areas. Staff need to strike solidly, and drivers should consider whether it is safe to drive trains through unstaffed stations. Should one day out not be enough, we should broaden out the action across the system: LUL is forcing displacements elsewhere too.

www.workersliberty.org/metropolitan

STRIKE FOR JEROME'S JOB!

Charing Cross group station staff are to strike to demand that LUL reinstates Jerome Bowes, a CSA sacked after being assaulted. 90% voted for strikes, recognising the injustice in Jerome's treatment and that if LUL gets away with this, any of us could be next.

All duties due to book on after 18:59 on Sunday 27 and before 19:00 on Monday 28 will strike. We need a solid strike, with TSSA members supporting RMT workmates, to make it impossible for management to open the three stations. Drivers should respect picket lines and refuse to drive through the striking stations

The Director's Appeal upheld the dismissal. LUL is asserting its right to sack staff who won't accept that being a punchbag is part of our job. We need to assert the opposite, by making this strike solid and by planning further action should LUL not back down. A second strike should be timed to coincide with planned action by other workers.

www.workersliberty.org/bakerloo

KEEP UP THE CLEANERS' FIGHT

Encouraged by the huge public support for the cleaners, we need to step up our activity for the next strike at the beginning of August.

Money from union branches is swelling the cleaners' strike fund. RMT and Feminist Fightback campaigners filled the GLA chamber with applause when they publicly demanded that Boris meet the demands of the cleaners' strike at 'Mayor's Answers' last week. Now even our Tory Mayor has promised that 'cleaners (on Metronet) will get the living wage by August', as TfL has finally taken over Metronet. We'll see if this natural friend of the rich delivers on this pledge to end poverty pay, and pressure still needs to be mounted against TubeLines, but this should give us confidence to go into the next strike.

But Boris's words do not disguise the system we are up against. Three impressive days of strike action have been followed by a raft of oppressive and intimidating measures, as the cleaning companies have tried to crush the spirit of the cleaners. Some who took part in the strike have been suspended without pay, either because their right to work has suddenly been called into question, or for other arbitrary accusations.

Unions obey highly restrictive laws when they strike, but the companies manipulate laws (eg. immigration law) and break others (eg. victimising trade union activists) with no fear of consequences. If only the unions could show the same spirit to defy the law!

We can not rely on individuals going to employment tribunals, as this could take months, by which time the strike will be over. Cleaners must fight collectively to beat victimisations and the awful way immigration law is used. Every cleaner must get involved in building a response: we have to stop employers having the unchallenged right to threaten anyone fighting for a living wage with detention or deportation.

◇◇◇◇

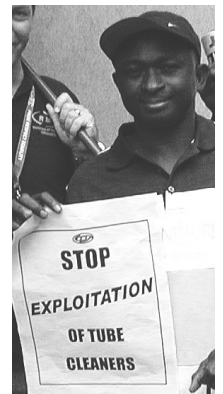
We also need to go into the next strike with a strategy to win. Organise picket lines in key stations and depots where there is a concentration of cleaner activists and LU staff willing to close stations and take trains out of service. We need staff to agree not to cross picket lines and cleaners to picket those locations. When things shut down, cleaning firms will feel it in the purse

and will begin to cave in to the pressure.

In the last strike, cleaning companies smuggled agency staff in to cover for strikers, limiting the industrial impact. This makes support from other grades all the more important.

The cleaners have to win this, as they cannot survive on the wage they are on, and because it will mark a victory for the union movement against ISS's, GBM's etc unchallenged rule of poverty and intimidation.

www.workersliberty.org/tubecleaners



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.

ROUND THE LOOP

Northern Line management are issuing drivers with warnings for detraining before going round the Kennington loop.

Drivers know we can not trust the official 3-PAs rule. Trains spend up to 15 minutes in the loop, and passengers who do not hear the PAs can panic and try to escape. This happened in the loop just a few weeks ago.

The reason management want you to do the 3 PAs and then move is that detraining takes 4 minutes and the service can be held up. There is a simple answer to that - more station staff at Kennington to do the detrainments. And in the meantime - stop disciplining drivers who are just trying to look after their and their passengers' safety.

www.workersliberty.org/northern

WOT NO CSAs?

Remember the dispute about Heathrow T5 staffing? Remember a strike threat forcing LUL to put CSAs there as well as a Supervisor? Remember Tubeworker saying LUL's promise of CSAs 'for now' was not good enough?

Guess what? Management now reckon that as soon as the barrier on the Eastbound platform is in place, the CSAs won't be needed any more. So who is going to do the work that the CSAs do now eg. detraining? Easy - the driver!

Which goes to show that if you settle for a weak offer, you need to draw your weapons again pretty soon.

www.workersliberty.org/staffinglevels

WOT NO OYSTER?

