



Solidarity Forever

PUTTING WORKERS FIRST NOT BOSSES OR BUREAUCRATS

ACROSS LONDON IWW IS GROWING, ORGANISING FIGHTING BACK!

The Industrial Workers of the World is the fastest growing union in London and has doubled its membership in a mere six months.

This exceptional growth can be explained by one simple fact – the IWW is fighting and against the odds winning for workers! In the City of London, Canary Wharf and the University districts the IWW Cleaners and Allied Grades branch has been at the forefront of an exciting organising drive. Ordinary workers and unpaid volunteers are taking the organising forward.

When the economic crisis began some union bureaucrats lectured us 'in a recession you keep your head down!' The IWW has proven this a misguided recipe for disaster that has seen those unions abandon cleaners whilst our industrial union has grown. The chronicle of IWW campaigns includes:

- At Heron Tower in the City IWW secured the London Living wage and justice for victimised workers.

- At the Guildhall after months of militant protests, managers responsible for abuse of cleaners were removed, nepotistic practices ended. A campaign for the London Living Wage is to be re-launched.

- At Mcgrigors, Old Bailey the IWW protests forced cleaning bosses to respect workers rights, safety and proper maternity leave.

- In a stunning victory at Exchange Tower in Canary Wharf, the IWW defied intimidation by the agents Cushman & Wakefield and won the London Living Wage of £8.30 p.h after a decade on poverty wages!

- At NTT communications Tower Hill, IWW defeated efforts to victimise the whole workforce securing their jobs and better pay and conditions.

- At Thompson Reuters in Canary Wharf, an international campaign has achieved the 'transfer' of management thugs responsible for threatening cleaners who asked for a pay rise, the IWW is pushing towards the Lon-



don Living Wage.

- At Bloomberg, in the City, a campaign halted the victimisation of an IWW activist, all disciplinary action was dropped and her suspension lifted.

- At St Georges, University of London in Tooting IWW cleaners have been resisting efforts to cut their pay and conditions.

The IWW has also achieved justice for a large number of individual workers through legal action and representation against companies and feral managers. The message being sent is clear – the arrogant disregard for workers rights that characterises the cleaning industry will not be tolerated where the IWW is organised. The IWW is showing that if workers organise collectively, show solidarity and adopt militant methods then gains can be made.

Jackie IWW Union Representative says she joined because 'I think it's a union that get's results for its members and because its grass roots based, there is no bureaucracy to contend with and also its not affiliated to the TUC or any political party.' Alba a cleaner in Victoria says 'the IWW is the best union it got my problems resolved; the unity of union is

the force to achieve this.' Etelvina a cleaner in the City considers that 'our union is strength of its own'.

Alberto IWW Cleaners Branch Secretary says the message from the recent campaign is that: 'We are not slaves, cleaning companies treat workers like slaves putting them in chains of fear and intimidation to achieve monetary gains. We are in the 21st century and we must break these chains and show to them that the human being is more important than profit.'

The recent campaigns of the cleaners have impressed other workers who have joined IWW, Kylie a bus driver says the 'management want more and more, but give us nothing in return. In IWW we are all workers and when something happens everyone will rally around and help no matter where you work'. The IWW is a small union, with little resources, we may not have the money to match the employers but we do have our passion for justice, our ability to organise, our solidarity with each other. The next period is going to be tough for working class people. Getting organised will be key to achieving workplace justice - in the words of the old trade union chant: *The workers united can never be defeated.*

LONDON BUSES OLYMPIC 500 CAMPAIGN

PHONEY WAR OR BATTLE FOR WAGES?



With over ten-thousand voting in favour of a ballot on industrial action, Unite the union has raised stakes in the campaign to secure a £500 bonus payment for the 28,000 bus workers in London. The demand for the bonus is just. The increased revenue the bus companies will make during the Olympics will more than cover the cost of a bonus in recognition of the even more stress and demands placed on bus workers. However, this issue raises far wider questions. The campaign has placed on the agenda the more important issue of the steady deterioration of bus workers wages and working conditions.

London Busworkers are not stupid. The call for a one off bonus cannot conceal the fact that for years the employers have been on the offensive whilst the largest union on the buses put up little resistance. Everyone knows that pay and conditions compared to other transport workers, especially on the tube, have grown worse. A number of studies comparing bus drivers' salaries have shown a significant deterioration in real wages between 2008 and 2012. The achievement of the bonus will be great, but once the Olympics are over the situation will be as bad as before the games.

The Olympic 500 campaign states bus workers should be treated the same as other transport workers. The question is why is it the train drivers union ASLEF can get a deal for a £1000 Bonus on the tube? Why have RMT secured a bonus of up to £2,500 for workers on the Docklands Light Railway, £500 for Network Rail and £600 on London Overground? It is because the employers respect these unions; it is because they have repeatedly stood up for their members. It is a different story on the buses.

When RMT rep's Eamonn Lynch and Arwyn Thomas were sacked RMT responded with industrial and legal action to get the victimised rep's reinstated. In contrast, when Abdul Omer Mohsin the Unite convenor on Sovereign was victimised in March 2010, Unite refused to hold a strike ballot despite workplace votes supporting action. Employers see such retreats as a green light to press ahead with attacks.

Since the London wide strike on pay in 2008 was called off, there has been pay deals that have been beneath inflation or amounted to a pay freeze – that is pay cuts in real terms.

The sacked Sovereign convenor had negotiated a pay deal on parity with London United that would have seen a £4,000 pa increase over the following years. After he was dismissed, Unite Regional Industrial Officer Wayne King

agreed to the annulment of the deal. When Sovereign drivers voted to strike against the 2011 pay offer the same union bureaucrat refused to announce or implement the ballot result due on 27th December 2011. At Metroline the same month the Boxing Day pay deal saw drivers suffer a 28.2% pay cut compared to what they were paid in Boxing Day in 2010.

Meanwhile workers are constantly being divided into different pay and conditions. On Stagecoach, drivers are on four different rates, none of them any good. Metroline imposed

two-year contracts on new starters from 1st January 2012 on £9.50 per-hour less than existing drivers. The companies are seeking to squeeze out those on better pay. Metroline just ignored the recognised union who withheld this information. No wonder Jaspal Singh CEO of Metroline can boast of the 'close and supportive working relationship with UNITE the Union'.

RMT have refused to accept the Bonus offered because management want to link it to worsening the conditions of tube-workers. The largest union on the buses refuse to link improving conditions to the campaign for a bonus!

At the UNITE London bus workers conference in February which (excluded any critics) a leading official said - 'if we don't get this right we are in trouble'. It is worrying that such officials see the issue as one of an apparatus interested in self-preservation instead of promoting members interests. Now the same bureaucrats who oversaw years of degradation of conditions are declaring 'London's bus workers have been treated as second-citizens for too long.'

Whatever the motives of union bureaucrats if they are prepared to launch a fight for a bonus then it is to be welcomed. However, they should not take bus workers for fools. If UNITE is serious about taking on a well-organised block of bus companies, TfL and the government then it should stop attacking other unions and support a united campaign run from the bottom up with all workers full participation.

Furthermore, what is most important is not just a one-off-bonus, but the desperate need for a London wide wage campaign, around a comprehensive claim for what is necessary to lead a decent life. To achieve this means recognising we cannot rely on stooges and bureaucrats, we can no longer continue on the same old way, we need an effective independent union that can stand up for bus workers interests.



ORGANISING THE UNORGANISED ABANDONED AND BETRAYED



BESNA IS DEAD

LONG LIVE THE RANK AND FILE!



The controversial Building Engineering Services National Agreement, triggered more than six months of angry protests from electricians, and construction workers. The attempt to impose this attack on their pay and working condition was defeated and officially dropped. This marks one of the biggest victories for workers in construction for many years, writing exclusively for *Solidarity Forever* **BRIAN HIGGINS** a leading militant and veteran of struggles in construction tells of the story of this fight.

At the beginning of August last year site electricians [nicknamed sparks] and other trades covered by the Joint Industry Board [JIB] agreement between Unite and Electrical Contractors in the building industry were told eight of the firms who were party to the JIB had broken away from it. And that that these firms were going to impose a new contract on wages and conditions on the sparks and other trades who worked for them. They also gave these workers an ultimatum that if they didn't sign the new contract, which included de-skilling and 35% wage cuts, they would be sacked. Workers then found out the new contract would be part of a new agreement, between the eight breakaway firms!, and it's called BESNA.

The huge multi national construction company Balfour Beatty, who have a subsidiary named Balfour Beatty Electrical Services [BBES], were the main movers in this attack on the JIB. Indicating if this rogue group of electrical contractors could force these savage wage cuts and destruction of working conditions on sparks, who are traditionally the most militant and well organised group of building workers in the construction industry. This would open the door for all building employers to do the same to the much more numerical trades like brickies and carpenters and other occupations.

Rank & file take the initiative

The sparks had been forced onto the frontline to defend wages and conditions. They were also extremely angry and rather than wait for or rely on construction fulltime union officials [FTOs], whose history of selling out was legend, they

decided to do something about this themselves. On 13 August They held a huge mass meeting in London and elected a National R&F Action Committee and also called on Unite to organise a ballot of all construction section members with a view to strike action to defend the JIB. They didn't and seriously dragged their feet.

The R&F didn't hang around to see if there would be a ballot or not and set about demonstrating and picketing outside sites where BBES and other rogue firms were working in London and then further afield. They also elected action committees in London, Manchester, Newcastle and other cities in England. Workers came out in sympathy at the huge Grangemouth site in Scotland and other jobs there and also Conoco on Teeside plus Radcliffe Power Station in Nottingham and the Lindsey refinery in Lincolnshire and Saltend site in Hull.

