



# tubeworker

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## Labour surges under Corbyn: now organise to...

# TOPPLE THE TORIES!

Labour's surge in the 8 June election is a source of huge political hope and inspiration for all working-class people.

The outcome, a Tory government only given a workable majority via the support of the far-right Democratic Unionist Party, is a grim outcome, but an unstable one. Another election, eminently winnable for Labour, is possible soon.

Tube workers should be actively organising to win a Labour government. Only Labour can halt the Tories' plans to end TfL's central government subsidy, which, without sustained industrial resistance from us, will inevitably lead to huge cuts on LU. The Tories want to impose more anti-union laws, further restricting our rights to organise at work; Labour are committed to repealing the Tories' "Trade Union Act".



What can you do? Join the Labour Party! Get active in your local party, get involved with campaigning. Fight for socialist policies in Labour so it continues to raise, and go beyond, the radical ideas in the election manifesto, rather than edging back towards the centre ground, as moderate, Blairite elements within the party (whether privately or publicly) wish and will be organising for. Encourage your workmates to join Labour and get active too.

If you are a member of Aslef, TSSA,

or Unite, make proposals in your union branch for what your union should do within the party. Propose that it backs socialist policies, and organises to select candidates who will commit to resisting cuts at local council level.

If you are a member of RMT, propose at your branch that the union requests reaffiliation to Labour. RMT was booted out of the party during the Blair years for the "crime" of backing socialist candidates in elections; now, the only viable socialist candidates will be standing for Labour. RMT campaigned for Labour in the election; now it should throw its weight behind the fight to bolster Corbyn and McDonnell, and win a left-wing Labour government by reaffiliating and getting actively involved in the party. RMT's recent AGM passed a resolution committing the union to consult branches on the union's relationship to Labour, with a Special General Meeting to be called at which RMT could decide to reaffiliate to the party.

Unless we take advantage of it, this immensely hopeful moment may not last for long. The Tories may consolidate their now shaky-looking power. The right wing of the Labour Party will find a way to reassert itself. Any worker who cares about solidarity, justice, and equality should join and get active in Labour.

**Help push forward the project to transform Labour into a genuinely democratic workers' party that seeks to govern wholeheartedly in the interests of our class, just as the Tories govern in the interests of the rich.**

**After Finsbury Park terror attack: defend Muslim communities! Solidarity against terror and racism - [bit.ly/finspark](http://bit.ly/finspark)**

## JUSTICE FOR GRENFELL

**The working-class people killed in the Grenfell Fire were killed because they were working-class.**

They were killed for their class — and, many of them, for being people of colour, and/or from migrant backgrounds — and not being able to afford better quality housing, or to afford legal representation to challenge the negligence of their landlords that tenants' groups had called out for years.

We send our sympathy and solidarity to the families of the victims, and to all those fighting for justice in the aftermath of this tragedy.

We have similar experiences from our own industry: it took the deaths of 31 people, with 100 more injured, in the King's Cross Tube station fire of 1987 to make London Underground tighten up its fire safety practises. The

Hatfield and Potters Bar crashes, in 2000 and 2002 respectively, killed a total of 11 people and injured dozens more. Both were caused by negligence resulting directly from outsourcing, just as the Grenfell Fire was.

The labour movement should take up the cause of the Grenfell tenants, politically and materially. We strongly echo Jeremy Corbyn's call for the empty homes of the super rich to be requisitioned to house Grenfell survivors. As charges are finally brought against those responsible for Hillsborough, Grenfell tenants must not be made to wait so long for potential justice.

**After Grenfell, rank-and-file rail and London Underground workers stand with the victims and say: our lives are worth more than the bosses' profits! Never again!**

## ORGANISE TO BEAT THE ANTI-UNION LAWS

Despite returning a majority of 80% in favour of action, the 35% turnout in the RMT ballot to reinstate Lee Cornell is not enough for the union to call a legal strike, meaning cross-combine action in this dispute is impossible without a re-ballot that does hit the thresholds.

