



London Calling

News and views from RMT's London Transport Regional Council

www.rmtlondoncalling.org.uk

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Respect to all Strikers

Warm congratulations, thanks and respect to all RMT members - and some members of other unions, whether ASLEF, TSSA or Unite - who defied a barrage of pressure to take strike action in defence of jobs, pay and justice.

Our action had a big impact, making management take notice of our grievances after months, even years, of ignoring them, and attracting a flood of public support that you won't read about in the *Evening Standard!*

Staff on both London Underground and Transport for London took action, involving all grades: operational, engineering and administrative.

Our fight for jobs, pay and justice goes on - but together, we have taken a big stride towards winning.



Young members lead the picket at Leyton signals depot

Strike News

- Talks with LUL will take place at ACAS next week.
- Labour movement legend **Tony Benn** gave his support to our strike, saying "London depends on the Tube workers and the Tube workers are entitled to get support from London."
- RMT strikers got strong **support in Parliament** when Labour MP Andrew Dismore waded into the Mayor and London Underground.
- **Britain's biggest union, Unite**, has given its support to our action, Regional Organiser Peter Kavanagh saying "We have expressed our solidarity with RMT in their fight for a decent pay settlement and assurances over no compulsory redundancies."
- Former Mayor **Ken Livingstone** launched a furious broadside against Boris Johnson and Tube chiefs, and made it clear that RMT is right over the key issue of compulsory redundancies. He said, "I gave a written guarantee that after the return of Metronet staff to the public sector there would be no redundancies. In an organisation as large as Transport for London (TfL) and with many proposals for expanding services and building new infrastructure we would have had no problems honouring that deal."
- **What next?** On Monday, your reps and branch officers will be discussing the way forward with union head office. The strike committee will also be meeting in the evening: all strikers are welcome to attend. Please contact your rep for more information.

A WORKMATE WRITES:

"I was proud to stand with you on the picket lines across London over the past two days. Our demands were clear and concise and fair. Despite the misleading Tory press headlines and Boris's propaganda from outside the dispute and the constant stream of misinformation from LUL, we stood strong. As well as all this we had not only individuals but the leadership of another union breaking the strike.

"This enforces my strong belief that the best union to be in is the one that supports its colleagues with actions. Unions should be about all grades working together for one another and I for one am happy to have played my part in defending the jobs, pay and conditions of all our colleagues including those whose union would rather sit around and chat with management for another six months to a year in the belief that management will alter their position out of the goodness of their hearts! Even at a time when people who we have the ability to defend are at risk of losing their jobs now.

"Once again thanks to everyone who stood strong and can hold their heads high when they return to their workplace: the workplace we are improving for all our colleagues."

Peter, RMT



Strikers picket Leytonstone depot on Tuesday morning

BOB CROW: THE TRUTH (and if not, sue us for libel)

This is my 31st year as a member of this union and a London Underground worker and in all that time I have never experienced such dishonesty from any management that I have dealt with. Let me explain what happened at the talks.

The Facts

- Pay. Management made a revised offer on a two-year deal or four-year deal. We said we would go away, speak to our members and representatives and come back to them. We said this did not have to be resolved immediately and hence we could suspend the action.
- It is an out-and-out lie that we were only interested in two sacked drivers. There were another five specific cases where management had abused procedures. It was agreed that ACAS would look at all seven cases; we said we could suspend the action to allow this to go ahead.
- Management were abusing sickness procedures by making unannounced visits to members without a union rep being present, and issuing 52-week warnings when the maximum allowed is 26 weeks. We reached agreement that the 26 weeks maximum would be adhered to and that a union rep would be in attendance at interviews.
- Redundancies. In 2001, LUL members were transferred to Metronet. We reached an agreement with LUL and Metronet that there would be no compulsory redundancies and that staff would be offered alternative employment if their job went. This was enshrined in members' contracts. As we predicted, Metronet went bust with massive debts. We asked that all Metronet members that came back to LUL, and

all other LUL members, should have the same agreement of no compulsory redundancies.

At 6pm, an hour before the strike was to begin, agreement was reached with the Acting Managing Director, Richard Parry. I signed a document to this effect and this was to go back to your General Grades Committee immediately so that we could suspend the strike. At 6.35pm, while awaiting the final typed agreement, management told us that they had made a phone call and could no longer abide by the agreement – they reneged before the ink was even dry. We were stunned that management could be so dishonest.

I have no doubt that the phone call made was to the Transport Commissioner or City Hall and they instructed the negotiators to pull the agreed deal. It became quite clear that the Transport Commissioner or City Hall were using stalling tactics to try to extend the talks to 7pm in the hope that staff would believe agreement had been reached and turn up for work.

It is an absolute disgrace that these bodies should interfere in the negotiations taking place between your union and the LUL management. We negotiate in good faith and expect the same from the other side. It was management that forced this strike to go ahead and now they will have to find a way to deal with the outstanding issues all over again.

The RMT want a negotiated settlement without interference from the politicians. Agreement can be reached if management sit down and negotiate honestly.

Bob Crow

General Secretary



"Well done for taking this action, it's exactly what we need to do in the face of pay cuts and bullying management."

Dan Jeffery

"I am a Londoner who uses the Tube, and I fully support the strike. People have to stand up for their rights. Good on you, and best of luck!"

Lydia

"I know the papers are laying into you, but I'm pleased to see someone standing up for the rights of working people. Yeah, it's inconvenient and some people will have a hard time getting to work, but someone has to fight our corner."

Dan C

"Keep up the fight! You are participating in an important act of direct action to resist the profiteers who would rather ignore your steps to engage in collective negotiations to ensure that you work in safe and secure jobs."

Meaghan Ross

"Your claims are just, your demands are reasonable. Good luck with your strike, and best wishes for a quick and total victory!"

Nick Holden

"Workers standing up for themselves is the way to go. No to bullying, no to job cuts."

Jason Travis

"I strongly support RMT members striking over the crucial issues of jobs, pay and management behaviour. This is the only sane reaction to aggressive management emboldened by the cabal of free marketeers residing in City Hall."

Daniel Crimes

"I ride the Tube in Stockholm almost every day, I just want to extend my warmest greetings of solidarity in your struggle."

Magnus

"Congratulations to all RMT members standing together in defence of both their own jobs and those of their colleagues. It is heartening to see a group of workers willing to stand together to defend what is right in the face of a clearly hostile management and media machine."

Aaron

"Stay strong and keep fighting."

Robert Stirling

"All the best; your case is just and deserves all our support."

Steve McKee

"Be brave and stand up to bullying managers and bosses to say that workers deserve a decent wage, no job cuts and decent working conditions."

Gemma Short

"Keep up the fight! The actions of workers in the RMT have been inspiring and have led by example for workers across the UK."

Seb Klier

PROTEST: SUPPORT TUBE CLEANERS!

Wednesday 17 June, 09:30

Join RMT members outside City Hall (nearest station: London Bridge) during Mayor's Question Time, to demand a living wage for cleaners.

NICARAGUA BENEFIT GIG

Saturday 13 June, 20:00, Brixton Jamm

Live Acts - Oggie, Red Venom and Melody Boytoy - On the Decks Dirty Needlez DJs from www.flavourradio.com - Skelly B and Locky Stylez with MC Flowz. Proceeds will help Nicaragua's Linking Young Trade Unionists Project.

Join 

- Get a form from your local RMT rep
- Phone 0800-376-3706
- Join online: www.rmt.org.uk/join