



# DESPERATE PEOPLE - DESPERATE LIES

## **SUCCESSFUL STRIKE ACTION CAUSES MEDIA PANIC**

Once again thanks to all RMT members across London Underground and TfL for their magnificent show of unity – not just in the face of Management, but in the face of the most vicious attack by the media that we have so far experienced.

There were so many lies and insults that it is too hard to know where to start. The fact is that the media were acting as mouthpieces for a management and a Mayor of London who are so desperate to smash up the working agreements of their own staff that they have lost their respect for truth.

## **TRUTH WAS A CASUALTY – SAFETY WAS ANOTHER!**

Trains were sent out without safety preparation, stations were open without trained staff, and unqualified people carried out a range of safety duties. Management are normally quick enough to discipline workers over safety issues. Their hypocrisy is now revealed – they are willing to ignore safety when it suits them. The RMT is in the process of collecting information about these serious safety breaches.

## **AFTER ALL THE LIES AND POISON IN THE MEDIA, HERE ARE SOME FACTS**

The RMT Executive called a dispute over three issues which were put in writing to management at the time and circularised to members.

The issues are:

- Widespread Management bullying and the abuse of disciplinary procedures, especially attendance procedures
- Management not honouring a key agreement over job security and restructuring.

Both of these issues are a matter of principle – if LUL can break these important agreements, they can ignore all agreements at will, which would undermine all conditions built up over the years on the underground.

- The third issue is pay. LUL asked the unions to submit written pay claims in November, so that the pay could be given on time. They then ignored the unions' claims for weeks and finally made a provocative 5 year offer which was a pay cut. They knew no union would accept this offer. All unions have stated that Management were not seriously engaged in pay talks. They were not seriously trying to get a deal.

## **MANAGEMENT AVOIDED TALKS**

After we had announced the strike days, Management was still in no hurry to talk. Days were ticking away and finally RMT issued a press release saying if LUL Management wouldn't settle, we wanted to meet Boris Johnson.

Eventually LUL met the unions on Friday morning, when the strike was on Tuesday. LUL changed the pay offer to a two year deal of 1% in year one and RPI + ½% in year two. Even this measly offer was only made in the hope of undermining the RMT strike.

That Friday afternoon LUL finally talked to the RMT negotiators about the issues of the strike, but seemed in no hurry to sort things out. LUL did not want to meet on the weekend so only talked again on Monday. LUL offered little or nothing. Finally on Tuesday – the actual day of the strike – RMT met with Richard Parry (who has taken over from Tim O’Toole). This time there were meaningful talks and the RMT team - Bob Crow, Steve Hedley and Oliver New - agreed to recommend suspension of strike action to the RMT Executive. This was on the basis of an agreement with Management which was argued over and written by hand on paper. ACAS took this paper away to be typed up so that it could be signed. It seemed there was a deal and the strike would not happen.

But within a few minutes Management announced that after a phone call they had changed their minds about the agreed wording.

In other words, they left the talks to the very last minute, then torpedoed the negotiated deal.

### **MEDIA LIES AND NONSENSE**

There were so many lies printed and told over the airwaves during the two days of strike action, they could hardly fit them all in! Here are the facts about some of them:

**Bob Crow ‘ordered’ the strike.** The truth is, the union has a democratic structure – it is Management who don’t and who ‘order’ things. After we had a democratic vote for strike action, LUL undermined it (instead of negotiating) by a technical legal challenge which forced the union to re-ballot.

**RMT wants 5% pay rise for greedy train operators.** The pay talks take place annually for all staff – some of who are not on good pay, especially for London. 5% was a figure mentioned in our original claim made (at management’s request ) in November last year – before the credit crunch crisis and low inflation. We had since made it clear that we would accept a lower offer

**The Strike was about two Victoria Line Drivers.** This is a crazy allegation. We told Management what the dispute was about all along. There is a separate dispute at the Victoria Line. During discussions on Management’s abuse of the disciplinary procedures, we asked Management to look at 7 cases in particular. Included among these 7 were the cases of three Vic Line Drivers

**The Strike was not well Supported.** The strike was excellently supported by thousands of RMT members including operating staff and infrastructure staff on the SSR and BCV. A special thanks to everyone including many members of Aslef who respected picket lines (despite their own leaders )

**“There is a Train Service Running ”** On strike days LUL and the media outrageously misled the public by claiming they were running a services that were not worthy of the name service.

### **WHERE NOW?**

Your Union is considering the next steps in our campaign.

Management’s aim is not just to have a go at the RMT, but at all unions and agreement. Those who want to hide their heads in the sand, or who claim this can somehow be sorted out by further negotiations, are just avoiding reality. The issues in dispute have been raised time and time again with Management for a long time. If we do not stick together, there will be a permanent process of cuts to agreements, standards, jobs and safety.

**United We Stand, Divided We Fall**