One recent Saturday, all Oyster readers clapped out, because of 'a corrupt electronic file'. Every Oyster card that touched in from start of traffic until 0930 was hotlisted and permanently knackered.

Problems for staff: firstly, your staff pass knackered; secondly, frustrated passengers, extra workload and grief.

Ironically, the company advised us to direct passengers to their nearest ticket office. Good job they didn't go ahead with those wholesale closures then, eh?

New technology is a good thing, but it isn't failsafe. Oyster should supplement staff, not replace us.

www.workersliberty.org/fares

WOT NO CONTROLLER?

The Waterloo and City line may be short, but it needs controlling like any other line. So how come the people doing the job were signal operators, paid less than they should be and expected to do work that they shouldn't?

TICKET OFFICES SAVED: OUR VICTORY, NOT THE TORIES'

The threat to cut and close Tube ticket offices has been defeated, with Mayor Boris Johnson stating that the plans are now off the table for good.

This is a fantastic victory for the unions and for passengers. Make no mistake: this is *our* victory, not Tory BoJo's. Johnson has dropped the plan because he doesn't want to discredit the Tories in the run-up to a general election they hope to win.

He saw it as a vote-winner because of the campaign waged by the unions. The petitions, leaflets and public meetings put the issue in everyone's minds, and the threat of industrial action showed we were serious (actual industrial action might have shown we were even more serious!). In any case, it was only because of our campaign that the tickets offices were not cut and closed before the Mayoral election even happened!

So don't let the Tory take the credit. BoJo will doubtless already be looking for ways to make us pay by attacking us in some other way. And never forget that the Conservative Party's DNA is to oppress workers and rule on behalf of the rich and the bosses.

www.workersliberty.org/ticketoffices

Under threat of the staff concerned withdrawing their goodwill, management have agreed to upgrade them.

www.workersliberty.org/staffinglevels.

NO SPYING

Station Supervisors are being asked to do competence assurance. But Supervisors are not managers. They have nothing to gain from assessing colleagues' competence, as getting workmates to spy on each other will make our jobs vulnerable in the long run.

If management are struggling to get around stations to sneak up on us to assess whether we're good enough at our job, let them struggle. Competence assurance is a sinister attempt to replace licences with a deskilled general measure of 'competence'.

If the practice of Station Supervisors assessing us becomes widespread, it will change the nature of the job. At present, despite the hierarchy, everyone is on the station to run the station, not to discipline and intimidate others. The union should put out strong guidelines to Supervisors to refuse to be part of this as it breaks with everything the union is about.

www.workersliberty.org/competence-management

IT'S A MYSTERY

Apparently mystery shoppers mark your SATS scores down if you don't say, 'The train now approaching is to Morden', etc, - even if the automated PA has said it two seconds before!

What customer will want repeated information ringing in their ears? Credit staff with the intelligence to be able to do our job, and don't just fail us for not sticking to the 'script'.

THANKS TO YOU

Management decided to reward King's Cross staff for dealing so professionally with the chaos on booze ban

party night. Perhaps management were embarrassed by their own poor preparation.

The £100 'Thanks To You' vouchers were most welcome - until staff discovered that some of their workmates had only got a tenner. So much for management's gratitude: sounds more like a divide-and-rule tactic to us. Solidarity prevailed amongst many staff, who told management where they could poke their Thanks, and insisted that all staff deserved equal reward.

www.workersliberty.org/handc

BRIEFING STALLED

CSA's have been briefed on a new procedure for when trains are stalled in tunnels.

'Brief' is the word! A few minutes to run through the 'one hour target', how we would detrain all trains immediately without waiting to see if the stalled train could be moved. And no information to take away with us.

Can't imagine that this 'one hour target' will be met if all operational staff are schooled by this shoddy process.

www.workersliberty.org/training

SINK THE BISMARCK

28 June was Metronet's major annual testing date, this ear named 'Operation Bismarck'.

If you were naffed off with Metronet ignoring everything your union said about outsourcing of work to TubeLines, transfer of control staff and the Vic Line upgrade, what would you rather do on a Saturday night: take part in the tests, or hold a party?

When a manager saw the link between management's behaviour and staff's unwillingness to let work get in the way of their social life, Metronet assured RMT that there would be no outsourcing, no staff transfers, and full consultation with the union over the upgrade.

Lesson: If management won't play ball, then neither should we.

www.workersliberty.org/metronet

Want to get every issue of Tubeworker (published at least every three weeks)?
Send us a fiver (cheques payable to *N London Workers' Liberty*) and your address!
Got a story for Tubeworker? We welcome reports & comments from all Tube workers.
Contact Workers' Liberty, PO Box 823, London SE15 4NA. 020-7207-3997
Subscribe to Tubeworker by e-mail: tubeworker-list-subscribe@workersliberty.org

Tubeworker p&p S. Matgamna

**Join the debate:
How can we build union activism?**
www.workersliberty.org/activism