The thresholds demanded of unions (50% turnouts, and 40% of all those balloted voting yes in certain "essential services", including transport) are not applied to any other area of democratic life: many MPs and councillors have mandates far lower than 80% on a 35% turnout! Previous legislation, which forces unions to conduct ballots postally, also has an effect. Voting on your own, at home, away from the discussion and solidarity of the workplace, is an atomising experience, and indeed is profoundly anti-democratic. Real democracy requires collective discussion, meetings, deliberation, debate, all conducted in person.

The fight to get Lee back to work must go on. His Employment Tribunal will go ahead, and should be supported by solidarity demonstrations. RMT still has a mandate for local action at London Bridge.

This outcome is undoubtedly disheartening, most of all for Lee, Dave, and Saeed, and for the reps and activists who have worked so hard. While we should learn from this disappointment and redouble our efforts in future to make sure we do hit the thresholds, we should not sink into recriminations and bitterness at colleagues who didn't return their ballots. The blame for this setback lies with the Tories who imposed the laws, and the employers who lobbied for them. The whole trade union movement, which met the imposition of the laws with only the most token levels of opposition, must start fighting back, calling demonstrations and rallies against the laws, and looking for ways to subvert and defy them.

Politically, getting involved in the Labour Party and campaigning for a Labour government - now a real possibility for when the Tory/DUP lash-up inevitably collapses - is a key priority.

**A Labour government will repeal the Trade Union Act, and should be pushed to go beyond that and legislate for genuine trade union freedom: restoring the right to workplace meetings, workplace ballots, and to take solidarity action.**

## LDI DIFFICULTIES

Area Managers on stations are leaning on Customer Service Managers (former supervisors regraded to "managers" and forced to take on disciplinary responsibility) to issue 26-week warnings as standard in LDIs.

Some CSMs who exercised their discretion to issue reduced warnings, or who refused to issue warnings at all, have received the hairdryer treatment from AMs. This is unacceptable, and must stop.

If it doesn't, CSMs should consider whether it's really acceptable for LU to force us to police each other.

## CASH OUT

**London Underground has not provided enough training to station staff on how to handle cash from the ticket machines since ticket offices closed.**

The new "Cash Handling Devices" (CHDs) do not eliminate much of the work of handling cash that a ticket seller used to do.

Why should you carry out work that you're neither properly trained nor paid to do?

## SAFETY FIRST

**The stretch of the Hammersmith & City and Circle Lines running past Grenfell Tower remain suspended, as investigations into the tragic fire continue.**

This is absolutely right; no corners can be cut with safety. Some question marks then, over why the suspension was briefly lifted before being reinstated.

If there's one overarching lesson from the horror of Grenfell, it's that safety must never play second fiddle to profit.

## PIC FLEET BALLOT: VOTE YES!

**RMT is balloting Tube Lines workers at Northfields and Cockfosters depots for strikes, after Tube Lines announced plans to employ new staff on fixed-term contracts.**

All new jobs should be permanent. Allowing fixed-term contracts to become the norm leads to casualisation, with workers becoming disposable depending on when the bosses decide the need is greatest.

The ballot closes on 4 July. Vote yes for strikes!

## IM EMERGENCY?

**We're being told to only contact IM Services "in an emergency".**

Could that be because staffing levels in the IT department are inadequate to deal with routine queries?

LU thinks we're "mobile" now we have iPads, but the new tech is only semi-functional, with poorly resourced support.

## CLEANERS' COLUMN

### INTERSERVE TURNS THE SCREWS

Bosses at Interserve are attempting to take advantage of an assumed lack of knowledge of their rights on the part of some cleaners.

RMT has issued the following advice to its members: "If you are called in for a disciplinary hearing, or a so called 'fact finding' which you think might lead to a disciplinary hearing you must immediately contact your union representative and ask them to accompany you to the 'investigation.'"

Remember, you have the right for any formal meeting with management to take place within your working hours.

Knowledge is power, know your rights!

### "SUPERBUG" BUSTERS?

**Various "superbugs" are loose in LU tunnels and stations, borne on poor quality air, according to a new scientific study.**

The Mayor wants to deep clean 50 stations overnight over the summer.

Following job cuts, cleaners numbers are stretched to breaking point, even with agency replacements: where will the cleaners come from?

The problem certainly needs addressing. LU needs to insist that its contractors reverse job cuts or, better still, take cleaning back in house.

### 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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