Unite officials knew they had to do something to get a toehold and organised a ballot of members who worked for BBES. 81% voted in favour of strike action. BBES just threatened to go to the High Court in London for an injunction under the notorious anti union laws. Unite took fright [FTOs with their salaries, pensions, cars and often very generous expenses have a lot more to lose than rank and file members] and cancelled the democratic 81% vote and said they would organise another ballot. The employers must've been cock a hoop. This was also meant to disrupt the very serious momentum the rank and file had built up in the months leading up to Xmas. It didn't. Instead it just made them angrier and they stepped up their action after the Xmas/New Year break.

BBES go to the High Court

Unite held another ballot of members with BBES. The result was announced on February 2nd. Again a large majority voted for industrial action. BBES went to the High Court this time to seek an injunction to overturn ballot result.

There then followed this rapid and exciting series of events. Wednesday 15th February – It was reported the Teamsters union of America and other unions, including building labourers one, demonstrated outside the office of Balfour Beatty's subsidiary Parson Brinckhoff in New York. A message was also relayed to BB that if this attack on the JIB didn't stop then the teamsters would have no option but to get involved in solidarity with their brothers in Unite! What a tremendous display of international workers' solidarity! 16th February – Judge [who elected him?] decided in favour of ballot result. 17th February – BBES announce they are withdrawing from BESNA. Effectively sounding the death knell. 20th February – NG Bailey announce withdrawal. 23rd February – the others left in BESNA declared they are also withdrawing. Victory was secured! What a magnificent workers' struggle and tremendous result. ALL WORKERS & TRADE UNIONISTS CAN TAKE HEART FROM THIS! AND FOR OUR LATIN AMERICAN SISTERS AND BROTHERS. VENCEREMOS!!

Struggle not over

Although a battle of huge importance, particularly in the building industry, has been won this [class] war continues. The rank and file are well aware Unite FTOs are more than capable of negotiating and agreeing to wage rates and terms and

conditions in the new JIB deal which will favour the employers, including BESNA lot who'll be thirsting for revenge, and amount to a defeat for the workers and all but cancel out the tremendous victory. To prevent this happening the rank and file insisted R&F delegates must be involved in any and all negotiations over a new JIB deal and that there is a vote of the whole membership on any 'final' offer by the employers. The union has agreed to R&F delegates being involved in negotiations. The R&F National Action Committee in consultation with area committees and meetings have come up with a set of policies they state must be the basis of any new deal.

All site workers can benefit

The sparks and others involved in this truly heroic workers' struggle and magnificent victory knew and declared they were fighting for the wage rates and conditions of all site workers and that if they lost building employers would cut loose on all other trades and occupations. Now we must get together on the sites and in the unions and form one huge United Front R&F Organisation for all site workers, union or no union, which will organise and fight to improve the safety and wages and conditions of all workers on site and ensure we are all treated with the dignity and respect our labour and lives deserve and not he utter contempt building employers treat us with at present.

**UNITED WE STAND TALL
DIVIDED WE FALL!**



Justice for Bloomberg Cleaners

The cleaning contractor OCS who employ cleaners at the Bloomberg HQ in the City of London victimised IWW activist Isabel and intimidated other workers to prevent them becoming organised. Problems began at Bloomberg after cleaner signed a petition protesting changes to their contract, hours of work and the threat of redundancies. They asked for a meeting with their employer.

In response the managers began intimidating the workers in order to impose their draconian changes. They singled out Isabel after manager Andy Kenwright declared he *'Was made aware of Isabel approaching staff to join a union'*.

According to the minutes of an OCS management meeting, it is recorded that *'Juan informed to keep an eye on her and monitor her activity'*. Isabel was suspended and they began disciplinary proceeding for 'misconduct' – her offence is *'speaking negatively about the Company'* and holding *'meetings with the staff to encourage them to join the union'*.

IWW wrote to OCS demanding justice and gave notice we would mount a defence campaign. IWW held a militant protest at the HQ of Bloomberg with many union members and fellow workers attending in solidarity. After this OCS did meet the IWW and within several days Isabel was told she

'had no case to answer', her suspension was lifted and she returned to work. Once again solidarity is the key to achieve workplace justice. IWW is now defending other workers at Bloomberg against the bosses. One IWW has member has been suspended after a manager followed him to the toilet! – He is accused of spending too long in a cubicle. Considering the bullshit that emerges from the bosses they are in no position to judge the natural acts of workers! IWW is defending the fellow worker accordingly and will take direct action if necessary.

Contact Us

INDUSTRIAL WORKERS OF THE WORLD
INDUSTRIAL WORKERS OF GREAT BRITAIN EST. 1909



Solidarity Forever is published by the Industrial Workers of the World London Regional Committee, which coordinates the activities of the **Cleaning & Allied Industries Branch, Bus Workers' Branch, Transport for London Branch**

and members organised in a wide range of other industries.

**Join the union in a class by itself
— the working class**

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The daily struggle to make ends meet for working class people



No hardships, however, for the super-rich



CHRIS FORD

IWW LONDON REGIONAL SECRETARY

London is tale of two cities: rich and poor. One of the wealthiest cities in the world it is also one of the most unequal.

Banks in the City have made billions, the four biggest alone announced a combined profit of £24.2 billion. The very richest 1,000 people in Britain, most of whom live in or around London, have assets estimated to be worth £335 billion and rising. In contrast, London has some of the poorest boroughs in the country. One in five Londoners earn less than the London Living Wage of £8.30 per-hour. One million people live in low-income households, 40% of Black Minority and Ethnic Londoners are in this situation. In Tower Hamlets, which will host the Olympics, 52% of children live in poverty. For women London is officially the worst place in the country to live, poverty, unemployment, pay inequality; child-care costs and sexual assault are all higher in London than anywhere else. Babies born in Southwark, Croydon, Haringey and Harrow are twice as likely to die before their 1st birthday compared to those born in Kingston and Richmond.

This inequality is a scandal screaming for justice.

ALICE IN WONDERLAND ECONOMY

The gap between the rich and poor is not an act of nature; our DNA does not include a rich or poor gene. Social inequality is caused by man-made social, political and economic structures. The existing capitalist system does not and cannot work in the interests of the majority; it is socially divisive creating a class division which cuts across society. Maximising profits is at the centre of the government's austerity strategy not restoring growth and well-being. These are crazy economics straight from Through the Looking-Glass, where the White Queen offered Alice to work for two-pence pence a week promising 'jam tomorrow and jam yesterday – but never jam today'. The government hope profits will recover faster than wages and one day in the future the economy will revive. In the meantime, austerity continues with reckless disregard for the well-being of the mass of the population.

JUDASES HEADING THE LABOUR MOVEMENT

Faced with such social evils why has the election been a boring personality competition between populist politicians. The reason is the politicians, Labour, Tory, Lib-Dem etc, actually have few fundamental differences. They all agree on sustaining the present system, even if they disagree on how to repair it. Yet any sane assessment would conclude the system is beyond repair and needs to be replaced by

one fit for human beings. Millions want a better society and since the start of the Great Recession there has been growing struggles by workers and radical youth

Yet paradoxically radical change seems a distant prospect.

The majority of the leaders of the labour movement - Labour Party and TUC have long since abandoned seeing themselves as part of an effort to reconstruct society. This is not only a view of the union bureaucracy but the majority of workers; many want to resist austerity and are sick of the recession but do not see a way out beyond what employers and politicians are offering.

There are many reasons for this situation today. The goals, methods and achievements of the labour movement before the 1980's, the wide support for radical ideas such as workers control are unknown to most workers today. It seems like a different world. The historic defeats suffered by the movement under the Thatcher government, the imposition of stifling anti-union laws, have left a negative legacy. For decades the establishment has used every opportunity to persuade people 'there is no alternative', politicians are happy to blame the banks but never the system. The failure of Soviet style state-capitalism helped undermine confidence that an alternative to capitalism was possible, state capitalism was a rotten system whose 'communist' ruling elite easily swapped their clothes for private-capitalism. On the other hand Labour Party style social-democracy embraced the same neo-liberal model of capitalism as the Tories. Such failures of "socialist politics" have helped discredit not only the name of socialism (and made communism a dirty word) but also the whole idea of radical change itself.

The TUC and union bureaucrats accept what exists and are reconciled to their place within capitalism seeing their role as bargaining (or pleading) with employers to improve conditions. Unions like UNISON and UNITE bankroll the Labour Party asking for little and getting next to nothing in return. Abandoning any pretence of having a goal for an alternative future has not made such unions more effective in the present.

PUTTING MILLIBAND BEFORE THE MEMBERS.

During the last Labour government, most unions failed to rebuild and renovate to meet the challenges of our age of global capitalism. Busy managing discontent and advocating partnership with bosses, the bureaucracy, that layer of unelected/employed officials, full-time officers and senior convenors, consolidated its position. Whilst bureaucracy grew membership declined; only 21% of waged workers in London are in unions. This has helped increase social inequality as employers' authority has gone unchallenged.

The current government and employers hard-line approach has disoriented the TUC and union bureaucrats. They responded by trying to talk them out of it, then under pressure, they called some

mass protests and a co-ordinated national strike. But the TUC and UNISON leaders quickly gave up the fight in defence of pensions. Now union opposition is fragmented without clear strategy. For the Labour Party leaders strikes and protests are an embarrassment, and union bureaucrats are happy to keep opposition within limits that will not harm Labour's image. It is not a coincidence that unions not attached to the Labour Party like RMT fight more effectively than those who put Milliband before their members. Overall the labour movement has failed to respond to the employers and their politicians with an equally resolute defence of workers interests. The Labour Party and TUC leaders are the Judas Iscariots of the working class.

