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Ken Livingstone on Tube Strike

We finally have the truth on our guarantee over compulsory redundancies by the man who made the agreement Ken Livingstone. We have often differed with Ken in the past but applaud his honesty about our agreement which covers all London underground and ex Metronet staff. In this time of uncertainty and recession we must be willing to make sacrifices now to ensure all our long term futures:

Former London Mayor Ken Livingstone today launched a furious broadside against Boris Johnson for his failure to meet with RMT at an early stage to address the issues at the heart of the tube dispute.

Livingstone has also made it clear that the union is right over the key issue of compulsory redundancies.

Writing in The Times, and speaking on radio this morning, Livingstone said:

“ ..the 2007 strike was caused by the failure of the administrator to give a guarantee of no redundancies after the collapse of Metronet, the public-private partnership responsible for maintaining and upgrading some lines.

I met the unions and gave a written guarantee that after the return of Metronet staff to the public sector there would be no redundancies. In an organisation as large as Transport for London (TfL) and with many proposals for expanding services and building new infrastructure we would have had no problems honouring that deal.

I also left the incoming Mayor £1.5billion in TfL's reserves to fund this. After the new Mayor's decision to stop all new infrastructure projects except those that are contractually committed, he is unwilling to stand by the no-redundancy pledge.

My guarantee of no redundancies merely carried on the commitments given by the Labour Government when it transferred these workers to Metronet. The Mayor cannot be surprised if the unions feel betrayed.

Instead of opening negotiations last summer, the Mayor made no offer to the unions, with the result that they submitted their pay demand in November. They only received a response from the mayor in February, just over a month before the expiry of this pay round.

The Mayor has no problem finding time to do his weekly newspaper column, endless photo opportunities and lead an active social life of opening nights, film premieres and society parties. He needs to remember that as Mayor he is the elected executive, as well as being chair of Transport for London.

No amount of bluster about no-strike deals or laws is a substitute for doing the day job”.