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NEWS RELEASE

A PERSONAL MESSAGE FROM THE GENERAL SECRETARY

THE TRUTH (AND IF NOT SUE US FOR LIBEL)

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

The Facts

Pay. Management made a revised offer on a two year deal or four year deal. We said we would go away, speak to our members and representatives and come back to them. We said this did not have to be resolved immediately and hence we could suspend the action.

Breaches of Agreements. It is an out and out lie that we were only interested in the two sacked drivers. There were another five specific cases where management had abused the disciplinary procedures. It was agreed that ACAS would look at all seven cases and we said that we would be able to suspend the action to allow this to go ahead.

On the application of the sickness procedures, management were abusing it by making unannounced visits to members without a Trade Union representative being present. They were also issuing 52 week warnings as opposed to the maximum allowed which is 26 weeks. We reached agreement that the 26 weeks maximum would be adhered to and that a Trade Union representative would be in attendance at the interviews.

Redundancies. In 2001 after campaigning that the privatisation of the infrastructure would be a disaster LUL members were transferred to Metronet. We reached an agreement with LUL and Metronet that there would be no compulsory redundancies and that staff would be offered alternative employment in the event of their job going. This was enshrined in members' contracts. As we predicted Metronet went bust with massive debts. We asked that all Metronet members that came back to LUL, and all other LUL members, should have the same agreement of no **compulsory** redundancies. At 6 o'clock, an hour before the strike was to begin, agreement was reached with the Acting Managing Director, Richard Parry. In fact I signed a document to this effect and this was to go back in front of your General Grades Committee immediately so that we could suspend the strike. At 6.35 p.m. whilst awaiting the final typed agreement we were told by management that they had made a phone call and that they could no longer abide by the agreement – they reneged before the ink was even dry. We were stunned that management could be so dishonest.

I have no doubt that the phone call made was to the Transport Commission or City Hall and they instructed the negotiators to pull the agreed deal. It became quite clear that the Transport Commission or City Hall were using stalling tactics to try and extend the talks to 7 p.m. in the hope that staff would believe agreement had been reached and turn up for work and members were also getting anonymous texts telling them the action was being called off.

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

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

Thank you for your support – the strike is solid and it is a tremendous effort by all of you. I will write to you with developments.

Best wishes

Bob Crow
General Secretary