DON'T MOAN ORGANISE

There is a need to recognise we cannot carry on in the same old way. The separation of more radical unions like RMT and the Fire Brigades Union from the Labour Party are signs of a process of change in the movement that needs to go much further. The current labour movement that took shape at the start of the 20th century is not eternal, a different form of movement existed before it and the movement can be reconstituted again for the 21st century.

Where will a new labour movement come from:

The labour movement as presently constituted cannot be relied upon to serve workers interests; unions can become effective, fighting unions, only if transformed by the members that can instill in them a new radical purpose.

It is not guaranteed all existing unions can be transformed. It is foolish to wait to be rescued by union reform movements. In the majority of workplaces, there is no union or sign of one coming. The space exists to build new independent unions, organised industrially and not crippled by bureaucracy, corruption and collaboration with the bosses.

We are not prisoners; it is entirely possible to fight employers independently of the old union officialdom. Restoring that spirit and confidence to act freely rather than wait for permission is what is needed. More than anywhere it is from independent organising and struggles that a new movement will emerge - there is nothing bureaucrats and bosses hate more than workers they cannot control. We can also take hope from the fact the working class, especially in London has changed – a whole generation has grown up who did not experience the defeats under Thatcher. The workers are strengthened by a new generation of migrant workers. These workers are not frozen stiff by the politics of fear bread into the movement by those who led us to defeat in the past.

Inspired by these new possibilities the Industrial Workers of the World is forging ahead on the principle 'organise the unorganised, the abandoned and betrayed'.

ABOUT THE IWW

Why the IWW?

We are a grassroots and democratic union helping to organise all workers in all workplaces. The IWW differs from traditional trade unions. We believe that workers have greater voice if we are organised within our own industries. For example, teachers, cleaners and secretaries who work in a school should be classed as education workers and all be in the same union. Furthermore, unions in one industry are far stronger if they are in the same organisation as all other industrial unions. Our aim is to see society re-organised to meet the interests of all people, and not just shareholders and corporations.

We are NOT:

Full of stifling bureaucracy or linked to any political party or group.
Led by fat cat salary earners who carry out deals with bosses behind your back.
Going to sell you services, life insurance or credit cards.

We are:

Led by membership. We make all decisions and we all have the final say.
For uniting all workers across trades, industries and countries.
Able to offer practical support for members in their workplace.
Flexible so you are still a member even when you change job or contract.

Who is the IWW for?

We are for ALL workers who do not have the power to hire or fire. This also includes workers who are retired, students, unemployed, part-time, temporary or those working at home. Workers who are members of other unions are also welcome.

O IWW

Dlaczego IWW?

Jesteśmy społecznym i demokratycznym związkiem który organizuje pomoc dla wszystkich pracowników we wszystkich miejscach pracy. IWW różni się od tradycyjnych związków zawodowych. Wierzymy, że pracownicy mają większe prawo głosu, jeśli są oni zorganizowani w tej samej branży. Na przykład sprzątaczkę, sekretarkę i nauczyciela, którzy pracują w szkole, powinni być klasyfikowani jako pracownicy oświaty i konsekwentnie należeć do tej samego związku. Ponadto, wierzymy że związki, które przynależą do jednej organizacji są silniejsze. Naszym celem jest przede wszystkim sprostać potrzebom każdego człowieka a nie tylko korporacji i biznesow.

Nie jesteśmy:

Grupa pełna przytłaczającej biurokracji i nie jesteśmy związani z żadną partią polityczną
Grupa która ma układy z grubymi rybami, które działają za twoimi plecami.
Grupa która chce sprzedać twoje usługi, ubezpieczenia na życie lub karty kredytowe.

Jesteśmy:

Prowadzeni przez równych sobie członków, podejmujemy wspólnie decyzje i każdy ma prawo głosu. Grupa która ma na celu połączenie wszystkich pracowników z różnych zawodów, branż i krajów Jesteśmy w stanie zaoferować praktyczną pomoc dla wszystkich członków nawet w ich miejscu pracy. Elastyczni co oznacza że jeśli zmienisz pracę lub umowę, nie stracisz członkostwa

Dla kogo jest IWW?

Jesteśmy dla wszystkich pracowników, którzy nie mają decydującego głosu. Dotyczy to również pracowników, którzy są na emeryturze, studentów, bezrobotnych, osób pracujących na kontraktach lub osób pracujących w domu. Pracownicy, którzy są członkami innych związków są również mile widziani.



THOMPSON REUTERS CLEANERS CAMPAIGN

DEFEAT THUG BOSSES DEMAND THE LIVING WAGE

The IWW has been engaged in a major international campaign to win the London Living Wage for cleaners employed by Rentokil-Initial at the Thomson Reuters office in Canary Wharf.

What began as a campaign for a pay rise then became also a fight against some of the worse cases of intimidation and abuse of workers the IWW has encountered in the cleaning industry.

IWW launched the campaign with an Early Day Motion 2679 presented in the House of Commons submitted by John McDonnell MP calling for the London Living Wage at Reuters. IWW cleaners then began collecting signatures for a petition from fellow workers at Reuters. The local bosses of Rentokil-Initial responded furiously. IWW member Valeryus was threatened with dismissal. Then on January 31st 2012, a meeting was called of all cleaners. The workers were spoken to like slaves, told they were 'stupid' and threatened if they asked for a pay rise Thomson Reuters would end the contract and would ensure cleaning staff had their wages cut and suffer job losses. The cleaners were forced to sign a 'form' that if they presented a petition for a wage increase they will be committing 'gross conduct', and will be suspended and dismissed.

In the past, some cleaners had been in another union who did nothing for them. Now as members of they were ready to fight back. Some courageously recorded the intimidation by the bosses

and sought the solidarity. IWW representatives met with the HR Director of Rentokil-Initial on February 10th. Our union demanded the removal of the feral managers at Reuters and moves to get the London Living Wage. Despite assurances, this did not happen.

Starting on Friday March 16th at the Aldgate offices of Reuters the IWW launched our international campaign for justice for the cleaners. IWW members from the London Busworkers branch, General Members Branch and others from London Region joined members of the IWW Cleaners and Allied Grades Branch. Speakers included John McDonnell MP, John Maloney –PCS DfT Group Secretary. Tremendous support was provided to the IWW campaign by the National Union of Journalists.

Then on Tuesday 20th at Reuters Old Street office IWW was joined by fellow trade unionists of the RMT and ASLEF on a further demonstration. Joined this time by a protest by the Autonomous Workers Union at the Reuters office in Kyiv, Ukraine. Further actions took place in Paris and by the German section of the IWW in Munich.

Rentokil-Initial management now removed one of the managers at Reuters, a fellow worker

who had been suspended was returned to work and disciplinary action dropped

Further discussions began between Rentokil-Initial management and IWW on Tuesday 27th March which are ongoing looking at the achievement of the London Living Wage for cleaners at Reuters. The IWW was informed that another of the management thugs was being 'transferred'. Further indications were given by the employer with regard to new moves to achieve the London Living Wage for the cleaners. IWW whilst welcoming these is also cautious, as we will not agree a wage pay rise which is paid for by 'efficiency' saving meaning cuts to our members pay or conditions.

It is noticeable that Thomson Reuters has sought to wash its hands of responsibility for the conduct of managers on their premises and sought to avoid revising their contract terms to lift the cleaners out of poverty wages. The IWW however is determined to achieve justice whether it is paid by the cleaning contractor or Reuters directly.

When subjecting cleaners to a tirade of abuse the bosses' said the cleaners 'were living in a dream world'. Who is dreaming now!



From left to right— IWW Cleaner Branch Secretary Alberto Durango speaking, IWW members from Reuters Canary Wharf office, John Maloney PCS, John McDonnell MP, Glenroy Watson RMT London (LUL) Region, RMT cleaners reps, leaflet of IWW Germany, Autonomous Workers Union picket at Reuters in Kyiv (left)

Interview with a London Hotel Cleaner:

Wages are a mockery to the working class

What do you think are the main issues of concern for workers?

A. Poor working conditions such as: low wages, psychological abuse, excessive work load for a person (one cleaner has to work for 2/3 people). Etc

Is bullying by management a problem?

A. Absolutely -

Is the disciplinary procedure used to bully workers?

A. Yes -

Are complaints by workers dealt with fairly?

A. Never

Do you think cleaning companies discriminate and exploit migrant workers?

A. Definitely -

What do you think about the wages?

A. That is a pittance, is a mockery to the working class -

Do you think the company is making you pay for the economic crisis?

A. What Crisis? "the crisis" is an excuse to exploit even more the people, the rich people take an advantage to being richer and let

the working class into poverty -

Do you think the system of Transfer between companies is a big problem?

A. yes, is when the companies take advantage to change the workers conditions, so it's very important the workers know their rights -

What should be done about it?

A The workers must be organized and educated in order to be able to defend our rights, as workers. It's also very important to give solidarity to our colleagues, regardless of a race, colour or religion.

Do you think you are safe at work? A. Not at all, I have not received any kind of training -

Do you get proper breaks and facilities?

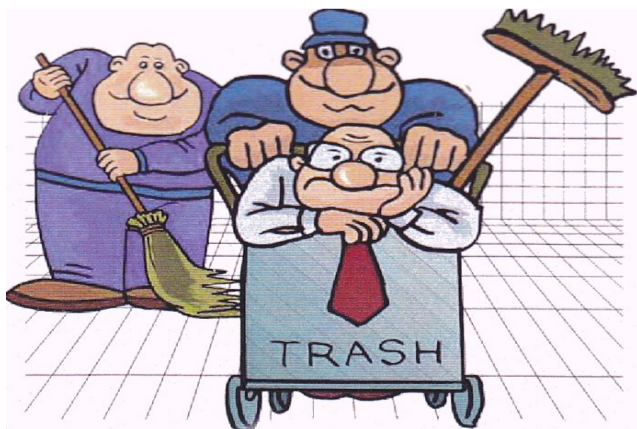
A.No, not really -

What should the priority be of our union? A. Educate workers in employment law and English language.

Give the workers power and confidence to be owners of their own decisions. Support workers in all the ways needed.

CLEAN UP YOUR WORKPLACE GET ORGANISED.

Sick of low pay, bullying by the bosses, long hours and rotten conditions? Then you need to join the IWW. The Cleaners and Allied Grades Branch meets on the first Saturday of every month and hold regular training, educational and social events, from English language classes to Samba. Contact the IWW Cleaners Branch at londonregion@iww.org.uk



CLEANERS CHARTER FOR DIGNITY AND RESPECT AT WORK

- The London Living Wage (£8.30 per-hour(as a minimum at entry, rising to at least £10 per hour at today's prices
- A pay increase each year and every year
- A proper career path and encouragement to apply for other jobs in the industry you are located
- A pension to ensure dignity in old age
- Additional payments as compensation for unsociable hours and bank holidays
- A minimum of 28 days basic annual leave plus bank holidays
- A fair sick pay scheme
- A 35-hour week pro-rata without loss of pay
- Clean and properly equipped staff rooms, changing rooms, showers and decent shelter
- Regular provision of uniforms and safety clothing and equipment
- Freedom from discrimination, bullying and intimidation - no 'third party' sackings
- Direct employment, an end to contracting-out of cleaning
- No to the 'right of management to manage', full consultation and agreement with IWW union representatives before changes at work
- For democracy where we work through workers control and self-management.



The magazines of the bus companies claim to speak for bus workers, but you never hear the real voice of workers. **Solidarity Forever** conducted some interviews with drivers from a cross section of companies in London here is what they said un-edited about the companies, the conditions and trade union organisation.

MYTH AND REALITY OF WORKING ON THE BUSES

**Metroline
Driver**

What do you think are the main issues of concern for workers?

Their Union and its submissiveness in relation to the firm, pressure at work from management which has been constantly rising

during the last few years, the number of working hours and driving hours, working conditions, conduct of disciplinary procedure and general attitude of management towards the drivers.

Is bullying by management a problem?

Well yes, I think they are on a power trip to impress their superiors or score points.

Is the disciplinary procedure used to bully workers?

That is a Fact, mainly the managers try to circumvent procedures for the sake of time and the workers representation suffers as a consequence. Moreover, the employees are not allowed to appeal against the first stage of disciplinary procedure which has significant consequence and is not right.

Are complaints by workers dealt with fairly?

Of course not, there is proof that in many cases the chain of command protects its subordinates even when clearly at fault.

Do you think bus companies discriminate and exploit migrant workers?

I believe management use the migrant's lack of English as a weapon against them in disciplinary cases. These employees are also not aware their rights so for the company they are good material for perfect workers. They can work to the dead line 12 hours per day 6 days per week, say nothing, being kicked in their backside, and if something goes wrong can be easily sacked as hundreds of new ones are waiting ready to work for less.

What do you think about the wages for drivers?

Wages are far too low. The average driver works around 50 hours per week without overtime. This gives around £28 000 P/A. If this amount of time is reduced to 40 hours as in most of the others industries we would get circa £22000 PA. How does it compare to a London Underground Station Assistant 35 hours per week £27000 P/A? Can you compare level of responsibility apart of money and length of working hours and holiday entitlement of these two jobs? Summing up I think that, we should get decent pay working 38-40 hours per week.

Railway workers will get an Olympic Bonus – what will you get?

As far as I am aware we will not get anything.

Do you think the company is making you pay for the economic crisis?

They say that the company must save because of the crisis. They treat us as one of the aspects of the saving. For example, employing new drivers they offer them lower rates so we have a few types of drivers - cheap and more expensive ones. Automatically old drivers are more vulnerable for attacks of the management, because they become too expensive for the firm. The company also uses the fact that many drivers are required to do long hours to earn decent wages so there is no need to employ more people which significantly reduces the firm's costs. On the other hand, drivers think in a

money-overtime-minded way that they are happy to do an overtime and that this is only way to earn like the other people without being ashamed by amount of money we bring home every week. We do not think globally and we do not believe that we can get a decent 40 hours per week wages. Well, good for the company...

Do you think the system of Transfer between companies is a big problem?

Yes. To my knowledge many people who want to go to another company with the route are refused to do so.

What should be done about it?

People should always have right of choice. Especially that in this particular case- Metroline has just lost 3 or 4 routes- it should be also in the company interest to naturally decrease number of employees by letting them go. The reason why the firm opposes this is the Olympic Games I think. They probably need extra staff to be able to cover. What is going to happen after the Olympic Game?

Do you think you are safe at work?

Driver's levels of Safety are different from my company levels, their level is what VOSA tells them and anything else get done if they have the time for it. For example: I recently found out from one engineer that they have done a servicing of a type of bus wrongly for over 4 years and now they have done a course to rectify it and this was related to heating, where drivers were asking for heating in the cab late at night and engineers couldn't provide it. In addition, comfort of our cabs is lower than zero. Many buses are too small. It is difficult to get in and get off. No space for your bag and jacket.

There are many sharp metal edges. It is easy to get hurt when passing in and out. Some buses have manual destination blinds that are hard to work and changing them you end up with your fingers being cut. Such rigid types of driver's seats are beyond imagination in most of European countries. The vibration from the suspension - very often spent and in need of immediate repair- goes straight into our spines. Volume level of the broadcast of the radio announcements along with all sorts of noises, along with scratchy panels and noise of the street make you seek. I would not be surprised if some of us have hearing affected by this.

We do not know who is our health and safety representative, we do not know how and when this person was chosen, and we do not know if this person has any idea about health and safety issues in the workplace. I have never seen this person doing anything about my safety in the workplace for more than 6 years in service in my garage!

Are drivers disciplined for being injured at work?

OH Yes, in one case of a car hitting a bus from behind and as a result the bus driver was injured and was absent for a while and he was disciplined for that and got an award.

Do you get proper breaks and facilities?

No we do not. Many drivers who complete their breaks are more tired after than before they start their break. It is because of a lack of facilities where we could relax. At some routes drivers cannot use any facilities nearby. For example route 90 drivers have to walk quite far or travel by bus to the nearest decent facility, MacDonald's, coffee shop. To travel you need time but often we have only

40-60 minutes and we cannot be late. Sometimes drivers cannot travel they spend their time standing under open sky. A few months ago, toilets for the

drivers were closed for over a month due to some graffiti on the wall. My colleagues had to contact the local newspaper to get it sorted. At Brent Cross, we do not have a chance to buy a hot coffee from vending machine early in the morning or late at night. That is exploitation, mainly from IBUS controllers, according to VOSA if we are inside the 8.5 hour of service we should get at least 45 minutes break when in reality we get only 40 minutes. Sometimes we have more time allocated but if the bus is late then they will use that time. As an example if the duty card says that we have a break of 1 hour then if there is traffic IBUS will make us lose up to 20 minutes for the sake of mileage. Sometimes drivers have to walk to the facility from the bus and this is included in their break time. Other times drivers must take their bus to the place required by the company and bring it back after their brake...

The old union?

The UNITE is riding in tandem with the company. They have been doing it for many years and they got use to each other. UNITE forgot what their purpose is and who they work for. It is time to say goodbye, because we are not going to pay for an institution which overall works against our interest and shames us.

Does the union recognised by the company help workers?

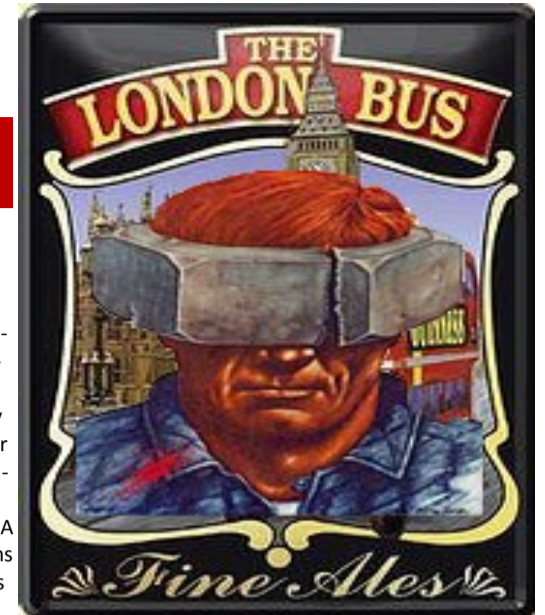
They seem to help to themselves and the company only.

Some say the old union is corrupt?

I do not know what is happening on higher level but in my garage the current union rep only works a few days per week. He never works weekends and most of the times when at work he walks around the garage shaking hands with everyone. When it comes to representation he is useless in opinion of many. At Crickwood garage things look quite the same. My colleagues say that their union rep plays with his telephone while representing someone in front of the manager. As far as I know union reps are paid in full for their 5 day rota plus money from the union, plus overtime which some of them do. This makes them the best earning drivers across their garages.

What should the priority be of the independent union?

They should be an alternative for workers. It is not possible for the company to choose or suggest any union for their employees. The independent union must educate and encourage people to get educated about their rights.



**Go Ahead-London
Driver**

What do you think are the main issues of concern for workers?

money, job security, re-

spect, "Better conditions" Bullying

Is bullying by management a problem?

Yes,

Is the disciplinary procedure used to bully workers?

Yes, they use every trick in the book in order to stop us from raising our voices and fight against injustice

Are complaints by workers dealt with fairly?

No, most of the times you find that they try to turn the complaint against you.

Do you think bus companies discriminate and exploit migrant workers?

Yes, no doubt about it, unfamiliar with the national language, laws and practice, and so less able than others to know and assert their rights. They may also face discrimination and racism, as well as being subject to unequal treatment at work and in their daily lives.

What do you think about the wages for drivers?

Not enough money, salary not keeping pace with the rising cost of living due to pay rises under inflation. A bus driver should earn min £30.000 a year not £26.000.

Railway workers will get an Olympic Bonus – what will you get?

Not sure, the so-called recognised Union mention £500, wouldn't hold my breath

Do you think the company is making you pay for the

economic crisis?

100% yes, claiming profits and still refuse to provide a decent pay rise.

Do you think the system of Transfer between companies is a big problem?

Yes, major problem that needs to be stopped.

What should be done about it?

Bus drivers to get paid the same (equal pay)

Do you think you are safe at work?

No, more needs to be done

Are drivers disciplined for being injured at work?

Technically yes, they try to dismiss us on medical grounds instead of helping us to recover.

Do you get proper breaks and facilities?

No, breaks sometimes are too short and facilities provide unhealthy food. Funny as companies put posters up advising drivers to eat healthy food but on their premises they serve unhealthy and sometimes rotten food.

Does the union recognised by the company help workers?

If they do, I am not aware of it

Some say the old union is corrupt?

I believe they are.

What should the priority be of the independent union? better wages, better conditions, job security, stop Bullying / Harassment, give our dignity back.

What do you think of the IWW bus workers Charter?

Excellent, keep it up.

Go Ahead-London

When this interview was conducted the fellow worker worked for First Bus, then it was announced the garage had been bought by Go Ahead group.

What do you think are the main issues of concern for workers?

Increasing degradation/ casualisation/ abuse of conditions of employment. *Bullying.* The whole privatised Bus system is rife with bullying.

Is the disciplinary procedure used to bully workers?

Yes

Are complaints by workers dealt with fairly? No

Do you think bus companies discriminate and exploit migrant workers? Of course

What do you think about the wages for drivers?

Rubbish but better than many jobs now.

Wages are now a third less than pre-privatisation [of the buses]

Railway workers will get an Olympic Bonus – what will you get?

A headache

Do you think the company is making you pay for the economic crisis?

Oh yes.

Transfer system?

I have worked for THREE companies in the last 15 months because of transfers.

Do you think the system of Transfer between companies is a big problem? Yes Health and Safety? A joke

Do you think you are safe at work? Only just

Are drivers disciplined for being injured at work? Yes

Do you get proper breaks and facilities? No

The old union?

Rubbish

Does the union recognised by the company help workers?

Not as much as it helps the company

Some say the old union is corrupt?

Why not say the truth?

An independent union

Good idea but not a new one

What should the priority be of the independent union?

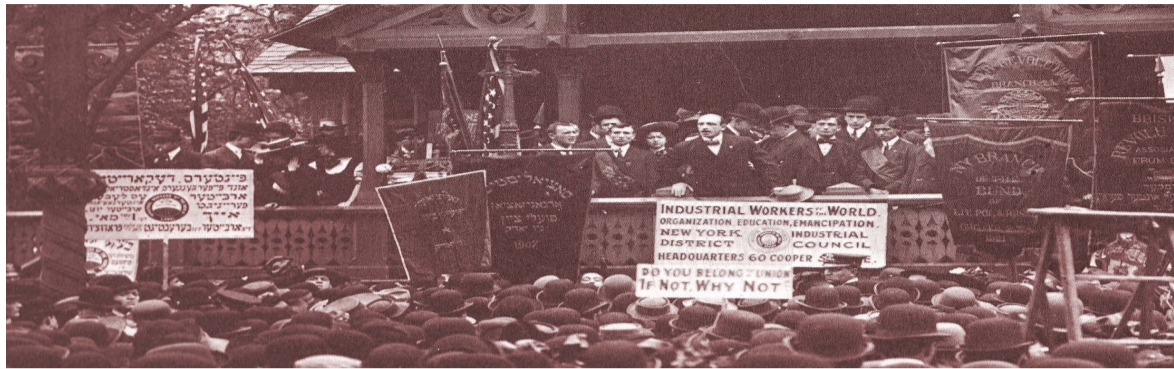
Find an issue all drivers in London can agree on e.g. One rate of pay for all Bus Drivers irrespective of company

What do you think of the IWW bus workers Charter?

Looks Good on Paper

IWW: 'RENEGADES', 'BREAKAWAY' OR PIONEERS

Some union bureaucrats unable to defend their own failures are seeking to discredit the Industrial Workers of the World, we have been branded 'renegades' and 'splitters'. Ironically the UNITE website has a rousing song of the IWW *The Ballad of Joe Hill* alongside recordings of verbal abuse against us. In fact we have split from nobody. The IWW was founded in 1905 in Chicago, in 1906 the British Advocates of Industrial Unionism founded the **Industrial Workers of Great Britain in 1909** as a branch of the IWW. The IWGB led 12,000 workers in one of the most important disputes in labour movement history – the strike at the Singer Sewing Machine Factory at Clydebank in 1911. IWGB was the first to challenge a major international corporation. Published below is the founding Constitution of our union and an extract from the manifesto issued after the strike by the IWGB Singers branch.



INDUSTRIAL WORKERS OF GREAT BRITAIN PREAMBLE TO THE CONSTITUTION

The working class and the employing class have nothing in common. There can be no peace so long as hunger and want are found among millions of working people and the few, who make up the employing class, have all the good things of life.

Between these two classes a struggle must go on until all the toilers come together on the political, as well as on the industrial field, and take and hold that which they produce by their labour through an economic organization of the working class, without affiliation to any political party.

The rapid gathering of wealth and the concentrating of the management of industries into fewer and fewer hands make the trade unions unable to cope with the ever-growing power of the employing class, because the trade unions foster a state of things which allows one set of workers to be pitted against another set of workers in the same industry, thereby helping defeat one another in wage wars. **The trade unions aid the employing class to mislead the workers into the belief that the working class have interests in common with their employers.**

These sad conditions can be changed and the interests of the working class upheld only by an organisation formed in such a way that all its members in any one industry, or in all industries, if necessary, cease work whenever a strike or lockout is on in any department thereof, thus making an injury to one an injury to all.

Therefore without endorsing any political party we unite under the following Constitution: -

RULES

1. The organisation shall be known as the 'Industrial Workers of Great Britain', forming one Recruiting Union composed of local recruiting branches such times as strength of numbers in given industries enables us to organise Industrial Unions as units of the 'Industrial Workers of Great Britain.'

2. Membership is open to all wage-earners who endorse the class basis and class purpose of the I.W.G.B who are not members of the police force.

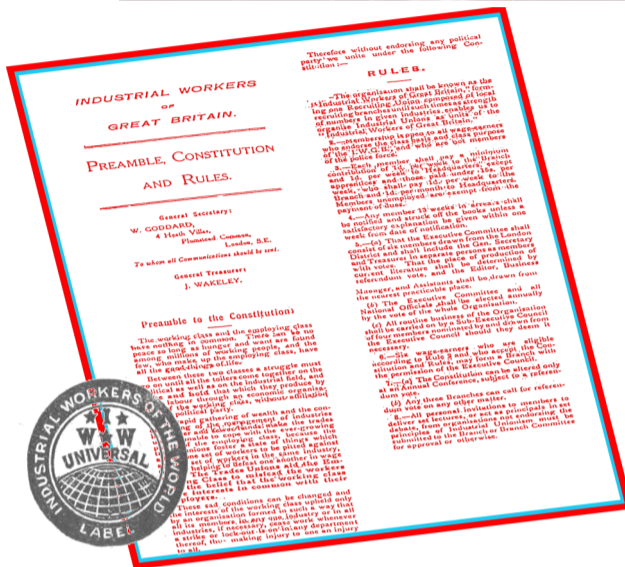
3. Each member shall pay a minimum contribution of 1d per week to Branch and 1d. per week to Headquarters, except apprentices and those paid under 15s per week who shall pay 1d per week and 1d per month to Headquarters. Members' unemployed are exempt from payment of dues.

4. Any member 13 weeks in arrears shall be notified and struck off the books unless a satisfactory explanation be given within one week from date of notification.

5. (a) That the Executive Committee shall consist of six members drawn from the London District and shall include the General Secretary and Treasurer in separate persons as members with votes. That the place of production of current literature shall be determined by referendum vote, and the Editor, Business Manager and Assistant shall be drawn from the nearest practicable place.

(b) The Executive Committee and all National Officials shall be elected annually by the vote of the whole organisation.

(c) All routine business of the organisation shall be carried out



by a Sub-Executive Council of four members nominated by and drawn from the Executive Council should they deem it necessary.

6. Six wage earners who are eligible according to Rule 2 who accept the Constitution and Rules may form a Branch with the permission of the Executive Council.

7. (a) The Constitution can be altered only by Annual Conference, subject to a referendum vote.

(b) Any three branches can call for a referendum vote on any other matter.

8. All personal invitations to members to deliver set lectures, or act as principals in set debate, from organisations not endorsing the principles of Industrial Unionism must be submitted to the Branch or Branch Committee for approval or otherwise.

THE KILBOWIE STRIKE AND ITS LESSONS

The recent strike in Singer's Factory at Kilbowie has caused more discussion throughout the Labour Movement than any of the numerous industrial disputes of the last ten or twenty years. The widespread interest which it evoked—not only in Britain but also in America and the Continent—the volume of comment which has been passed upon it, angry denunciation in many quarters, in others enthusiastic praise, have placed it in the History of Labour alongside of the Dockers' Strike of 1889, and the Engineers Lock-Out of 1897, events which, though they implicated a vastly greater number of workers than those concerned in [the] Singer's Strike, have this point in common with it, that they marked a new epoch in the Labour Movement, and introduced, for good or for ill, new principles and tactics into the conflict between capital and labour.

By demonstrating the fallacies and errors resident in old and trusted methods, they [Dockers and Engineers] proved the need for and gave birth to newer and better methods. The Dockers' Strike

laid the foundation of what was in the last decades of the Nineteenth Century known as the "New Trade Unionism." The defeat of the Engineers in 1897 revealed hitherto unsuspected weaknesses in the "New Trade Unionism" and its inability to face the improved organisation and tactics which the employers used against it.

Accordingly it gave rise to that wave of advanced thought—unfortunately focused almost entirely on political action—which has manifested itself so signally among the working class during the last ten years. The strike at Singer's Factory in Kilbowie has brought to light the existence of and the need for the new method of organisation: Industrial Unionism.

The defeat of this strike has brought in its train one result which was from the nature of things inevitable. In spite of the fact that, at the moment when the strike broke out, less than a tenth of the workers were members of the Singer Group of the Industrial Workers of Great Britain; in spite of the fact that of that small portion over five-sixths were members of only a few weeks' standing, and consequently while full of pluck and enthusiasm were acquainted only with the externals of industrialism, an attempt has been made, from various quarters, to lay the whole blame for the failure upon Industrial Unionism.

Opponents of Industrial Unionism, capitalists and official trade unionists, have not concealed their delight at the defeat of these thousands of oppressed and sweated workers, on the grounds that their failure was calculated to discredit the I.W.G.B. In addition to these, a number of men sympathetic to the new movement, who in their early enthusiasm, expected it to work miracles, have shown a tendency in the bitterness of defeat to indulge in angry recriminations or pessimistic criticisms of Industrial Unionism. The former we have no desire to conciliate. We have nothing to offer them but our hearty contempt, and accept their hostility to our movement and their mean gratification at the defeat of the Singer workers, as tributes to the integrity of the I.W.G.B. ...

We make our appeal not only to the Singer Workers, but to the whole working class. The lessons of the Kilbowie Strike are lessons for them too. Throughout all branches of industry, machinery and the divisions of labour are breaking down the trade divisions upon which trade unions are based, and are making this form of organisation more and more inadequate and more and more of an hindrance to working class progress. The tendency which has reached mature development in Kilbowie is at a more or less advanced stage in all departments of industry, and the merciless methods of exploitation and the reign of terror which the management of Singers has meted out to all efforts towards organisation, will be your fate tomorrow, unless through Industrial Unionism you organise yourselves as a class to resist it....We are confronted by a determined and vindictive attack upon the whole principle of organisation....The plot aims at reducing the workers to a mass of disorganised serfs, degraded and dehumanised instruments for producing wealth for others, incapable of helping each other or of offering the smallest resistance to the never-ending and ever-increasing robbery of the master class. We appeal to you to support us by studying industrialist principles and getting into line with the Industrial Workers of Great Britain.

Manifesto Issued by the Singers' Sewing Machine Workers' Group of The Industrial Workers of Great Britain

BUS DRIVERS SCORE LEGAL VICTORY AGAINST TRANSFER SYSTEM

A group of drivers have scored a major legal victory over the misapplication of the TUPE regulations by the London bus companies. For years, companies have told drivers their contract was with the company not the bus route. However, when routes came up for tendering and went to a new company, workers have been told they had no choice but to transfer to the new company. The system has been equally unfair to drivers who may wish to transfer but did not work in the route and have been prevented from exchanging with other drivers.

The drivers who worked for CentreWest, which ran the 414 bus route operated from its Westbourne Park depot were to be transferred to Abellio, which intended to run the service from its depot in Battersea. The drivers decided to put up a fight and eighty signed a petition demanding UNITE make a legal challenge – but it refused saying they would lose. Therefore, the workers organised them-

selves and got a solicitor who agreed there was scope under the TUPE regulations to challenge how they were being applied. UNITE now got a solicitor to come and speak to the workers at the garage—to tell them there was nothing could be done!

Five brave drivers took their claim to the Employment Tribunal stating they were being dismissed unfairly by being forced to transfer. The Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations (TUPE) is meant to protect workers contracts of employment when their company or work is taken over by a owner.

The Employment Tribunal judge ruled in the drivers favour finding that all the drivers had objections to the new location. It affected their travel and domestic arrangements. The new location would mean between 1 and 2 hours extra travelling per day. It was held by the Tribunal that there had been a substantial change to the employees' working conditions to their material detriment under Reg 4(9) of

TUPE. The move was additionally a repudiatory breach of contract (in that a mobility clause in the employment contract did not extend to the Battersea location). Therefore the drivers were also constructively dismissed. It followed that the dismissals were automatically unfair, being by reason of the transfer. Under TUPE employees may treat an employment contract as terminated when a transfer results in a "substantial change in working conditions" to their "material detriment."

The bus companies sought to overturn the Tribunal decision in an Appeal against the case of two of the drivers – but the companies lost again. This case has major ramifications for the way the transfer system operates. Sadly many union have not publicised this yet. nothing. One of the drivers recently addressed the IWW Busworkers Branch meeting and all agreed there is a need to publicise this victory and ensure workers use it to their own benefits.

CULTURA DEL MIEDO EN EL TRABAJO

El miedo es una emoción primaria, que da lugar a un proceso natural del cuerpo humano que trabaja para nuestra propia supervivencia. De mantenerse en ese estado natural, el miedo no sería mas que una cualidad, una capacidad totalmente positiva...

Pero, a lo largo de la historia, ha sido usado por el poder para conseguir sus fines, el miedo pasa así a ser un instrumento que otorga ventaja en las relaciones de poder. En la actualidad, el miedo se instalado de forma permanente, de manera intensa y extensa: está en el medio, en el aire, y llega a cada rincón de nuestra existencia. El miedo se ha convertido en una experiencia de amenaza vital, convirtiéndose así, en una traba frente a la vida que nos gustaría vivir, frente a la vida que tenemos derecho a vivir.☐

Estamos inmersos en una crisis global y profunda. Desde la hegemonía del poder, se nos dice que para intentar superar estas crisis, la única posibilidad, objetivamente necesaria, es realizar una serie de cambios que impondrán sacrificios a todos.

Ante esta realidad, la incertidumbre se convierte en cotidiana, la amenaza se muestra constante, el peligro se hace inminente, y la angustia, se extiende en el ánimo de todos.

... Nos gobiernan a base de miedo, introduciendo en la población un fuerte impacto emocional a través de una situación de continua amenaza, una situación que desorienta; y antes de que pueda darse cualquier reacción, implementar rápidamente una serie de cambios profundos en la estructura económica, social y política.

El miedo tiene un potente peso en nuestro día a día..., miedo a la "crisis", al "rescate", al despido, al desempleo, a no encontrar trabajo, a no poder pagar el alquiler o la hipoteca del piso, al desalojo, a la pobreza... Con el cuento de la crisis y a base de miedo, nos han quitado derechos laborales, bajado los salarios, y rebajado las ayudas sociales y pensiones y anulado nuestras libertades.

Los efectos individuales del miedo en el trabajo puede ser muy intensos. Algunos autores comparan los efectos del desempleo con los de la represión política, dado que remiten a la persona

a vivencias de inseguridad muy profundas. Con la amenaza a la subsistencia material y a los proyectos de vida, el miedo puede producir sometimiento, impotencia, pasividad y resignación ante la explotación. Cuando el miedo aparece, la imagen que la persona tiene de sí misma se deteriora, puede surgir la sensación de humillación, del cuestionamiento de la propia dignidad. El miedo puede deshacer la estructura y los soportes de la identidad personal. Se pueden generar entonces sentimientos de frustración y desvalorización personal intensos, vivencias de inseguridad muy profundas, puede instalar un sentimiento de fracaso y de derrota personal. La frustración se establece como núcleo central y se va generando la percepción en la persona de que se está perdiendo a sí misma.

Esta situación, llevada al lugar de trabajo, convierte el miedo en un sentimiento que paraliza, que disuade de organizarse, de reclamar cualquier derecho, y que lleva al conformismo....

Constituye una de las principales herramientas cotidianas para someter y conducir la conducta de los trabajadores. A trabajar más por menos, y sin protestar. Este ambiente laboral es un caldo de cultivo para la desconfianza en los demás, para la desconfianza hacia los compañeros. Y en ese contexto, finalmente, donde el individuo pasa a ser el origen del problema, y es él quien debe cambiar y adaptarse, se trata incluso de una cuestión de libertad y decisión personal: *usted aceptó, si usted no quiere, ahí está la puerta de la calle.*

El efecto grupal y social del miedo funciona como disuasorio para los que puedan sentirse identificados con las personas reprimidas, ejemplifica lo que puede suceder, y orienta hacia la paralización y la colaboración con el poder. El miedo lleva al silencio en el grupo. Ante situaciones de represión (una suspensión, un despido...), no hablar de lo sucedido se convierte en una manera de evitar el peligro, dado que compartir lo que se sabe o se ha presenciado puede suponer riesgos, riesgo a que te identifiquen con el otro, riesgo de ser acusado de estar al lado de las personas reprimidas y a sufrir las mismas represalias. Esta imposibilidad de compartir produce un im-

pacto significativo en las personas, donde todos saben, pero nadie habla. Se instala la cultura del *no decir, no preguntar, no saber.*

El silencio refuerza el miedo, y este, se extiende y se convierte en denominador común. Pasan cosas inadmisibles, pero todo sigue igual, El silencio, se convierte en norma represiva oficial, se da una auténtica negación social de la realidad. Esta situación, en algunas personas, hace que el silencio se mezcle con ansiedad, impotencia y culpa. En otras con indiferencia, negación o cinismo. Del silencio, se transita con rapidez a la desconfianza, la división, la rotura de los lazos de solidaridad, y el aislamiento de las víctimas de la amenaza y su entorno.

Por eso, es tan tristemente habitual, que un trabajador que defiende sus derechos o los de algún compañero vea cómo, el resto de compañeros rehúyen su contacto como si de un apestado se tratara. Es muy probable y entendible entonces que la persona amenazada sienta una profunda decepción, frustración, hastío de todo y de todos, de tal manera que desactive su lucha. El silencio de abajo será aprovechado por el discurso de arriba. Desde la empresa y los sindicatos cómplices, se lanzarán discursos y rumores que inoculen más miedo, más grande, desde más arriba: nos llega el gran monstruo, la crisis.

Se pretenderá entonces que el sometimiento grupal sea generalizado y que perdure en el tiempo, instalando la sensación de fracaso por siempre inevitable, dado que *"así son las cosas y así es la gente"*. Y para consolidar la confusión sobre la realidad, quedará la duda eterna sobre lo que sucedió: *"algo debieron hacer para que les despidieran..."*.

La sedimentación del miedo y el silencio va creando formas de relación social que se estabilizan y naturalizan como normales, y así, silenciosamente, se van creando en las personas formas de ser y de comportarse basadas en el silencio y en el miedo. No preguntar se puede convertir en la



conducta socialmente deseada, en la conducta gratificada, correcta, normal. En caso de que alguien no siga la norma de silencio, la persona puede ser tildada de problemática, radical, culpable de lo que le pueda suceder.

La dimensión histórica del miedo circula por generaciones, pero apenas se reconoce su existencia. De lo que no se habla, no existe. Al suprimir el recuerdo, se suprimen posibilidades de aprendizaje, y la experiencia, como un componente histórico del ser y el hacer individual y social, desaparece. Ya no son trabajadores, ni clase obrera; son "operarios, o técnicos cualificados", consumidores con hipoteca y tarjeta de crédito.

Así, los trabajadores con miedo, dóciles y sumisos, son funcionales al sistema de producción. La imposición del mandato de silencio establece formas de relación social que impedirán preguntas y respuestas y, por tanto, la aparición de la verdad de la represión. Se normalizará la coacción del más fuerte, se naturalizará y hasta se pretenderá su legitimidad.

El miedo es una potente y sofisticada herramienta de control social, es una perversa forma de gobierno, de conducir las conductas de la gente. Y se aplica masivamente para controlar a los trabajadores.

...PERO NO ES INFALIBLE.



Yo me críe en el campo donde el problema de uno es el problema de todos, mientras viví ahí no me enteraba de la explotación de la mujer, pero si sabía que la mujer tenía que trabajar muy duro, como esposa, madre e hija.

Cuando emigre a la Ciudad me di cuenta de la diferencia cultural y regional que existía y la explotación de la mujer.

Muchas mujeres permiten el machismo de sus parejas porque no tienen otra opción, porque económicamente dependen de ellos, muchas mujeres no tienen la oportunidad de tomar parte en el desarrollo de sus hijos, porque el sistema está diseñado para eso, históricamente la mujer siempre ha sido discriminada creando así una división entre trabajadores.

Cuando emigre fuera de mi país a un país como este que supuestamente está más desarrollado, dice ser pionero de los derechos humanos pero esto no es así; Aquí es donde más violan los derechos humanos y donde la explotación de la mujer es más evidente, donde la mujer tiene que sobrevivir como madre, como inmigrante y aun mas tiene que sobrevivir como indocumentada, ósea que este país explota al trabajador tres veces más.

A pesar de todos estos atropellos la mujer

siempre se manifiesta de diferentes maneras sobre su inconformidad. Es una vergüenza que en pleno siglo 21 siga pasando este tipo de situaciones; pero no debemos extrañarnos que esto pase ya que los ricos siempre quieren ser más ricos a costa de lo que sea, no les importa pasar por encima de quien sea para conseguir lo que quieren. Esto nunca va a cambiar si nosotros como pueblo no nos unimos para luchar en contra de la injusticia.

Ahora con el pretexto de los recortes amparados y apoyados por el gobierno de turno, las empresas aprovechan para explotar hasta el máximo a los trabajadores en general, donde un trabajador o trabajadora tiene que hacer el trabajo de 3 o 4 personas. Esto es inhumano y con un salario de miseria que es imposible sobrevivir en un país tan caro como este. Ósea que los hijos de los trabajadores ya no podrán ir a la universidad por el alto costo de la misma. Esto es un abuso claro al derecho de estudiar y un ataque discriminatorio al trabajador y al pueblo en general.

Con los recortes de la educación afecta directamente de los inmigrantes y por su puesto la mujer queda más marginada porque al no poder estudiar y aprender el idioma queda en total desventaja, por ejemplo para ayudar a nuestros hijos

con las tareas, para poder comunicarnos con los profesores de las escuelas, para ir al médico, para poder defender nuestros derechos como trabajadoras etc; Por el idioma cada día nos queda más difícil a los trabajadores integrarnos a la sociedad y poder compartir nuestras experiencias con los trabajadores Ingleses o inmigrantes de diferentes culturas.

Tomando en cuenta que nosotros no somos causantes de esta crisis ni de ninguna otra. Al pueblo no le han preguntado si estamos de acuerdo o no, en que vayan a invadir otros países, a que vayan a matar mujeres, hombres, niños, ancianos, etc.

Tampoco nos preguntaron si estamos de acuerdo a que inyecten billones de libras esterlinas a los banqueros. Porque tiene que ser el pueblo el que pague la crisis que solo ellos crearon?

Nosotros no somos culpables de que los bancos quiebren, a nosotros no nos beneficia para nada que estos existan. Los bancos son creados por el sistema capitalista para enriquecer a unos y explotar a otros.

Personalmente puedo decir que pude sobrevivir sin una cuenta bancaria por más de 30 años hasta que vine a este país, Porque el sistema obliga a tener una cuenta bancaria para poder trabajar. Esta es una manera más de esclavizarnos.

Este sistema está destruyendo a la humanidad y todo lo que nos rodea, cuando las compañías extranjeras van a explotar nuestros recursos naturales, destruyen todo lo que está en su paso, la naturaleza, los animales, contaminan las vertientes naturales de los ríos con los químicos que estos utilizan, volviendo así la tierra infértil para la producción, creando la explotación, el terror, el hambre y la miseria de nuestros pueblos. Obligando a muchos padres Y madres de familia a dejarlo todo incluyendo sus hijos para emigrar a otros países en busca de un futuro para su familia y cuando llegan a estos países llamados del primer mundo, espe-

ranzados en encontrar mejores condiciones de vida y de trabajo, nos damos cuenta que no es tan lindo como lo pinta la propaganda capitalista, ya que nos explotan hasta no poder mas, volviéndonos aun mas esclavos del sistema ya que por los bajos salarios tenemos que trabajar largas jornadas para poder medio sobrevivir y no queda nada para asistir a las familias que se quedaron desamparadas en nuestros países.

Muchos aquí quizá no lo entiendan porque no lo han vivido, mientras no les falte la gasolina o sus derivados para echar andar sus vehículos o lo que fuera, no saben la realidad de lo que hay detrás de todo esto.

Todos los trabajadores del mundo tenemos un enemigo en común. Por ende siempre vamos a estar explotados si nosotros no nos unimos y luchamos por nuestros derechos y por los derechos y futuro de nuestros hijos.

Los paros nacionales organizados por los grandes sindicatos lo que hacen es controlar al pueblo diciéndole por donde y hacia donde debe ir, esto no pasa de ser una marcha más que muy poco afecta al gobierno y donde la fuerza pública abusa de su poder para reprimir al pueblo. Nosotros no necesitamos que nadie nos controle, somos nosotros los que debemos tomar nuestras propias decisiones, es el pueblo el que está sufriendo las consecuencias de la corrupción. Lo que necesitamos son medidas más radicales, como un paro nacional indefinido preferible sufrir un mes o dos sin pago, antes que nuestros hijos continúen con los salarios de miseria y explotación toda su vida, es una de las tantas maneras que podemos presionar a este gobierno para que cambie la injusticia en contra del pueblo.

Para medidas radicales, protestas y paros radicales.

La solidaridad no tiene fronteras para el abuso capitalista.

Marlene



JOHN MCDONNELL

MP FOR HAYES AND HARLINGTON

Over the last 21 months we have seen the best and the worst of our movement.

The best has been the tsunami of activism that started in November 2010 with the students and lecturers march on Millbank and which flowed on to half a million at least turning out for the TUC's March for the Alternative in March 2011.

Despite the dead hand of bureaucratic resistance to industrial action within the TUC, the strike by teachers, lecturers and civil servants in June undoubtedly forced the hand of other unions and the TUC to back co-ordinated action in November.

Again, despite all those doom merchants moaning that their members would not come out and that the strike would be unpopular, people poured out in their hundreds of thousands and we saw demonstrations in towns and cities on a scale not seen for decades, popularly supported by local communities.

In some areas in the north of England and Northern Ireland the reports were of a virtual general strike.

Nationally opinion poll ratings supporting the strike were also reached as in no other dispute we have engaged in.

Throughout this period, the generation that many had given up on as obsessed with celebrity culture and materialism emerged with a vibrant creativity to challenge the very foundations of capitalism with their occupations and direct action.

The Occupy movement with its use of new media also demonstrated an internationalism that many traditional organisations had long forgotten.

But we have also seen the worst of our movement as well.

The dogged opposition by the TUC and some trade union leaders to a co-ordinated campaign of industrial action showed just how incorporated into the system some organisations and individuals had become.

Just as the leaked memos from WikiLeaks showed the TUC reassuring governments that the trade union protest against the Iraq war would be comfortably contained, it is clear that the mindset of the TUC and some trade union leaders was that though they may have to concede to the November 30 strike, they could reassure that they would rapidly kill off any prospect of further co-ordinated action.

These bureaucrats were willing not only to accept any offer from the coalition no matter how pathetic the deal, but worse still they were also willing in front of government ministers to attack those union representatives who refused to sell out their members.

It became clear that what some trade union leaders wanted was a return to the acquiescent quiet life of the last 14 years to enable them to continue to enjoy their lifestyles that are closer to those of the class they are supposed to represent.

When it came to political representation we also witnessed the downside of our movement.

RECLAIM OUR MOVEMENT



The Labour Party's political leadership has failed to recognise the scale of the suffering that our people are experiencing and the anger that they are feeling.

This has produced a lack of confidence in the Labour leadership over the desire for change among our own people and in their willingness to act. This resulted initially in a succession of losses of nerve.

The refusal to back the strikes and the direct action movements comes from that deep-seated fear by those at the helm of the Labour Party of supporting anything that doesn't secure overwhelming majority focus group support.

Only when an issue is completely safe will the Labour leadership show leadership.

Arguing now that standing up to Rupert Murdoch was an example of courage when it came after 12 months of calls for such a stand, weeks after attending a Murdoch party and only when Murdoch was on his knees, really just doesn't wash.

This depressing lack of courage has led on to support for reactionary welfare reform, privatisation of public services, including healthcare and staggeringly even prisons, acceptance

of the coalition's academies and now the complete capitulation to neo-liberalism in the recent statements of support for cuts and pay freezes.

The economic crisis creating mass unemployment and intense poverty is hurting our people terribly.

In my own constituency we are distributing food parcels to help people get by.

This is the opportunity to explain starkly how capitalism works and the crisis-ridden nature of this system.

For Labour leaders to react to it by supporting the same old failed economic orthodoxies that mean ordinary people will pay for the crisis is rapidly making them appear irrelevant.

Competing with David Cameron in calling for responsible capitalism is laughable when the extremes of wealth and poverty and inequality caused by the capitalist system are being evidenced every day and the bankers' bonuses are returning with a vengeance.

There is now a vital opportunity to challenge our corrupt and incompetent economic system and to give people the possibility of opening up a new era in how we organise our society.

That means resisting the cuts, pay

freezes and every attack on our class. It means offering an alternative based upon a radical redistribution of wealth, insisting on democratic control of our economy at every level from the firm to the City, pressing to eradicate inequality in all its forms and recognising that if environmental sustainability is not at the core of our world view, everything we plan will become irrelevant anyway.

The last period has shown that there is the potential of creating an exciting new movement for change.

We need to reclaim our movement from the bureaucrats that are undermining from within the TUC and some trade unions the solidarity upon which the labour and trade union movement was founded.

Union by union we need to organise to challenge and clear out the defeatists.

We need to base our movement once again on action. That means mobilising to support industrial action, direct action, occupations and demonstrations wherever there is an injustice to fight, a cut to resist or a strike to wage.

If Parliament fails us our political leadership must instead come from the picket line and the streets.



Olympic 500: fałszywa wojna albo opór

Związek Unite zwiększył działania mające na celu podniesienie rangi kampanii, która ma zabezpieczyć pięciuset funtową premię dla 28 tysięcy kierowców autobusów w Londynie. Ulotki, plakaty a nawet czołowi działacze pojawiali się w niektórych garażach. Żądanie premii jest słuszne. Zwiększony dochód firm autobusowych podczas igrzysk olimpijskich przyniesie znacznie większe zyski niż kwota potrzebna na premię w obliczu zwiększonego stresu i wymagań wobec kierowców. Jednak kwestia ta budzi dalej idące pytania. Kampania powstała z powodu dużo ważniejszych kwestii – stale pogarszających się poziomów wynagrodzenia i warunków pracy kierowców autobusów.

Londyńscy kierowcy autobusów nie są głupi. Wezwanie do wypłacenia jednego z dodatków nie może ukryć faktu, że przez lata pracodawcy byli w ofensywie, podczas gdy jeden z największych związków autobusowych stawał bardzo niewielki opór. Każdy wie, że w porównaniu z pracownikami innych środków transportu, szczególnie metra, wypłaty i warunki poprawiały się znacznie wolniej. Liczne badania porównujące zarobki kierowców autobusów pokazują znaczne pogorszenie realnych płac w latach 2008-2012. Uzyskanie olimpijskiego dodatku byłoby świetne, ale po zakończeniu olimpiady sytuacja będzie tak samo zła, jak przed igrzyskami.

Kampania *Olympic 500* ma na celu pokazanie, że kierowcy autobusów powinni być traktowani tak samo, jak pracownicy innych środków

transportu. Pytanie, dlaczego maszyniści metra ze związku ASLEF mogą dostać Olimpijski Bonus w wysokości tysiąca funtów? Dlaczego RMT zabezpieczył dodatek do dwóch i pół tysiąca funtów dla Docklands Light Railway, pięćset funtów dla Network Railway i sześćset funtów dla London Overground? Dlatego że pracodawcy szanują te związki, bo one wielokrotnie stały w obronie swoich pracowników. W przypadku autobusów jest to zupełnie inna historia.

Kiedy przedstawiciele RMT Eamonn Lynch i Arwyn Thomas zostali zwolnieni, RMT odpowiedziało przemysłową i legalną akcją, aby przywrócić represjonowanych przedstawicieli. Dla przykładu, gdy Abdul Omer Moshin przewodniczący Unite w Sovereign był represjonowany w marcu 2010 roku, związek odmówił przeprowadzania głosowania w sprawie strajku, mimo że w miejscu pracy głosowano za wsparciem akcji. Pracownicy zapłacili wysoką cenę za ten odwrót – pracodawcy uznali to za zielone światło do kontynuowania ataków. Od 2008 roku, gdy w Londynie odwołano strajk w sprawie podniesienia wynagrodzeń, nastąpiły lata umów płacowych, które były poniżej inflacji albo do zamrożenia – to jest prawdziwe cięcie płac.

Zwolniony przewodniczący z Sovereign negocjował umowę płacową, która była na równi z tą w London United, czyli podwyższenie płac o cztery tysiące funtów rocznie w ciągu kilku następnych lat. Po tym, jak został zwolniony, członek regionalnego zarządu przemysłowego Unite Wayne King zgodził się na anulowanie umowy z kwietnia 2010 roku. Kiedy kierowcy

Sovereign w pocztowym głosowaniu wypowiedzieli się przeciwko umowie płacowej z 2011 roku, King odmówił ogłoszeniu lub wprowadzenia w życie wyniku głosowania 27 grudnia 2011 roku. W Metroline w tym samym miesiącu podczas wypłat kierowców spotkało obniżenie wynagrodzenia o 28,2 procent w porównaniu do tego, co zarabiali w Boxing Day w 2010 roku.

Tymczasem pracownicy są podzieleni według różnych umów. Od 1 stycznia 2012 roku Metroline narzuca początkującym dwuletnie umowy czasowe i przyjmuje ich na gorszych warunkach niż wcześniej zatrudnionych pracowników. Teraz kierownictwo będzie starało się obniżyć warunki na niższy poziom i pozbawić pracowników lepszych płac. Zarząd po prostu zignorował uznany związek, który zataił tę informację. Nic dziwnego, że dyrektor generalny Metroline'u Jaspal Singh może pochwalić się „bliskimi i ofiarnymi stosunkami ze związkiem Unite”. Analogicznie, kierowcy ze wschodniego Londynu stracili prawie trzy tysiące funtów rocznie – więcej w przypadku nowych pracowników. A wraz z szeregiem nakładanych zmian w swoich umowach, które prowadzą do tego, że pracują więcej, za mniejsze pieniądze.

RMT odmówił przyjęcia olimpijskiej premii oferowanej przez London Underground, ponieważ zarząd chce połączyć ją z pogorszeniem warunków pracowników metra. Unite odmówił połączenia poprawy warunków pracy pracowników z kampanią na rzecz premii!

W lutym podczas konferencji pracowników

autobusowych Unite Londyn powiedział o *Olympic 500*: „jeśli nie zdobędziemy tego prawa, znajdziemy się w opałach”. Niepokojące jest to, że urzędnicy przedstawiają sprawę premii jako walkę o narzędzie samoobrony związku, zamiast o interesy członków. Teraz ci sami burokraci, którzy nadzorowali przez lata degradację warunków pracy deklarują, że „londyńscy pracownicy autobusowi byli zbyt długo traktowani jako obywatele drugiej kategorii”.

Niezależnie od motywów burokratów z Unite, jeśli są gotowi, żeby zacząć walkę o premię, to przyjmujemy to z zadowoleniem. Jednakże, Robotnicy Przemysłowi Świata (Industrial Workers of the World) proszą, żeby nie brać pracowników autobusowych za głupców. Jeśli Unite na serio mówi o dobrze zorganizowanej blokadzie firm autobusowych, to TfL i władze powinny przestać atakować inne związki i wesprzeć zjednoczoną, oddolną kampanię na rzecz uruchomienia pełnej partycypacji pracowników. Ponadto, najważniejsza jest nie tylko jedna premia, ale paląca potrzeba szerokiej kampanii na rzecz płac w Londynie, wokół kompleksowego wniosku o to, co niezbędne do prowadzenia pół-godnego życia. Aby osiągnąć to uznanie nie możemy polegać na marionetkach i burokratach, nie możemy dłużej kontynuować tej samej starej strategii, nie możemy odkładać na bok budowania efektywnego, silnego związku, który będzie mógł stanąć w obronie interesów kierowców autobusów.